

For if debt servicing is to be honored then money can only come through the implementation of the most vicious and suicidal austerity policy.

How will the United States government address these questions at the ASEAN conference? The record is not encouraging. In fact, the U.S. is currently backing the policy of the IMF in respect to debt and monetary questions, and using the bogus "free enterprise" line toward the development question.

A viable policy can be developed upon the foundations laid at Bremen and Bonn. That is a Grand Design conception based upon rapid development of U.S. capital exports, particularly nuclear energy. Financing could easily be arranged through U.S. cooperation in the European Monetary system proposed at Bremen, in conjunction with rapidly expanded U.S. Export-Import Bank financing.

U.S. Dirigist Leadership

There is ample precedent for this Grand Design thinking. Prominent nuclear physicist Dr. Edward Teller, while holding a series of lectures in Indonesia in the fall of 1975, proposed that the U.S. design, construct, and provisionally operate an entire network of nuclear power plants in Indonesia. He proposed financing them through oil exports to the U.S. Such a proposal, he said, had been developed by the Atomic Energy Commission under the stewardship of Dixie Lee Ray, current governor of Washington state.

Prime Minister Fukuda of Japan also called for U.S. cooperation in the development of nuclear energy in third world countries while visiting the U.S. last spring. Also, the Japanese have called for reducing their trade surplus with the U.S. through the construction of floating power plants built in Japan, and utilizing U.S.-manufactured generating equipment. The units would then be sold to developing countries on easy terms.

The failure of the U.S. to think in these terms could very well result in what General MacArthur warned of in 1951. The U.S. "would in time surrender. . . the moral, if not political leadership of the eastern hemisphere."

MacArthur, following his dismissal by President Truman from the Korean Command in 1951, warned this country that mainland China and its British supporters posed a danger to world peace. The warning holds true today. If the U.S. continues to have no policy for the region, except the so-called "China option," then Southern Asia will be opened to destructive Chinese-orchestrated tensions, such as those built up now between Cambodia and Vietnam, and China and Vietnam. The ASEAN countries could be pushed toward an accommodation with mainland China and away from the type of cooperative development policies with Indochina, Japan, Europe, and the U.S., all of which are in global vital interests.

—Dean Andromidas

Colombian Peasant Group Calls For High-Technology Development

Colombia's oldest and largest federation of small farmers, the National Agrarian Federation, has begun a campaign for advanced technology in agriculture and industry as the only way to pull the country out of economic misery and into the development policies

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flowing from the Bremen and Bonn economic summit meetings this month. In addition to opening up Colombia's vast market for farm-related machinery, the federation campaign focuses attention on Colombia's huge uranium reserves, and its industrial potential.

The federation, known as FANAL, called on the rest of the farm federations in the country to form a coordinating group that would fight for the development of nuclear energy, the mechanization of the countryside, the expansion of food production, and the education of the peasantry.

The FANAL program for the proposed Agrarian Council puts immediate pressure on the newly elected Colombian government of Julio Cesar Turbay to follow the path of Mexican development instead of World Bank austerity. The World Bank's focus in Colombia is on

appropriate technology—manual labor projects that keep unskilled labor unskilled and rule out high technology—such as tractors—as too costly.

At this point, Turbay backs the current agricultural policy, the Integrated Rural Development program, which is based on World Bank studies and suggestions. The World Bank forces are hoping that Turbay won't want to rock the boat, especially since he will be taking power August 7 in the midst of a very unstable situation. In particular, opposing domestic factions aligned with the World Bank are ready to use labor and peasant unrest over the decline in living standards to keep Turbay in line, and, if necessary, to overthrow him. Turbay's only road to a stable government is via the development programs outlined by FANAL.

Nuclear Power Key

The FANAL initiative is bound to have an impact throughout Latin America as well as the rest of the Third World because it puts the "appropriate technology" schemes on the line. The United Nations environment program has chosen a well-known Colombian agriculture project, Las Gaviotas, as the "appropriate technology" model for the development of tropical regions in the Third World. The Gaviotas program is funded by the Ford and Rockefeller foundations and calls for

developing "intermediate technologies" like the windmill so that the area's "sensitive ecology" will not be disturbed. This is exactly the primitive mentality that FANAL wants to eradicate in order to bring the country into a nuclear era of prosperity.

As shown in the FANAL program and the interview below with FANAL leader Fausto Charris, peasants need nuclear plants, not windmills.

