

# Inter-American Dialogue 'sharpens dagger' against national sovereignty

by Gretchen Small

At a Washington, D.C. press conference Dec. 8, the Inter-American Dialogue released a blueprint for the elimination of national sovereignty, *de jure* and *de facto*, from the Western Hemisphere, in the immediate period ahead. The Dialogue's latest report, *Convergence and Community: The Americas in 1993*, outlines a strategy for crushing the nation-state, and replacing its functions with a network of supranational institutions run according to the dictates of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The importance of the Dialogue project extends beyond the Western Hemisphere. As the speakers emphasized, establishing supranational governance in the Americas through the creation of a Western Hemisphere Community of Democracies is designed to advance the one-world project for the elimination of the sovereignty of all nations. Founded by David Rockefeller and the U.S. government in 1982, the Dialogue now serves as the Trilateral Commission's leading policy body for the Americas.

There is another lesson to be learned from the Dialogue's *Convergence* report, addressing that frequently asked question as to why the Anglo-American establishment is so intent on eliminating national sovereignty. The so-called democratic world which emerges from the pages of *Convergence* is an Orwellian nightmare, where international financial interests rule through an interlocking network of supranational non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and official bodies, which sets the rules and suppresses all independent forces outside their control. The supranational "democratic" project being pushed worldwide is the instrument of the IMF; it is *usury*, not humanitarian concern, which drives it.

In January 1992, under Richard Feinberg's direction, the Inter-American Dialogue initiated its project on *Redefining Sovereignty*, dispatching academics and policymakers to draw up the legal and conceptual parameters for the "new world order." The project is ongoing, with its conclusions scheduled to be published in a book under that title in 1993. *Convergence* and the press conference called to announce it made clear that elimination of sovereignty is the overriding concern of the Dialogue today.

Dialogue President Feinberg bluntly told the Washington press that the Dialogue members are agreed that sovereignty

should not be "a shield behind which governments or armed groups" can hide. He added that what the Dialogue is proposing for the Western Hemisphere "is consistent with what the international community is doing in Somalia." For Co-Chairman Peter Bell, the "whole terrain [of sovereignty] is in evolution. What is significant is the self-conscious sense that we're entering a new period." Bell told the press that anti-sovereignty precedents are being set one after the other, as seen in Haiti, Peru, and now Somalia. Bruce Babbitt, who replaces Bell as Dialogue co-chairman in January, hailed the current period as "a historic turning point in the history of the hemisphere," out of which the Dialogue seeks "to build a model for the rest of the world" of the institutions required by the "post-Cold War" world.

Citing his authority as a leading member of the Democratic Party, Babbitt assured his listeners that the Clinton administration will "warmly embrace" the principal components of the Dialogue program. Indeed, several Clinton advisers are associated with the Dialogue—Richard Feinberg, Jimmy Carter, and Henry Cisneros, among them.

## Elimination of the opposition

The arrogant claim by all the speakers that everyone in the Americas has now "converged" on a consensus in favor of this one-world plan, was interrupted, however, the moment the question period began. The first dose of reality came from a journalist who asked: "What will it mean for the convergence you are discussing, if there is a military government in Venezuela by the time the embargo [on publication] of your report is lifted [Dec. 13]?"—a rather pertinent question given that, not two weeks before, top officers of Venezuela's military had led a second rebellion in 1992 against the leading spokesman for supranationalism in that country, President Carlos Andrés Pérez.

An *EIR* journalist questioned whether the Dialogue's expressed concern for human rights violations had led them to discuss the international scandal developing over human rights violations in the United States, where innocence is no longer a protection from a state-ordered execution, and where gross political abuse of the judicial system has been demonstrated in the case against the nation's leading anti-establish-

ment political figure, Lyndon LaRouche.

