

Report from Rio by Silvia Palacios

A new 'special relationship'?

U.S. Defense Secretary Perry's efforts to commit Brazil to a Bush-style "new world order" ran into a snag on the Amazon.

In 1975, then-Brazilian President Gen. Ernesto Geisel broke the "special military relationship" which Brazil had maintained with the United States for decades. Geisel was responding to the Carter administration's sabotage of the nuclear energy agreements signed between Brazil and Germany.

In November of this year, U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry traveled to Brazil with the clear intention of reestablishing that special relationship. He did so on the eve of the Dec. 9-11 Miami summit of Ibero-American and Caribbean heads of state with President Bill Clinton, a summit which could serve to define whether hemispheric relations will find a new basis of understanding, or whether the inheritance of George Bush and his new world order will continue to hold sway.

Perry did little to change the Bush policy guidelines regarding Brazil: The only concrete offer the defense secretary made conformed to the rotten agenda of the Inter-American Dialogue for new security relations between the United States and its neighbors. The Dialogue is an Anglo-philic policy grouping that promotes drug legalization and demilitarization.

In a conference with high-level military officials held on Nov. 18 in Brasilia, whose theme was repeated in his remarks to the Foreign Ministry, Perry in effect welcomed the policy of technological apartheid that has been imposed on Brazil from abroad as a means of paralyzing such high-technology programs as nuclear energy. He observed that Brazil's "adhesion to non-proliferation is decisive and a

real sign of global leadership." He then mentioned that he hoped Brazil would also abandon its aerospace program and adopt the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR).

The American defense secretary also emphasized that he would like Brazil as an ally of the United States in one-worldist operations under the command of the United Nations: "To the extent that Brazilian world economic interests grow, so too should its interests with regard to security." The United States, stated Perry, would like to see Brazil participate in joint peacekeeping operations, in helping victims of natural disasters, and in promoting international humanitarian aid efforts. He also invited the Brazilian Armed Forces to undertake police functions in fighting the drug trade—one of the Inter-American Dialogue's campaigns.

Perry did not hesitate to put forth all the arguments used for dismantling the Armed Forces, including suggesting the creation of a Defense Ministry headed by a civilian. "The United States wants to hold periodic meetings with all the defense ministers of Latin America," he said.

Secretary Perry and the one-worldist bureaucracy at the Brazilian Foreign Ministry have been cooking up a new Brazil-U.S. military pact, and everything indicates that this will be one of the key initiatives toward the Armed Forces on the part of the next President, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, a founding member of the Inter-American Dialogue with whom Perry had a warm meeting.

In essence, Perry's offer was that if Brazil wants a place as a permanent

member of the U.N. Security Council, as the Foreign Ministry has proposed, Brazil will have to comply with all of the above. "Brazil should assume new commitments toward maintaining world security; from a regional power, Brazil is becoming a global power," Perry stated before the audience of military officials.

To give continuity to his "good will" rhetoric, Perry became the first U.S. defense secretary in several years to visit the Brazilian Amazon. He visited the Amazon city of Manaus, and was at the jungle warfare training center, where he backed efforts to limit Brazilian sovereignty over the Amazon—George Bush's policy!

According to the daily *Correio Brasiliense* on Nov. 16, Perry's agenda included an appeal to the Brazilian government to demarcate the Amazon lands of the Yanomami Indians, since President Clinton was being pressured by several senators on the matter. The Yanomami reserve was decreed, in violation of national sovereignty, during the corrupt presidency of Fernando Collor de Mello.

When Bush, in his day, threatened Brazil over the Amazon question, a great movement of civil-military resistance began to emerge; Perry was quick to discover that re-opening the issue would prove his first diplomatic setback.

While Perry was still in Brazil, President Itamar Franco gave one of his strongest speeches ever to a meeting of the National Council of the Amazon, which includes 16 cabinet ministers and 9 governors. Franco denounced those who would meddle in the Amazon: "Interests foreign to the Amazon community have always tried, are still trying, and will probably continue to try to turn the wealth of that territory into a kind of reserve for their exclusive future use."