

# Gulf war triggers intense debate at Brazilian military symposium

by Silvia Palacios and Lorenzo Carrasco

“Lessons of the Gulf War” was the theme of a symposium held June 24-28 by Brazil’s Army Command and General Staff School (ECEME), the military’s elite training institute and think tank. The symposium provided the scene for a heated controversy, to the delight of the select audience of more than 300. The polarized debate was a reflection of the intense discussions that have been ongoing within the Armed Forces on the consequences for Brazil of the new world order, born of the Gulf conflict and proclaimed by President George Bush in Brasilia, during his state visit last December.

Also participating in the event were the authors of this article, *EIR*’s correspondents in Brazil, speaking on three different panels: “Diplomatic and Other Interests Involved”; “Juridical and Ethical Concerns,” and “The Post-War Period and the New International Order” (see *Documentation*).

Throughout the five days of deliberations, it became clear that there exist two clearly antagonistic positions: One view concludes that, in the aftermath of the Gulf conflict, the country is left with no alternative but to align itself unconditionally with the United States, even if that requires “revising the concept of national sovereignty.” This viewpoint was emphasized in the presentation of *O Estado de São Paulo* journalist Antonio Carlos Pereira, a graduate of London’s International Institute for Strategic Studies. Pereira lamented that Brazil had not sent troops to support the “powers of the First World, to which the current [Brazilian] government seeks entrance.”

This extreme liberal grouping, dubbed by Army officers present as the “official current,” maintains a simplistic and pragmatic view of the Gulf conflict. For them, “Iraq invaded Kuwait out of expansionist designs, and to unburden itself of its debt from the war with Iran. . . . The United States reacted to keep stability in the region, maintain oil prices and the oil flow to the allied countries, and to assure Israel’s survival.”

## ‘War was pre-planned’

The opposing view warned that the conflict was “a diabolical creation of intelligence to, among other things, destroy Iraq’s industrial capability,” making it impossible for Iraq

“to become a regional power that would challenge Israel’s hegemony.” Thus, we saw “the destruction of targets that were of no military interest.” This viewpoint, expressed clearly in the interventions of various ECEME officers, insisted that “Iraq was launched into the war. United States Ambassador to Iraq April Glaspie couldn’t fail to know what Iraq’s intentions were. . . . Saddam was instigated into taking that action [of invading Kuwait]. . . . Kuwait was very confident, despite its clearly provocative attitude. . . . The more one studies this war, the more one must conclude that it was pre-planned,” was the finding of a high-level officer warmly applauded by the audience.

On the Brazilian decision not to send troops to the Gulf, an Army officer declared that, first and foremost, the Brazilian Armed Forces were not in any condition materially to undertake such a deployment. He related the following anecdote: “Upon the arrival of a Navy ship at port, the port guard is supposed to greet it with an artillery salute. When this didn’t happen, the naval captain received the following explanation from the commander of the guard: ‘My Captain, we did not do it for nine reasons: first, we had no powder.’ ” More to the point, continued the Army officer, “Brazil is not cut out to be a *capanga*,” using the derogatory Brazilian term for gangster.

The extreme liberals expressed no fears that the “new world order” stemming from the war on Iraq posed any threat to the sovereignty and technological independence of Brazil, above all—commented the arrogant *O Estado de São Paulo* representative—since “President Bush pardoned Brazil for its neutrality.” Nonetheless, the vast majority of officers present reflected quite a different view, as they already understood that Brazil could be the next target of the New Order, which seeks to limit Brazilian sovereignty over its Amazon territory and its technological policy. “We are being punished for having an attitude of sovereignty and independence, maintaining neutrality in the Gulf War. . . . The reason for the pressures against Brazil is not its neutrality, but because of its potential which, if developed, could alter the shape of world power. This war should serve to remind us to keep our dignity, and not to expect help from the outside that they aren’t going to give us. Let this

war serve to prove that a nation without economic and military power will not be able to establish itself as a great nation," declared a colonel from ECEME.

### 'New order' threat to military industry

The high point of the ECEME symposium was reached during the debates on the implications of the technological order that emerged from the Persian Gulf war. It was here that the concepts identifying the nationalists with their idea of a national project, and the extreme liberals with what in essence is a multinational project dictated by the Anglo-Americans, came to a head.