The speakers asserted that the Dialogue had never raised either the death penalty or the implications of the LaRouche case in their deliberations. As for Venezuela, they responded with threats that the "international community" would embargo Venezuela's oil if there were a coup. Not only would a military coup in Venezuela be a major setback to "convergence" in the hemisphere, Peter Bell answered, but the plan also faces another major vulnerability: "If the North American Free Trade Accord [NAFTA] does not pass, it will be a body blow to the whole set of recommendations" contained in the Dialogue's report.

### Free trade vs. sovereignty

NAFTA is the first of three pillars upon which the Dialogue's proposed Western Hemisphere Community of Democracies is to be based—NAFTA as a precursor to the Western Hemisphere Free Trade Accord, which they seek to have established as soon as politically feasible. From their standpoint, NAFTA/WHFTA has a two-pronged function in hemispheric affairs. The first is the more obvious economic one. *Convergence* specifies plainly that Ibero-America's role in the WHFTA is to supply raw materials and cheap labor.

The principal purpose of these accords, they explain, is to make free trade looting so permanent in the hemisphere that no nation can break from its grip far into the future. *Convergence* writes:

"Free trade agreements, in short, serve as both an incentive and an anchor for trade liberalizing measures and other economic reforms. These reforms, once bound by international agreement, are insulated—at least to some degree—from domestic political reversal. For some, the 'locking in' of economic policies might be considered a cost, not a benefit, because it restricts national sovereignty and may constrain national responses to special problems. But the intent of all international agreements is precisely to limit the sovereign choice of the contracting nations."

WHFTA is also needed to enforce *political* conditionalities. The Dialogue demands that "commitment to democratic governance and respect for human rights" be made requirements for membership in this "club," and points to Mexico as the first target of this policy. For NAFTA to succeed, *Convergence* argues, Mexico must "open its politics, end electoral fraud, and fully respect human rights," while Feinberg specified in Washington that the 1994 Mexican presidential elections must be monitored by the Organization of American States (OAS).

### Collective defense of 'democracy'

Challenged at the press conference as to how Ibero-American governments will respond to this limited sovereignty doctrine, Dialogue Co-Vice Chairman Rodrigo Botero explained that, while it would still be "difficult for any government to endorse a statement that national sovereignty

has disappeared," it is nonetheless a fact that, with the adoption of the Santiago Resolution of the OAS in 1992, which mandates international response to domestic political events, governments are already "on record" accepting limits to sovereignty. "That's what is behind the term, collective defense of democracy," Botero declared.

Collective defense of democracy—thus admitted to be but a politically acceptable name for limited sovereignty—is the second pillar of the Dialogue's proposed "Community." To enforce it, the Dialogue proposes that the OAS be provided with far-reaching intelligence and policing capabilities so that it can, as Feinberg put it, identify which measures, directed at the right "pressure points," can "alter the internal balance of power" of a target nation.

*Convergence* demands the broadest possible mandate for when supranational OAS intervention should be activated: in "countries where internal order has collapsed or is severely threatened, where repression and/or violence has become rampant, or where communication between contending political forces has broken down." Even before these conditions are reached, governments must "be pressed to accept international observers to monitor electoral processes—from the conduct of the campaign to the counting of the ballots."

Acceptance of these rules is not a voluntary matter. As Feinberg emphasized, the Dialogue deliberately chose to portray the sanctions which the OAS can wield to enforce its rule, as "a dagger," whose tip is formed by multinational military intervention (see *Documentation*). Because "external military involvement . . . in the domestic affairs of any nation remains an issue of extreme sensitivity in inter-American relations," *Convergence* reports that Dialogue members are divided over whether or not the time has come to *discuss publicly* the need for the OAS to develop its own military capability.

No such division of opinion exists in Dialogue ranks over the need to break up national military forces in the region, however. The Dialogue has been working on the demilitarization project since 1986, when they created a task force to study civil-military relations. What distinguishes this report, is the explicit linkage of the use of internationally run "peace processes" with the campaign to destroy the military. They demand that Guatemala, Colombia, and Peru be subjected to "persistent diplomatic and political pressure" until they negotiate power-sharing with the terrorists under supranational supervision, as occurred in El Salvador. International financial institutions must, meanwhile, "monitor military spending" of all nations to ensure that their budgets are cut.

