

Kirchner Takes On Regional Warmongers

by Cynthia R. Rush

In an Oct. 19 ceremony before 4,000 people in the Bolivian city of Santa Cruz, Bolivian President Evo Morales and Argentine President Néstor Kirchner signed an historic 20-year “strategic association,” by which Bolivia will sell Argentina much-needed natural gas, and the two countries will collaborate closely in a wide range of mutually beneficial projects for cooperation in energy, infrastructure, and economic development.

The agreement, which Kirchner hailed as “a fundamental strategic step” and “a real example of integration,” includes provisions for the two nations’ state oil firms—Bolivia’s YPF and Argentina’s ENARSA—to work on joint projects in both countries, including the building of a gas pipeline in northern Argentina that by 2010, will transport 27.7 million cubic meters of Bolivian natural gas daily into that energy-starved region. Argentina will also help Bolivia build processing plants so that it can industrialize.

Through these initiatives, Kirchner is boldly intervening against the synarchist bankers allied with the Cheney-Bush Administration, who think that by plunging Bolivia into social and economic chaos, they can derail the efforts of the informal Ibero-American “Presidents’ Club” which is seeking alternatives to the International Monetary Fund’s predatory policies. After foreign multinationals and allied financial interests sabotaged Evo Morales’ plans to nationalize his country’s hydrocarbon resources, which is the cornerstone of his government’s policy, the Bolivian President has faced escalating provocations from international synarchy’s local left- and right-wing assets.

An ‘Historic Act’

Kirchner knows that an out-of-control Bolivia could destabilize the entire region. In Santa Cruz, the capital of the province which Ibero-America’s enemies would split off as an oil republic, the Argentine President spoke forcefully. He told a cheering audience waving Argentine and Bolivian flags that Morales had specifically wanted to sign their agreement in that city “face to face with Bolivian society and all of Latin America.”

And, Kirchner announced, “We came with open arms to show our solidarity, and to say that the sister Republic of Argentina has come to embrace its sister Republic of Bolivia to build the *Patria* that we all need. . . . We know the battle that Bolivia is waging against old interests. . . . If some rogues

don’t invest what they have to invest, have no doubt that Argentina is going to be helping with the needed investments.”

He turned to Morales, whose government mobilized rallies last week in the face of widespread coup rumors, and told him: “I admire the work which you all are carrying out. Don’t lose heart in the face of these obstacles; have strength, much courage, and much passion and decision for the construction of a new era.”

Morales called the agreement an “historic act” and pointedly called for the state oil firms of Bolivia, Argentina, and Brazil to work together to develop the region. This is particularly important because Brazil’s nominally state-owned Petrobras has functioned more like a private company, exacerbating tensions with Bolivia by repudiating Morales’ nationalization of hydrocarbons. Referring to Brazil, Morales said, “We need them, just as they need us, and we are obligated to live together like a married couple—without divorce.”

That appeal was no doubt welcomed by Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, whose desire to assist Bolivia has been hampered by his electoral race against right-wing free-market advocate Geraldo Alckmin, whom he will face in a second round of elections on Nov. 1. Advised by former President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Alckmin has attacked Lula for being “submissive” to Morales, failing to defend Petrobras’s right to ride roughshod over the Bolivian economy while making deals with Venezuela’s Hugo Chávez.

Regional Cooperation Is Crucial

Kirchner doesn’t face the same constraints that Lula does. In comments made Oct. 18, statesman Lyndon LaRouche emphasized that what Kirchner has done in coordination with Chávez, in organizing other governments around an alternative to International Monetary Fund insanity, is of great importance. But missing in this geometry is Mexico, a nation which, until synarchist bankers took power in 1982, served historically as a continental leader in defense of sovereignty and economic development.

In this context, attempts to legitimize the electoral fraud that occurred in Mexico’s July 2 Presidential elections, and impose Felipe Calderón of the synarchist National Action Party (PAN) as the next President, is a disaster, LaRouche said. He added that were a Mexico committed to a defense of the general welfare to ally with Argentina, problems afflicting the rest of the region could more readily be resolved.

For this reason, the synarchist financiers behind the Bush-Cheney Administration are determined to prevent the real winner of the July 2 elections, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, from becoming President. He has mobilized the Mexican people around the fundamental existential issue facing the country: Either there is a government committed

to defending the general welfare and sovereign economic development, and ending the unbridled economic looting carried out by all governments since 1982, under the aegis of “modernization” and globalization; or the free-market “Mexico, Inc.” that Calderón’s controllers seek to impose, will mean the end of Mexico’s constitutional republic.