FANAL's insistence on nuclear power is critical within Colombia as well. Current political debate centers explicitly on the questions of whether the country will industrialize and enter the era of "nuclear energy," as called for by Gaitan Duran, Mines and Energy Minister, or whether it will deindustrialize along the Gaviotas model.

The U.S. Role

Of great importance in helping the FANAL program to launch a wave of development and industrialization is the response of U.S. and European industry.

But U.S. industry should take note that Colombia is only 1,400 miles from the Port of New Orleans, and the FANAL organizing call, in effect, is an invitation for U.S. industry to take advantage of the potential market for tractors, irrigation equipment, and mechanized industry in general.

What follows is an interview with Fausto Charris, the secretary general of the Colombian National Agrarian Federation and the moving force behind its program for advanced technology. Charris was interviewed in Bogota by *Executive Intelligence Review* correspondent Lorenzo Carrasco.

An Exclusive Interview With FANAL Secretary-General Fausto Charris

Q: In a recent statement you mentioned the necessity for Colombia to develop nuclear energy. Can you elaborate that idea, particularly how it would benefit the peasantry?

A: The peasantry has to be understood in terms of what it has been historically. It is a potential for development—not what those circles who traditionally controlled the peasants politically have told them they are: a class obsessed with their "little piece of land"; this view makes land ownership the meaning of one's existence. . . .

Thus, technological advances have a direct bearing on the peasantry. The utilization of nuclear energy, in fact, would transform the mental outlook of the peasantry, enabling it to become a semiurban population, with all the necessary public services, housing, health, and education.

It has recently come to my attention that India is planning to build agricultural complexes known as nuplexes. These are agroindustrial complexes built around a nuclear reactor base. In addition to producing fertilizers, desalinating millions of gallons of water for irrigation, the nuplex produces industrial inputs like aluminum. So the "little piece of land" becomes less important in the struggle of the peasantry. The increased agroindustrial production will cause an increased demand for industrial workers. Many of the peasants who are presently uneducated and marginal to society will become part of a strong emerging working class with the obvious, inherent benefits accompanying this process.

The production of nuclear energy in Colombia is physically possible, but those interests who are against the development of the country presently oppose it. These interests are linked especially to lending agencies which have traditionally weakened Colombia, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund—for whom our country's economic independence is unacceptable.

Q: How do you see the upcoming government of Julio

César Turbay and what position will FANAL take toward it?

A: It's difficult to predict the course a President will take at the beginning of his regime. But if we consider the question in terms of the influence exerted over presidents by the machines connected to international lending institutions, we would have to assert that the next government will be mediocre—if it's not overthrown by a military coup. However, one can't overlook those layers inside the government which, if wisely encouraged by pro-development forces, would have positive effects on future struggles. Any realistically thinking pro-development movement has to think in terms of alliances. . . . At a point of crisis, FANAL would support Turbay, if the only other option were a coup d'etat. But apart from this, we would not support a president per se, but the forces which are working for the country's development and the defense of the peasantry as I described a moment ago. If Turbay represents these forces, we will support him.

Q: What do you think about the present situation in the country and what importance do you give to the unity of the agrarian federations?

A: The present situation is critical. Two forces are fighting for the control and domination of the country. One is looking to develop the country, and the other force detests this possibility. Taking this into consideration we have to reevaluate the concepts of "left" and "right" which are being used to divide those forces committed to national progress. Fortunately, these progressive forces are to be found in all social classes, but they are necessarily more prominent in the working class and peasantry. It's obvious that if Colombia develops, it will benefit all Colombians, but if backwardness prevails, then only a small alienated minority, (the faction) now really controlling things, will gain.

Q: What can you tell us about the National Labor Council, CNS (this consists of the country's four labor federations—ed.) and CONA's (the proposed National Agrarian Council—ed.) relation to it?

A: The formation of the National Labor Council (in Sept. 1977—ed.) was a real victory for the working class if you look at the history of the trade union movement in this country. The real question is, what will the working class do now that the CNS exists? . . . If we workers and peasants value the CNS's creation, you can imagine how the country's antihumanist forces see its strength; their greatest aim is to destroy it by converting it into an anarchist entity.

The Colombian population is waiting to see who the CNS's leaders will be and how they will influence it programmatically. Various of this country's anti-development sectors are trying to take control of the CNS by taking over the leadership of two of the four union federations which belong to it. . . . I feel that to counteract the moves by antinationalist elements infiltrated in the labor movement, we must immediately pose a development program for the country as a political alternative. If this doesn't occur, then we can't look for positive results from the CNS.

