

# President García confers with Schiller Institute labor delegation

by Robyn Quijano

Less than one week before Peruvian President Alan García's Sept. 23 address to the United Nations, expected to be a call to reason to put the welfare of sovereign nations and their populations above the payment of the usurious debt, García conferred at the Presidential Palace in Lima with 20 members of the Schiller Institute Trade Union Commission. The labor leaders, representing the majority of the democratic unions of Ibero-America, brought the support of the continent's labor movement for García's heroic war on drugs and his tough stand against the economic strangulation of the International Monetary Fund. They strongly backed his coming intervention at the United Nations General Assembly.

"I am President of Peru, yet I am also a world citizen—of the world, and of Latin America," President García told the Schiller Institute delegation.

In his reply to reports by Commission members on the battles against the IMF in seven Ibero-American nations, more than once García cited the lines of Friedrich Schiller, the poet of freedom, on the need to be both world citizen and patriot. President García also thanked the Schiller Institute, named in honor of the great German poet and friend of the American Revolution, for mobilizing to back the policies of his new government.

"We are carrying out an experiment to prove that many things can be done if there is a will. And I'm convinced that if we do it this way, swiftly and decisively, at least we will prove to other ruling friends in Latin America that things can be done, and must be done with no reverential fear," he said.

The Peruvian President explained to the trade union leaders his strategy for the emancipation of his nation and the continent: "We began to govern our destiny at will. . . . The Monetary Fund is not who will tell us how much interest should be charged in Peru, by how much we should devalue the Peruvian currency. . . . All we have introduced is an element of will, . . . relationship with the world, stopping the drain of resources abroad, and . . . preventing an international financial agency from being the one who governs the Peruvian economy. Yes, you've documented it well: It is a colonialist looting permit, a letter of submission. . . . everybody agrees, but nobody does anything because there is an immense, reverent fear of the Empire."

## Determination

García described the determination needed in this moment of history: "First, *we* rule—not the Fund. Second, set a payment ceiling, because of the impossibility of payment and also because we need our dollars for other ends. And, third, attack national immorality. It is immorality to coexist with misery . . . and it is immorality of the human, global, kind to permit the country to become a field in which cocaine growing and traffic flourishes so publicly and scandalously."

"We in Peru had become accustomed to being witnesses of how it was that the narcotics traffickers, themselves also Latin Americans, had beaten us at making their international Latin American integration of narcotics traffic, with Colombians and Bolivians ending up in Peru. And they have exchanged among themselves and have integrated their industry in such a way that there is production and trade throughout Latin America. In a really astonishing, malevolent way, we have learned to integrate," García said.

## The War on Drugs

"We have begun to fight drugs, and many people say: 'What's your interest in the drug theme? Drugs are produced in the jungle, go out in Colombian planes, are sometimes refined in Colombia' (they've begun to refine them in Peru now), 'and they go to the United States. They're not Peru's problem,'" he explained the arguments against his war on drugs.

"But we don't lose sight that we are world citizens. And although the United States behaves as badly as it is behaving with us, the poor people . . . in the U.S. by the millions who consume drugs are part of a humanity which is being torn apart. . . . That is why we are fighting drugs, and we have delivered some blows which have been some of the most important. . . . And we are going to continue until there is not a [drug runners'] airport or large [cocaine] factory left. . . ." he promised.

Although the Peruvian Interior Ministry has repeatedly sent requests for U.S. helicopters and the crucial equipment needed to continue knocking out the airfields and cocaine production centers, no such expanded aid has been promised. The García government has captured cocaine centers worth several billion dollars, and has knocked out the capability for

producing one-third of the U.S.'s cocaine imports. The spectacular drug busts were done with the aid of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency and Landsat photos from NASA, but the Peruvian government has declared that more equipment is essential if they are to beat the powerful drug mafia.

### **Dare to fight**

"We've said somebody has to take chances for Latin America. When I am asked, 'What moves you to say that, when you are one of the countries most dependent on food imports?' I have said that somebody has to take the risks. Without taking risks, there is no transformation or revolution; otherwise, winning economic freedom and independence would be very easy. If there were no risks involved, could it be worth anything? And we are running that risk."

