

Trilateral policy is tested in Trinidad

by Carlos Wesley

President George Bush's deployment of troops to Saudi Arabia and Iraq's move into Kuwait were not the only military interventions in which the Trilateral Commission had a hand in recent weeks. In fact, the Trilateral Commission's recent proposals for "a multinational police force," which former member Bush wants to put into practice in the Persian Gulf crisis, were tested in the oil-producing Caribbean nation of Trinidad and Tobago, during a week-long crisis that ended on Aug. 1.

On July 30, Jamaican soldiers landed in Trinidad, according to the Caribbean News Agency (CANA). The Jamaicans, probably accompanied by soldiers from other Caribbean nations and by American forces, went into Trinidad to help end a looting spree, unleashed after a group of heavily armed men, led by one Iman Yasin Abu Bakr, a former policeman, seized the Parliament on July 27. The assailants, a fringe Black Muslim sect known as the Muslimeen, also took control of the national TV and radio stations and took 41 people hostage, including Prime Minister A.N.R. Robinson, several members of his cabinet, and opposition members of Parliament. The hostages were held until Aug. 1, when Bakr and his followers surrendered unconditionally to authorities.

Bakr's uprising coincided with a summit meeting of the heads of state of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) in Jamaica, whose prime minister, Michael Manley, has long advocated a multinational force to police the countries of the hemisphere, allegedly to fight drugs. The hostage-taking in Trinidad created yet another pretext for military intervention, besides the fraudulent "war on drugs" that was used to invade Panama. Seizing upon the fact that Bakr had visited Libya, the uprising was blamed on Muammar Qaddafi—always a safe bet as a bogeyman—and it was claimed that Ibero-America and the Caribbean are now threatened by Islamic fundamentalism.

The Caribbean leaders quickly assembled a multinational force in nearby Barbados under the Caribbean Regional Security System (RSS). The RSS, set up in the wake of the U.S. invasion of Grenada in 1983, coordinates closely with the U.S. Southern Command in Panama, headed by Gen. Maxwell "Mad Max" Thurman.

"Our information was that Jamaica was sending its troops to be on stand-by here in case the Trinidad government asked for their assistance. But then they went in [to Trinidad], we don't know at whose request," a CANA editor in Barbados

told *EIR* on Aug. 1.

American and Venezuelan warships were deployed into the Gulf of Paria. Several sources in Trinidad confirmed that American troops and helicopters were also deployed, although Washington officially denied it.

IMF austerity policy is to blame

While Bakr's uprising was the immediate trigger for the widespread looting, "ultimately the policies of the International Monetary Fund have caused all this mess," said a Trinidad trade unionist. "Some people have taken advantage of the situation to advance their own agenda, but it is the destitution brought about by the IMF, which, just like the riots in Caracas, has brought us to this point," he said.

Like most of the governments in the Americas, the Robinson government in Trinidad has been following the "economic liberalization measures" being pushed by the Anglo-American Establishment through the IMF, in hopes of qualifying for the empty promises of Bush's "Enterprise for the Americas" or similar fakeries. In Trinidad, the government signed with the IMF, even after a government-appointed commission confirmed the charges made by former IMF official Davison Budhoo last year, that the IMF had concocted fraudulent statistics to justify unnecessary austerity in Trinidad.

Other countries in the region are also facing unrest because of IMF austerity. On July 28, President Carlos Andrés Pérez of Venezuela raised gasoline prices by 15%, and similar increases will take place every month for the next six months. Fearing a repeat of last year's rioting, the government militarized several cities as it announced the price hike.

The Trilateral agenda

Pérez was also working on a strategic oil reserve for the hemisphere, in expectation of a war in the Middle East. Oil-producing Trinidad, just seven miles off Venezuela's coast, has a role slated in that scheme. Both Manley and Pérez are advocates of a multilateral military force to impose austerity. They also share membership in Jimmy Carter's Council of Freely Elected Heads of Governments. Carter was the first U.S. President installed by the Trilateral Commission.

It was anticipating a Trinidad-style backlash to genocide economics, that the Trilateral Commission recommended that "new regional security systems" be set up. In a report issued earlier this year, "Latin America at the Crossroads: The Challenge to the Trilateral Countries," the commission called for "jawboning" the region's governments into accepting "liberalization measures that the whole world knows hold the key to economic progress." The report recommends that NATO forces be deployed out-of-area to police the Third World, adding: "Serious thought about new institutional mechanisms to update or replace OAS-Rio Treaty arrangements is clearly in order—including consideration of some form of multinational police force."