### An IMF-NGO dictatorship

The third pillar of the Dialogue's proposed Community are programs for governments to "fight poverty." Answering the prejudices of their banker constituency, *Convergence* adopts the terminology of the eugenics movement when it answers its own question, "Why worry about poverty and

inequality?" It argues that programs are required, not to eliminate poverty, but to control the political unrest of the "underclass" expected from the *increased poverty* they admit their free trade scheme will cause.

Programs are required to control "the prospective losers from hemispheric integration," as major sections of the existing economies are shut down under the WHFTA, *Convergence* argues. "Workers who lose jobs and communities which lose important sources of livelihood as free trade transforms patterns of investment and production" might otherwise threaten the "democratic" order.

The Dialogue's proposed "anti-poverty" measures will further destroy the advanced productive capabilities of Ibero-America. Money for the hand-outs which they suggest only for the most wretched of the poor, is to come from raising taxes throughout the hemisphere, cutting military budgets, and transferring resources out of universities and hospitals, into primary schools and low-technology clinics. They promote the most unproductive "informal" sector of the economies, and identify the women of Ibero-America as the greatest "underutilized" source of work to be tapped. Their programs to enhance women's work in "subsistence agriculture and small commerce" are nothing more than a barely disguised program for population control.

The program they outline is to be imposed by external conditionalities. Writes *Convergence*: "External agencies play the lead role in setting the international development agenda, establishing global norms for confronting key problems, and fixing priorities for action. . . . International financial institutions—including the Inter-American Development Bank, World Bank and IMF—have considerable scope . . . for exerting economic pressure on unconstitutional regimes." These institutions "should support . . . initiatives to strengthen legislatures and judicial systems"—Dialogue President Feinberg suggested in Washington that the IMF should "teach" the Brazilian Congress how to draw up the country's budget—and "condition their support in ways that . . . press for such policy initiatives as tax reform and cutbacks in military expenditures."

To succeed, the financial institutions must "seek opportunities for collaboration" with that strange animal known as the non-governmental organization (NGO). Dialogue president Feinberg called for a "de facto alliance" between the IMF and the myriad of NGOs dealing with human rights, environmentalism, "civil society," etc. To help this along, the Dialogue itself has set up an umbrella organization for NGOs in Washington, D.C. to deal with Ibero-America, whose declared purpose is to "build stronger bridges between the NGO community and the U. S. government."

Thus has the supranational net already been tightened, and a new instrument of anti-national power been quietly constructed. When Feinberg crowed on Dec. 8 that "the era of the NGO has arrived in the Western Hemisphere," it was of this net that he was speaking.

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## Documentation

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### Sanctions to be imposed

*Convergence and Community: The Americas in 1993 contains a list of escalating sanctions which the Inter-American Dialogue suggests can be applied against governments which violate the rules of their would-be supranational order. The authors did not merely list the sanctions, but designed a graphic to display them, as Dialogue President Richard Feinberg emphasized, in the form of a "dagger," which the Dialogue wishes to see placed in OAS hands. The "dagger" section reads as follows:*

#### Political and diplomatic

- Denial of travel visas to coup leaders and close supporters.
- Suspension of the offending country's membership in sub-regional organizations (such as the Group of Rio) and in broader regional institutions (such as the OAS).
- Exclusion from Latin America and Western Hemisphere caucuses in international agencies.
- Withdrawal of ambassadors.
- Withdrawal of formal diplomatic recognition.
- Direct financial and political assistance to democratic opposition groups.

#### Economic

- Suspension of bilateral economic assistance programs (except, perhaps, for humanitarian aid).
- Suspension of trade preferences.
- Embargo of vital exports and imports.
- Embargo of all trade.
- Suspension of all economic and commercial ties.

#### Military

- Termination of military aid.
- Withdrawal of foreign military missions.
- Embargo of military supplies.
- Imposition of a blockade.
- Multilateral military intervention against the de facto government.