Moreover, every Ibero-American nation that has suffered from decades of neo-liberal economic policies is grappling with the same existential issue, now made more urgent by the crash of the global financial system and the necessity of creating the New Bretton Woods proposed by Lyndon LaRouche.

Changing the Subject

Aware that they are losing their grip on the region, reflected by the motion of the Ibero-American Presidents’ Club, synarchist financiers are desperately trying to change the subject and focus people’s attention on the bogus issue of the “threat” that Chávez represents to the region, supposedly stemming from the military cooperation agreement he signed with Bolivia last May, as well as Venezuela’s bid to win a non-permanent seat on the United Nations’ Security Council.

Inside Argentina, right-wing synarchists are trying to build up a climate of conflict between the “right” and the “left,” reminiscent of the 1970s, charging Kirchner with leading a vendetta against the Armed Forces—hundreds of officers charged with human rights violations are being prosecuted—and threatening Argentina’s republican system by allying with Chávez. But the real issue behind their accusations that Kirchner is a power-hungry “authoritarian,” is his insistence on an economic policy not dictated by failed agencies such as the IMF and World Bank.

During his Sept. 20 speech at the United Nations General Assembly, Kirchner issued a stinging attack on the IMF and called for reforming “the international financial architecture such that it will lead to the progress of the poorest nations.”

In early October, former Spanish Premier José María Aznar, George Bush’s Francoite ally, and Felipe Calderón deployed to several Ibero-American nations to ratchet up the anti-Venezuela hysteria. Both men made a point of visiting Chile, the great “success story” of synarchist bankers George Shultz, Felix Rohatyn, and “economic hit man” John Train.

The fascist cabal that installed dictator Augusto Pinochet in 1973 is concerned that President Michelle Bachelet might slip from their control, given the global crisis and Ibero-American moves away from the IMF. Although constrained by the structure of the “Concertación” coalition government created by Pinochet to ensure that future Presidents would be locked into his “Chicago Boy” free-market model after he left office, Bachelet has made a point of cooperating with other Ibero-American Presidents and was leaning toward supporting Venezuela when UN voting began Oct. 16.

Aznar came in with both pistols blazing, ranting that some Ibero-American nations had fallen “into the grips of populism” and warning that Venezuela represented a “grave threat” to the region. He wasted no time in whipping up the right-wing Alliance for Chile with his Bush-like attacks on “Islamofascism,” while Calderón sweet-talked legislators about how he would like to install a Chilean-style coalition government in Mexico. While he courted the Alliance for Chile, Calderón made a point of saying that the PAN identifies most closely with Chile’s Christian Democracy, nominally a member of Bachelet’s Concertación coalition.

No surprise here. Shortly after Calderón departed, this party that helped to overthrow Salvador Allende threatened Bachelet that it would pull out of the governing coalition should she back Venezuela at the United Nations. Under enormous pressure from the Bush Administration and its local allies, Bachelet opted to abstain.

A New Chaco War?

Synarchists are also using the military cooperation between Bolivia and Venezuela to hype Dick Cheney’s plans for unleashing regional war.

At the end of September, Paraguayan legislators and media charged that Venezuela’s military assistance to Bolivia, and plans to build bases along the border, are proof of a Bolivian “arms race” that threatens Paraguay, possibly including an aerial attack on the country—a ludicrous charge, considering that Bolivia has no Air Force! Evo Morales charged earlier that month that the Bush Administration is behind “a campaign to get us to fight each other,” as occurred 70 years ago when Standard Oil and Royal Dutch Shell manipulated the two nations into the brutal 1932-35 Chaco War.

From Chile, the Pinochet crowd growled that the military treaty is a threat to the entire region and to Chile in particular. *El Mercurio*, whose owners helped plan the 1973 coup against Salvador Allende, editorialized Oct. 11 that given the “convulsed regional panorama” and “Bolivia’s institutional precariousness,” it would make sense for the Bush Administration to declare Chile a “non-NATO ally,” as occurred some years ago with Argentina, when then-President Carlos Menem boasted of his government’s “carnal relations” with the United States.

President Bachelet responded that she saw no threat to Chile from the Venezuela-Bolivia treaty, adding that it is their “sovereign right” to make treaties with anyone they please. In Paraguay, Defense Minister Roberto González stated on Oct. 16 that the treaty in no way constitutes a threat to Paraguay. In fact, according to the Oct. 17 edition of the daily *ABC*, Paraguay’s military leadership is examining the hypothesis that certain “U.S. interests” are trying to provoke conflict between the two countries.

“Rather than conflict with Bolivia,” González said, “I prefer to look at the integration processes [under way in the region], for the common good.”