

Special Report:

Peru, Under Fire, Leads Bloc of Anti-Fascists At Military Conference

Oct. 25 (IPS) — Representatives of the Peruvian and Panamanian militaries led an anti-fascist intervention into the Eleventh Conference of American Armies in Montevideo, Uruguay, this week, to blast away at bloodthirsty calls for a continent-wide anti-communist crusade and the unleashing of fascist military attacks on the pro-development Peruvian regime. The purpose of the conference was to lay the basis for the detonation of the RAND War of the Pacific scenario against the Brezhnev's recent statement that detente would not mean the end of ideological struggle by declaring that detente is entirely insufficient without "ideological detente." The Uruguayan Commander in Chief of the Army extolled the "Uruguayan model", where the Military has outlawed the Communist Party and all trade unions or cultural organizations of marxist tendency as a prelude to the military "dismantling of the powerful guerrilla group, the Tupamaros". Argentine Army chief General Videla added that in order to end subversion, "we will kill everyone necessary."

The Brazilian Chief of Staff backed up his call for an integrated anti-subversion drive by warning that the movement of international communists will do everything to repeat another Portugal. This is a direct attack on Peru, touted the hysterical Rockefeller press as a potential Portugal.

Development Vs Guns

The development opposition to a continentwide military organization—a "Latin American NATO"—was government of Peru and the destruction of any potential communist-led resistance to that scenario.

This was made unmistakably clear by the Chief of Staff of the Chilean Army who proposed the institutionalization of a continental military organization under the Organization of American States and who broke the Chilean government's previous public commitments to peace

and friendship with neighboring Peru. The Chilean, clearly talking about Peru, attacked those countries, "some military controlled or influenced," which negotiate or vacillate" in relation to "marxist subversion." He further motivated assaults on Peru by noting the Peruvian refusal to endorse the rabid anti-communism of the meeting that the "enthronement of socialist leaning regimes harbors the risk of extending into neighboring spheres."

The conference concluded with a resolution to separate from hemispheric defense arrangements those countries that establish governments of marxist orientation.

Leftist Peruvian Chief of Staff Fernandez Maldonado came to the meeting prepared to launch his own offensive for the peace and development forces on the continent and stated bluntly at the start that the Peruvian government is "humanist and socialist." Before leaving for the conference, Maldonado put forward Peru's desire for peace and friendship with all countries in Latin America and for integration and cooperation to solve common problems. On arriving in Montevideo, he swiftly organized Panama, Ecuador, and Venezuela, the latter two key "swing" countries for RAND's war push in Latin America, to issue a statement objecting to the rigid anti-communism being pushed by the U.S. and the other Latin American countries. In another communique, Peru and Panama attacked the anti-Marxist tone of the conference as "an instrument to serve economic dependence and the multinationals." Panama also hit at the "right-wing subversion" of the transnationals' use of the natural resources of the weaker regions.

Maldonado defined the common problems facing Latin American nations: "There is no integral security over the rubble of misery, of hunger and illiteracy, of the lack of a secure roof, of liberating education, of health and social welfare."

The gorilla counterthrust was a heightened attack on the "international marxist aggression." The "international Communist parties" were singled out as the key infiltrators, the main enemies in the present struggle against "subversion." Uruguayan President Bordaberry, a leading fascist on the continent, directly answered Soviet Communist Party head Leonid initiated more than a month ago by Mexican President Luis Echeverria when he announced without apology that Mexico would not participate at the CIA-designed military conference. Maldonado's attack on the gorilla regimes at the Uruguayan conference was based on a coordinated campaign by pro-development forces: last week Mexico issued an official attack on the CIA-fed Latin American arms race and supported Peru's drive for arms control in the Andean region, targeted by RAND for war.

Furthermore, the creation last week of the Latin American Economic System (SELA) as a development bloc on the continent is the alternative to solve the economic crisis wracking the continent. This week the Soviet press hailed SELA as an anti-imperialist opportunity for development.

Even within the U.S. State Department itself, there are increasingly loud murmurings against the gorilla offensive. Saturday Review published an article last week by a State Department official attacking the U.S. focus on arms sales to Latin America, a key part of the RAND scenario. He stressed that instead, economics must be the keystone of future U.S. relations with Latin America. The official concluded that the continued military assistance to Latin American countries "defies logic" in light of the needs for public health, education etc. If the U.S. does not act soon to change the present mad policies toward the continent he warned, "the smoldering animosities will turn open, angry and ugly."