The liberals' association with a multinational project was fully confirmed by press reports that a new policy for Brazil's military industry was afoot, which would turn it into a series of assembly plants, or *maquiladoras*, for the giant Anglo-American military companies. This is, in fact, nothing less than the application of Bush's Enterprise for the Americas initiative to the military sector, as was suggested by one of the speakers, who is linked to the military industry. He added that it would be appropriate for Brazil to broaden its participation in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), in the area of services, which would, he said, "benefit the weapons industry."

The contrary viewpoint was voiced by several participants, who stressed the importance of continuing with such autonomous projects as Brazil's nuclear submarine and the aerospace program—especially the satellite launch capability. At the same time, they denounced the enormous pressures to which the country has been subjected in these areas. To develop high technology, said one engineer who participated, along with Gen. Hugo Piva, in the air-to-air missile project in Iraq, "one needs political will, above all else."

In the final speech to this panel, Prof. Waldimir Pirro e Longo of the Fluminense Federal University, emphasized that "Brazil needs technological and industrial might to make itself respected." Otherwise, he said, as could be seen in Iraq, at "any moment, the superpowers can create shifting coalitions, and bludgeon a nation near or far," leaving behind 200,000 deaths and then moving on to another.

### Anglo-Americans find advocate

On the last day allocated to discussing the postwar period and the "new international order," and to summarizing the deliberations of the week, ECEME director Gen. Luciano Casales stunned the audience with his open embrace of the position of the extreme liberals. "I want to apologize," said General Casales, "because last year I said that I didn't believe there would be war in the Gulf. I didn't know that Saddam was insane. Because anyone who dares to challenge a unanimous decision of the U.N. Security Council is just that, insane. . . . The Gulf crisis began over oil prices. In my opinion, the Brazilian fleet should have been the first to reach the Gulf," he told his perplexed audience.

To justify the attack by the Anglo-American coalition against Iraq, General Casales said that "Kuwait is a nation which has existed for centuries. Iraq is not a country, it is a product of who knows how many machinations. Iraq was a watering hole, nothing more, until they discovered oil." The war, according to General Casales, "gave us the opportunity for our economy to recover, because oil prices did not rise. . . ."

Thus, he continued, "we have nothing to learn from this war . . . law without force is not law. When one enters a war, law disappears. The number of Iraqi deaths was because the bombardments had to be carried out from a high altitude, since the Iraqi anti-air defense was the only thing that functioned."

General Casales's position, implicitly attacking the ideas expressed by these authors and by the majority of the nationalist officers who addressed the ECEME symposium, served to clearly demonstrate that two diametrically opposed views exist within the Brazilian Armed Forces on how to act in the postwar world dominated by Bush's new order and Pax Americana: the one, to fight the pressures and defend one's sovereignty; the other, to submit.

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## Documentation

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### What really were the stakes in the Gulf war?

*EIR Brazil correspondent Lorenzo Carrasco gave the following presentation to the ECEME symposium on June 24.*

Four weeks before the invasion of Kuwait by Iraqi forces, *EIR* magazine, for which I and my wife Silvia are correspondents in Brazil, predicted that a Middle East war was about to occur. Specifically, in a July 2, 1990 interview, published in the July 20 issue of the magazine, *EIR* founder Lyndon LaRouche, the economist, politician, and philosopher currently serving a 15-year jail sentence in the United States for having been the first opponent of President Bush's "new world order," stated: "If the present combination [of power] persists in Israel, and the current agreements among the governments of the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union persist, we can say now that war in the Middle East will break out within weeks or months, depending on conditions. . . . The government of the United States is set on a war in the Middle East. The exact date is the only open question. . . ."

LaRouche has no crystal ball. . . . The precision of his

analysis and forecast stems entirely from a correct method of evaluating world events. . . .