#### 'Architecture' of supranational rule

*Convergence proposes that four new supranational institutions be created to oversee the destruction of national sovereignty in the hemisphere, in addition to broadening the powers of the already-existing Inter-American judicial and human rights system and OAS. These include:*

- 1) A new multilateral organization to "guide and coordi-

nate progress toward a Western Hemisphere Economic Community." The organization could "evolve from the proposed NAFTA commission," or be set up through collaboration between the Inter-American Development Bank, OAS, and the Economic Commission on Latin America of the United Nations. Private business, trade unions and non-governmental organizations are also to be involved.

This institution's assignment is "to collect, systematize and disseminate statistics on trade, capital flows and macro-economic indicators; to analyze issues and policies related to regional integration . . . including . . . harmonization of economic regulations; to review and evaluate proposed trade and related agreements among nations; and to serve as a source of expertise and technical assistance to individual countries. Over time, it could be entrusted with more sensitive tasks such as defining rules to guide negotiations, mediating negotiations, investigating violations of trade and economic accords, and settling disputes over many aspects of hemispheric integration."

2) A Pan-American Environmental Organization. This suggested institution should be modeled either on the Pan American Health Organization or the Inter-American Human Rights Commission, and given policing attributes.

Its assignment: "to gather and analyze data on environmental issues, furnish technical assistance, evaluate compliance with agreed-upon targets, and spotlight violations."

3) Establishing an OAS intelligence capability to advise OAS diplomatic missions. The centerpiece of the Dialogue's proposed restructuring of the OAS is the expansion or transformation of the newly formed *Democracy Unit* in the OAS into an independent agency with full policing powers. *Convergence* proposes three means to accomplish this: provide the OAS's new Unit for Democracy with a fact-finding and analytic capacity; transform the unit into an "Inter-American Commission on Democracy," modeled on the Inter-American Commission Human Rights (HRC), with its own governing board and independent mandate; or, expanding the mandate and resources of the HRC itself to include responsibility for promoting and defending democracy. This is necessary because:

"Good quality OAS decisionmaking requires accurate, timely, and nuanced assessments of the key political actors (including the military) and their changing positions and alliances, the points at which different kinds of pressure would be most effective, and the main options for proceeding. Such assessments require continuing consultations across the political spectrum and among many different sectors of society."

Therefore, this institution must "have the capacity to gather and analyze information on countries where the constitutional order has been swept aside or is under siege. . . . During a period of crisis, it should be able to draw on a wider, previously organized network of academic and policy experts. . . . At other times, staff would be responsible for monitoring democratic progress in the Americas and for in-



Bruce Babbitt (right) and Peter Bell spell out the Inter-American Dialogue's plan for ending national sovereignty, at a Washington press conference on Dec. 8.

vestigating potentially eruptive situations. . . . [It must] establish regular channels of communication," perhaps through "informal advisory bodies," with "the multitude of non-governmental organizations, foreign and national, that are active in such areas as human rights, humanitarian aid, refugee protection, press freedom, and judicial and electoral reform," so that the OAS could "make use of them to reinforce its own efforts."

4) Establish "a permanent forum" to oversee the demilitarization of the nation states:

"The OAS should consider organizing a permanent forum of civilian defense ministers, armed service commanders, and key members of legislatures, to develop regionwide norms of civil-military relations and the evolving missions of armed forces in the Americas. Clearly, such norms would not immediately be adopted by all armies, but they could lead to a growing convergence of attitudes and behavior as has happened on such matters as the conduct of elections and economic management."

5) Strengthen Inter-American judicial powers to police "human rights" violations by security forces. The HRC should be given even greater powers to police and prosecute the military in the region. *Convergence* states:

"Western Hemisphere countries should expand the resources available to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the associated Court and Institute, and vigorously pursue the findings and recommendations of these agencies. Governments and multilateral institutions should also give careful attention to the reports and recommendations of the many credible non-governmental organizations professionally monitoring human rights. Such actions could help diminish the violence and human rights abuses perpetrated by Latin American security forces."