

military ties to the nations of the Warsaw Pact.

The step-by-step negotiations as the Carter cabinet is now carrying them out will only lead to a headlong confrontation with Cuba and the Soviet Union itself — and that is precisely their intention.

Carter made clear his adherence to the Linowitz Report's perspective last weekend when he told reporters, "The main thing that concerns me about Cuba is the human-rights questions, political prisoners and so forth. The release of "nine" CIA agents jailed in Cuba and several anti-Castro Cubans convicted of treason are among the "gestures" the Linowitz Report suggests would be appropriate for the Cubans before negotiations begin. Cuban Vice President Carlos Rafael Rodriguez identified Cuba's policy on this question last week in London. Cuba has no political prisoners, he stated flatly.

Congressman Jonathan Bingham (D-NY) returned from Cuba this week after five days of talks with Cuban officials, including a reported seven hour meeting with Premier Castro. The message Bingham had for Carter is that Cuba is not willing to begin negotiations on the normalization of relations until *after* the trade embargo has been lifted. The lifting of the embargo as a precondition for negotiations has been a long-standing position of the Cubans.

Whether or not the embargo is lifted sooner rather than later, this does not change the use to which Carter plans to put the human rights issue. As one source close to the State Department said this week, "You cannot separate trade and human rights, at least not regarding Cuba." Even if President Carter ends the embargo on Cuban exports of nickel, sugar, rum, shellfish, cigars, and other

commodities to the U.S., these will be subject to prohibitively high tariffs under the 1974 Trade Act. And under the provisions of that act, low tariffs and Export-Import Bank credits are linked to free emigration from the trading country.

Other concessions provocatively demanded of the Cuban government include disavowal of aid to anti-imperialist governments and movements in the Third World, withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola, and compensation for U.S. firms nationalized after the 1959 revolution. To these, the Carter-Trilateral cabinet have recently added "concern" over Cuban plans to build a nuclear power plant, supposedly because of fears that an impossible "accident" at the plant might "endanger Florida's coastline."

The danger of the Carter confrontation policy has been heightened by the failure of Fidel and other Cuban officials to call a hawk a hawk. The Cubans know the Carter team to be the retreads of the Kennedy administration that carried out the abortive 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba and orchestrated the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. But Fidel, adhering to the foolish policy of the Soviets with respect to "grand deception" postures toward Carter, has given Carter's speech pronouncements an air of legitimacy by praising him as a man with a "sense of morals," who "may abide by...the universally accepted principles among people." Such statements only serve to increase the Carter cabinet's maneuvering room, for a war program which will publically emerge for what it is at the moment that the Cuban government appears "intransigent" in the face of demands that it abandon its revolution.

Venezuela's CAP Threatened With Coup, Assassination

President Carlos Andres Perez now faces the gravest threat to his government and person since his inauguration two years ago. CAP's opposition has publicly stated its intentions in the country's press: scandals, subversion of the armed forces, a coup and even perhaps assassination of CAP. All signs are that the "internal opposition" to CAP is being directed from the White House.

A month ago, spokesmen for the major opposition party, COPEI, declared that CAP must go the way of Nixon in the U.S. His replacement, it was said, should be a "Venezuelan Jimmy Carter." Charges of widespread corruption and a "crisis of leadership" within the top levels of the government, now receiving big play in the press, followed immediately upon COPEI Party Secretary Pedro Pablo Aguilar's personal discussions with Carter in Washington, at his first "Prayer Breakfast" as president.

COPEI-linked columnist Tarre Murzi made it clear in the Caracas papers that no mere traditional party opposition is involved. Venezuela's democracy is still "immature," after an earlier statement that the country was

not back to "October 1945" — the date Standard Oil agent Betancourt and allied military circles pulled a coup against the government of Medina Angarita.

Assassination and terror capability has been activated in Venezuela's extensive Cuban exile community. A well-known front-group for CIA-controlled Cuban exiles in an ad in a Caracas daily last weekend, warned CAP he could soon become "another Kennedy." Terrorist leader, Orlando Bosch, presently under arrest in Venezuela for his role in the bombing of a Cuban airline last September which resulted in 73 deaths, made the scenario more specific. From jail, Bosch told the press that Castro would be sending terrorists to Venezuela — distinguished as exiles — who would carry out a wave of assassinations including high government officials!