President García defined the risks: "All the cards have not yet been played. I am sure that, beginning in October, Peru will be besieged internationally, because the industry that you see here in Lima is an assembly industry which puts together components; for the most part it isn't even an industry, but the administration of foreign parts. We bring in television parts, stove parts, auto parts, parts of everything to assemble. This is all administration; it comes from outside. It's not industry; no value is generated. And of every 100 pounds of bread or pasta, which is the basic food of Peru, 99 come from abroad. Thus, we are going to undergo a bitter siege in times soon to come, and it is up to the Peruvian people to know if it really wants a process of breaking away, of starting out on the road to economic independence, or if there has been nothing more than a moment of electoral enthusiasm or excitement."

"We are introducing an element of will, and are opening several fronts at once. I don't know if General Perón, were he alive, would recommend any strategy to me for dealing with this problem of opening several fronts. We have opened the national economy front against domestic monopolies; we have opened the drug-trafficking front, which is an international front; and we have opened the foreign debt front. We have opened up a fight against violence, and we continue fighting against the guerrilla and subversion—against violence, in the name of a popular government, massively voted in by the people.

"We do not rule out that among certain layers, especially in the East, there is a clear connection with the guerrillas—or the appearance of the guerrillas—to justify the drug trade and keep the police away," he warned.

### **Confrontation with Castro**

García has attacked Fidel Castro's attempt to take over the ferment around the debt crisis on the continent, and has insisted that it is a North-South problem, not an East-West problem. Castro, obviously upset about García's all-out war on drugs and subversion, has attacked the new Peruvian President various times since his inauguration on July 28.

After sending an insulting message to García on his inauguration day, Castro attempted to send special planes to Lima to whisk away Ibero-American dignitaries to a special conference on debt in Havana on July 29. García refused to allow members of his APRA party to join Castro in Havana. After Castro openly admitted that drug kingpin Robert Vesco, the boss of Colombian cocaine king Carlos Lehder, was residing in Havana, the reason for his confrontation with García became clear.

On Sept. 17, Castro attacked García's policy of paying no more than 10% of his nation's export earnings for debt service, claiming that it demonstrated a "lack of hormones" and was simply a "tithe to the empire." Castro, known in Western banking circles for his prompt payment of his debt, has not mentioned any plan for cutting his own payments to the Soviet Union. Castro also made known his affinity with Henry Kissinger when he read the entirety of Kissinger's "new Marshall Plan" proposal during a speech at his Havana debt conference.

"Peru pays tribute to no empire," was the ironic response of Alan García's press secretary, Hugo Otero, to Fidel Castro's comparing García's limiting debt payments to 10% of exports to the old church tithes.

### **Schiller commission pledge**

The trade union representatives who met with President García on Sept. 17, told him that the labor movement is in complete agreement with his proposal for a summit of Ibero-American chiefs of state in Panama, and committed themselves to increase the mobilization to guarantee that their respective heads of state dealt with their call with the urgency required by the gravity of the crisis.

They also proposed to President García that he convoke a summit of Third World leaders in Lima in order to set the basis for a new international economic order. The Schiller Institute Trade Union Commission declared its rejection of the alleged "solutions" to the debt crisis offered by Henry Kissinger and Fidel Castro, since both insist on defending the IMF and portraying the problem as an East-West question.

Since the Schiller Institute Trade Union Commission had set the War on Drugs as one of its founding principles, it requested that the President make a formal declaration of war against the drug traffic. Finally, the labor leaders told him they fully identify with Peru's proposals for facing the economic crisis, and that the Commission has been promoting across the continent the solutions posed in *Operation Juárez*, the economic program written in 1982 by American economist and Schiller Institute Advisory Board member Lyndon LaRouche.

The Schiller Institute mobilized for demonstrations in cities throughout the world on Sept. 23, the day García spoke to the U.N. General Assembly. The banner of the marches was "Neither Kissinger nor Castro! Long Live Alan García!"