The Middle East conflict was not a war over oil prices, nor did it originate from factors intrinsic to the region, although it is related to these. In truth, the war was a broad-based geopolitical maneuver, intended to first affect unified Germany and Japan, which ended up paying a part of the war bill, thereby extending somewhat the life of the bankrupt Anglo-American economy and its condominium with the Soviets. At the same time, the offensive was intended to destroy Iraq, the only country in the region not inserted in the strategic scheme of this condominium, by reason of the fact that Iraq is the simultaneous enemy of both Syria and Israel, in addition to being the country with the greatest demographic growth and vigorously pursuing a plan of autonomous technological development.

It is useful to review some of the developments which preceded the outbreak of the conflict. Go back to Nov. 9, 1989, when the unification of the German nation—which Anglo-American diplomacy had defined as long-term—became the number-one item on the world political agenda.

At the same time, the Soviet economic crisis had entered into a phase of accelerated collapse. The U.S.S.R. would require urgent foreign aid to be able to minimally stabilize its empire. This was clearly shown in the Group of Seven meeting, held July 9-11, 1990 in the U.S. city of Houston, where Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachov's appeal for economic aid was rejected under the influence of the Anglo-Americans. . . . One week later, July 15-16, German Chancellor Helmut Kohl went to Moscow to meet with President Gorbachov. . . . The two heads of state reached an agreement which accelerated Germany unification, in exchange for massive emergency economic aid to the Soviet Union.

The possibility of long-term economic agreements which began with this meeting—and which would make possible the development of a Eurasian heartland—raised the hysteria level of the press, especially the British press . . . against Germany, whose unification was already branded “the Fourth Reich.” On July 9, Britain's Trade and Industry Minister Nicholas Ridley, who lost his post only days later, managed to compare Kohl to Adolf Hitler.

Although President Bush declared that the German-Soviet agreements had been arranged earlier . . . this was, in fact, but a weak attempt to appear to be in control of the most important world development of the moment. The truth is that the unification of Germany and the development of Eurasia through great infrastructural projects—as urged in the Berlin-Paris-Vienna “Productive Triangle” proposal formulated by a team of researchers under Lyndon LaRouche—would make possible a certain stability of the Soviet bloc, while turning Germany, in alliance with other nations of Western Europe, into the centerpiece of world economic recovery. Something which was not—and is not—in the grand scheme of the Anglo-Americans, whose leaders are

determined to impose, through GATT, the same radical liberal dogmas that have driven their nations into the severe economic depressions afflicting them today. . . .

From this standpoint, the outbreak of a conflict in the explosive Middle East, a conflict which had been readied much earlier, would be favorable to the interests of Washington, London, and Paris (this last, for chauvinist reasons of President François Mitterrand). Such a conflict would seek, essentially, to establish the authority of the United States President as the chief leader on the planet.

Strictly speaking, it was not a war in the Persian Gulf, but a massacre, a cruel exercise in vanity in the best style of the Roman Empire. . . . It is clear that if England and the United States—through economic warfare—created the basis for [Iraq's] invasion of Kuwait while simultaneously organizing a war government in their puppet state of Israel, the invasion by the U.S. and its allies had nothing to do with the supposed liberation of Kuwait, as was propagandized. It was, in fact, nothing but a justification for launching the “new world order,” whose main purpose is control of the world's natural resources and population growth, through “extra-jurisdictional” interventions by NATO, which practice was begun in 1982 during the Malvinas War and whose lessons were not correctly drawn at the time.

## ‘Desert Storm’ was a defeat for humanity

by Silvia Palacios

*The following is a synopsis of the speech presented by EIR correspondent Silvia Palacios, at the ECEME symposium “Lessons of the Persian Gulf War.” Palacios spoke during the panel on “Ethical and Juridical Aspects of the Conflict.”*

On the juridical and ethical aspects of the Gulf war, I would like to refer to the two fundamental principles which were destroyed: one, the principle of national sovereignty, which was replaced by the supranational power of the United Nations Security Council; and second, respect for the life and dignity of the human being. We are not talking about two accessory aspects to international relations or to ethical codes, but rather of two crucial principles upon which Western Christian civilization was based.

Seen from this standpoint, the so-called “victory” of the coalition of nations which carried out the “Desert Storm” military assault on Iraq was characterized by the Catholic Church as a “defeat for humanity”. . . .