

to Afghanistan.

Just as President Khatami was engaged in talks in Islamabad, Russian Atomic Energy Minister Alexander Rumyantsev was in Tehran, to work out the final details of his country's nuclear cooperation program with Iran. This immediately made headlines in the U.S. and British press, where the cry was: Russia is supplying "axis of evil" member Iran, with nuclear technology!

Russia and Nuclear Energy

Rumyantsev took the wind out of the sails of such war-mongering propaganda, telling a press conference at his ministry, on his return from Iran on Dec. 27, that the main purpose of the trip was to check the construction of the nuclear power plant in Bushehr. This plant, begun by the German firm Siemens, had been abandoned at the time of the 1979 Iranian revolution, and later reactivated with Russian assistance. It is to be fully operational by the end of 2003. Rumyantsev stressed that Russia considers Iran both an economic and a strategic partner. As for the scare stories about Iran's "atomic bomb," he said repeatedly that Iran was using nuclear technology for purely peaceful purposes, that it has no nuclear weapons programs and will not have them in the foreseeable future. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) continues to inspect Iran's facilities regularly, and has never found anything suspect. In 2001, Rumyantsev said, the IAEA made 60 checks of Iran's nuclear facilities, including Bushehr, and concluded that there were no military programs. A similar number of checks occurred in 2002. He confirmed that Russia and Iran are working on a long-term agreement, in areas including atomic energy; plans have mentioned up to six further nuclear plants over the next 12-15 years.

The first step is the completion of Bushehr. Some 1,200 people are working there, 40% of them Ukrainian and 60% Russian. Their numbers are expected to increase over 6-8 months, because of the need for extra manpower for the assembly of heavy equipment. "The first batch of fuel for the Bushehr nuclear plant produced by Russia is ready and packed. Russia is trying to make necessary preparations for its shipment," Rumyantsev was quoted by IRNA. Supplying the fuel is contingent on a signed agreement for the return of the spent fuel to Russia. This agreement, he explained, had been reached in principle, and President Khatami had said Iran favored the idea. Now the final text is being worked out by the respective ministries; he expected it to be signed in January.

All things considered, Iran's foreign policy effort to secure regional stability through mutually beneficial economic cooperation agreements, is eminently viable. If it can forge economic ties between Pakistan and India, establishing the basis for trust, while strengthening its economic and strategic relations to Russia, the entire region will benefit. Khatami should be taken at his word: "This is our region, and we must use all our available resources for the cause of development of the region."

No 'Allende Solution' For the Chávez Problem

This statement and dossier on the Venezuelan crisis, and the history of Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez, was issued on Dec. 21, 2002 by the LaRouche in 2004 Presidential campaign.

U.S. Presidential pre-candidate Lyndon LaRouche expressed his concern over the dangerous and rapidly degenerating political situation in Venezuela, and in particular over the added complications arising from the highly unstable and erratic behavior of President Hugo Chávez. Chávez's apparent personal state of clinical insanity represents a significant security threat to the Americas. This, added to the overall explosive situation throughout the hemisphere, threatens to become the detonator which sets off the entire bomb.

LaRouche emphasized that, in his capacity as a leading candidate for the Democratic Party nomination for the 2004 Presidential elections, it would be negligent on his part not to draw attention to this urgent matter, and to emphasize the urgency of choosing the best path towards its solution.

There is substantial evidence that Chávez is actually clinically insane. This evidence, which we indicate below, must be duly assessed, LaRouche urged. If Chávez is as insane as appears to be the case, then a prompt, quiet, non-bloodily solution must be found and agreed upon by the relevant parties, under which Chávez would be induced to step down from office, perhaps with the assistance of suitable friendly professional advice.

LaRouche emphasized that such an approach is called for immediately, lest others might concoct very bad alternatives to the current Venezuelan chaos, such as coups, assassinations, and other approaches that will only trigger a chain reaction and spread the problem across the region. LaRouche stated emphatically, "We don't want an 'Allende solution' to the Chávez problem."

LaRouche also rejected the idea, currently promoted by the Inter-American Dialogue and other bankers' think-tanks, of using the Organization of American States (OAS) to orchestrate a supra-national intervention into Venezuelan affairs, in violation of that country's national sovereignty. This mechanism was employed in 2000 by Wall Street and the U.S. State Department, in order to overthrow the Fujimori government in Peru, which established a terrible precedent for the hemisphere.

LaRouche reiterated that his policy for the Americas is in the tradition of John Quincy Adams, Abraham Lincoln, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt, where a community of principle

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.