

Report from Rio by Silvia Palacios

World ecologists pressure Collor

The President-elect was presented with environmentalist demands from Washington to Paris to Moscow.

During Fernando Collor de Mello's ongoing international tour, the Brazilian President-elect has come under enormous pressure from the world eco-fascist lobby. Starting with his meetings with George Bush and environmental czar William Reilly, where Collor was presented with a laundry list of environmental concerns, through his official meetings in Moscow, Japan, Germany, France, and Italy, he is being told that Brazil's relations with the rest of the world are conditioned on submission to ecological parameters—as defined by the malthusian fascists who run the world's "green lobby."

In Moscow, Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze "impressed Collor by telling him that the planet spends \$800 billion per year on weapons, enough to resolve all environmental problems once and for all," reported *O Globo* Feb. 2. Shevardnadze also said that he had visited Brazil during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and that he was never attacked for representing a country that had used force. "I wasn't applauded, said the foreign minister, but I was treated very well, with cordiality, with understanding."

Shevardnadze delivered his comments at a moment when various sectors of Brazil, and especially its Armed Forces, had reacted strongly against the U.S. invasion of Panama. The Joint Chiefs of Staff, according to Brazilian press leaks, issued a warning that President Bush's Panama policy could be extended to other areas that Washington might choose to consider its "concern," such as the

Amazon. It would thus appear that Shevardnadze's comments were intended as a message that Brazil could become a minor partner of the developed sector, *if and when* it decides to submit its sovereignty to superpower "interests."

The other side of the pressures was exposed in a Feb. 4 interview with presidential adviser Zelia Cardoso de Mello, which appeared in *Gazeta Mercantil*. Cardoso revealed that international financial aid for Brazil has environmentalist strings attached. His meeting with West Germany's Minister of Economic Cooperation was important, said Cardoso, since "there are various funds at his disposal, all clearly linked to protection of the environment, on the order of \$500 million."

Under these kinds of pressures, President Collor gave a press conference at which he said, "I am surprised by the interest shown in the environment. Undoubtedly, I will be dealing with the same issue today with [West German Chancellor Helmut] Kohl. What I wish is that ecology could be addressed without the political-electoral trappings with which it has been treated in several countries up until now."

Nonetheless, there seem to be contradictions between Collor's team and what he himself has stated. On Feb. 11 the *New York Times* published a euphoric report on Collor's European trip: "Collor was surprisingly conciliatory with the environmentalists." The *Times* attributed to the President's "transition team members" a tendency to accept the highly controversial "debt-for-ecology"

swaps. That proposal has been pushed by the British monarchy, and emphatically rejected by Brazil, especially by its Armed Forces which refuse to endorse any mechanism which imposes the notion of "limited sovereignty" on Brazil.

But in Brasilia, before his departure from Europe, Collor had affirmed that "There are currents which want to couple negotiation of the foreign debt with the question of the Amazon . . . as if it were a matter of buying or selling a pineapple or a handful of bananas. Every country has to clean its own house."

Playing a major role in the attempt to subject Brazilian sovereignty to supranational oversight has been the Brundtland Commission, named after the Social Democratic former prime minister of Norway. The period between now and 1992, when Brazil hosts the U.N. World Conference on the Environment, will be one of extreme pressures.

She presented her malthusian thesis to the daily *Gazeta Mercantil*, in which she pushed her birth reduction policies and directly attacked the notion of national sovereignty: "In this century, and certainly by the next, nation-states will be inadequate to protect the rights of individuals."

The Brundtland/Gorby show in Moscow won one enthusiastic adherent in Brazil: The ultra-liberal former minister Roberto Campos, who attended the Global Forum, was fascinated by Gorbachov's environmental focus, especially because of its potential to eliminate the concept of national sovereignty. Commented Campos on Jan. 28, "What he proposes on ecology is perestroika, a 180° turn away from sick nationalism which rejects any foreign inspection, to a bold internationalism that believes that communities make the jealousies of the nation-state obsolete."