Border tensions have been exacerbated with Venezuela's three neighbors: Colombia, Guyana and Brazil. With the country supposedly surrounded by menacing nations, the military is much more easily aroused against the government under the guise of guaranteeing "national security." Eliot Janeway's now famous piece in the *Washington Star* Jan. 5 launched the ensuing

escalating pressures around Venezuela's borders. Aiming to goad Brazil into invading Venezuela, Jane-way's article virtually promised Secretary of State Vance's support for a Brazilian invasion.

CAP's counterstrategy has been straightforward: detente with Brazil eased by oil sales on favorable terms, and consolidation of the Colombia and Guyana fronts through negotiated accords backed by economic integration. When CAP began meeting with the country's opposition parties almost a month ago however, to discuss proposals for a resolution to the long-standing border dispute with Colombia, his proposals were met with cries of "sell-out." COPEI's official party position was a blanket "no" to any discussion of joint exploration of the area's resources, precisely the proposal the press reported CAP made. COPEI's ex-Foreign Minister Aristedes Calvani threatened that the population was "emotionally charged" about any loss of sovereignty.

Last week Ramon J. Velasquez, the powerful head of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, called for a plebiscite to be held within the Armed Forces on the border negotiations! Velasquez' attempt to pull the military into the factional debate was immediately and quite bluntly rejected by CAP, who reminded Velasquez that the Armed Forces are "obedient, not deliberative organisms," as any jurist should know. CAP's statement

received immediate support from the Minister of Defense, Alvarez Torres.

But Velasquez' call has already sent rabid nationalists into action. A group calling itself the "Comite Rafael Urdantea," reported by reliable sources in Caracas to be organizing an Argentine Triple-A style death squad capability, took out an ad in a Caracas paper backing the call for a plebiscite in the Armed Forces, and blustering that "traitors" to Venezuelan interests will be stopped.

CAP has continued to use trade and economic cooperation as the keystone of his defense. Greatly expanded economic integration was, in areas other than the disputed Gulf area, announced between Colombia and Venezuela following last weekend's meeting between the country's two finance ministers. The plan includes the formation of mixed national companies for joint investment in agroindustrial projects in Venezuela and technification of coke production in Colombia, as the initial steps in longer-term development plans for the border region. The post of "flying ambassador" was created in both countries as well, designated specifically to handle the increased commercial and economic deals.

Simultaneously, a trade mission in Guyana is holding discussions on joint development of fishing and wood industries and increased trade between the two countries.

Third World Think Tank Announces Study Of Debt Burden

On Jan. 25 the Third World Center for Economic and Social Studies (CEESTEM), directed by former Mexican president Luis Echeverria, opened its doors to invited guests and the press to provide a progress report on the CEESTEM's activities. The Center was inaugurated in mid-September 1976 in the presence of United Nations Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim, and it is developing its activities in close cooperation with U.N. bodies. The following are excerpts of that report, delivered by CEESTEM spokesman Adolfo Aguilar and reprinted in the Mexican daily El Dia Jan. 27.

CEESTEM has initiated its task on the basis of a fundamental theoretical assumption: underdevelopment cannot be viewed solely as an economic phenomenon or in light of simple indicators and statistical variables. Underdevelopment is a by-product of unequal development, an historic outcome of the international division of labor and colonial heritage ... In less than three decades, the population explosion will double the populations of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Never before in the course of human history has there been a situation with such characteristics. The new needs in education, nutrition, employment, sanitation, and urban and political-economic matters is completely without precedent... In many industrial countries, because of unequal development, an opposite situation is arising: declining birth rates and the progressive, accelerating aging of the population pyramid. Magnitudes vary, to be certain, but

not the urgent obligation to confront the global contradictions of our time with a scientific spirit. Without this prior analytical effort, positive results will be minimal while conflicts will become increasingly greater.

The world economic crisis is reflected, materially, in inflation, monetary instability and the general deterioration of job opportunities. Three hundred million people are jobless in the Third World; 17 or 18 million, according to estimates, in the industrial nations. Juxtaposing these two figures would be irrelevant, since unemployment in the peripheral regions is of a structural nature, and points to the existence, as new categories, of underemployment and marginalization as essential and precise features of social disintegration.

In one way or another, this is a global crisis, a crisis of the monetary system and the way in which the economy is organized, based on the irrational exploitation of resources and people.

The concrete result of these facts is multifaceted: soaring increases in the public debt of the Third World; loss of capital and the subsequent decrease of the ability to invest; the increasing Third World balance of payments deficits; and the growing contradiction between rational options for development and the whimsical suppositions of utopian change. As a result, violence and irrationality today have become a heavy burden on all peoples.

The lack of international solidarity, the prediction of the World Bank that resources allocated for aid will be