In terms of CONA's relationship to the CNS, this must be established on two levels: organizationally and programmatically. In terms of the latter, FANAL has stated that CONA is a key element in the CNS's struggle. If we want to push through a general wage increase, then we have to address the problem of low food production that presently afflicts the country. As FANAL has stated, the CNS through CONA will link its own struggle to the peasantry's fight for better living conditions. The latter is possible only through the mechanization and modernization of the countryside, and effecting necessary changes in land tenure from that of feudal *latifundios* (large land holdings—ed.) and the *minifundio* (small plots of land—ed.) to the establishment of large cooperatives, which utilize the most advanced technology.

Program for Industrialization

Q: You've told us that unity by itself would be tenuous. How do you plan to consolidate CONA?

A: Very simply, unity must be based on a program for governing, presented to the country by the working class, via the CNS. It must be based on the all-around industrial and agricultural development of the country. This can be done through modern technology, complemented by the utilization of nuclear energy, which is quite feasible in

Colombia given the abundance of uranium reserves. This in turn would create the impetus for technical education on a short-term basis to increase workers' skill levels and allow them to take advantage of these favorable circumstances. First of all, production would be directed not fundamentally to export as it is now, but rather for developing those industrial areas geared to reinvestment in industry and to complement agroindustrial programs and technical production of food and raw materials which the country needs. This would mean production of heavy machinery for agriculture, and of fertilizers, taking advantage of the country's reserves of phosphoric rock and petroleum derivatives.

This would logically bring about an increase in real production, which would lead to the reduction and effective control of prices, the unprecedented employment of the country's labor force, and the fiscal strengthening of the state for investment in public services, housing, health, and especially education.

Q: Within this program, what do you pose as an alternative for the unemployed?

A: They would benefit the most from the development of the country. There are two theories that address this social problem. The program of the antihumanist sector led by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, with the complicity of the last several governments, consists in denying technological progress and employing the unemployed in labor-intensive programs without regard to production. These "pick and shovel" programs, as they are called by the above mentioned agencies, mean greater effort on the part of the worker, less production and lower wages.

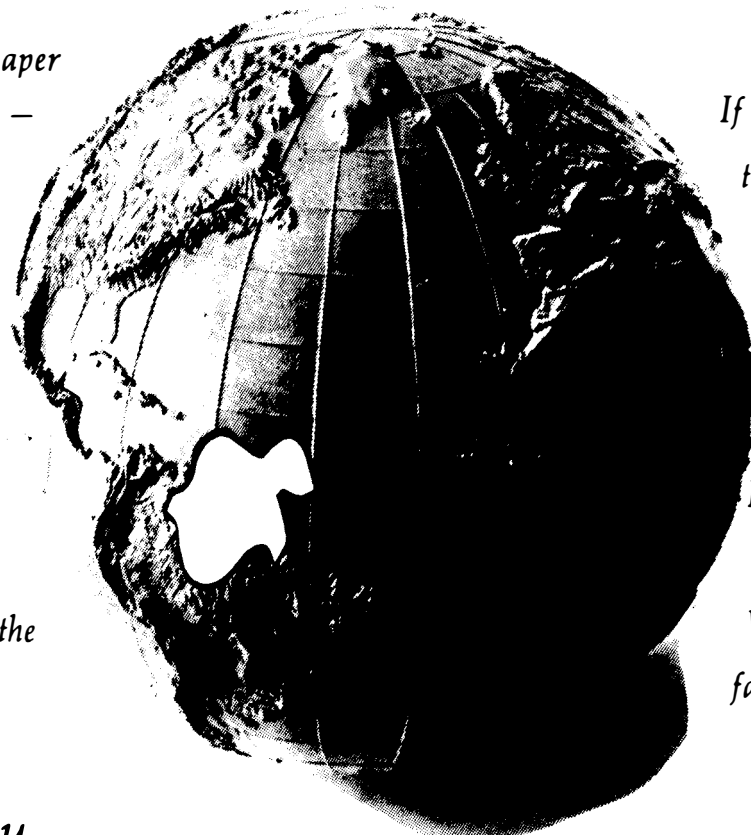
The second theory poses a solution to the unemployment problem, based on the global development of the country; that is to say, it does not negate technology, but rather stresses the education of the population so that it is capable of dealing with these advances. This is only possible through a global program for development presented by the CNS and supported by the nationalist sector. As FANAL recently pointed out, the alternative to this problem is to unite the unemployed to the fight of the employed working class. If this unity fails, the unemployed sectors could be used as a battering ram against the trade unions and the mass of employed workers.

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