

Bush stands up South American compradors

by Mark Sonnenblick

The scrubbing of President George Bush's trip to five South America countries, scheduled for Sept. 16-22, could puncture the illusions of a U.S. bailout with which Ibero-American Presidents are propping up their bankrupt regimes. The State Department announced Aug. 5 that Bush would be tied down in Washington with the federal budget nightmare. The U.S.A. is also bankrupt.

The Project Democracy-linked Presidents of Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, Chile, and Uruguay were left in the lurch. Argentina's Carlos Menem looked particularly ridiculous. For months, he has been assuring his compatriots that Bush would be so impressed by how he has dismantled the economy that he would convince the bankers to renegotiate its debts. Menem has been scurrying to meetings with the other four Presidents to plan how to warm Bush's cockles. Menem has brought his country to the edge of revolt to woo Bush; and now there is no Bush.

Lyndon LaRouche anticipated on July 27, "Look at the situation in the Hemisphere, particularly, with the United States sliding on the verge of the great financial and monetary mudslide, which is about to come down, we don't know exactly when, but this will mean . . . that very soon all these governments in Central and South America, which have cut deals with the United States, will find themselves embarrassed by the bankruptcy of the United States, in monetary and financial terms, as well as economic ones.

"They will look like fools before their own people, and there will be a process unleashed in each of these countries, against the ridiculous fools, who counted on being submissive compradors to the whims of the giant, who is not really a giant anymore, to the North," LaRouche commented. Compradors were the native agents for colonial looting operations, such as the Dutch East India Company.

Cancellation of Bush's trip indeed left them looking foolish. These fools sought rewards from Bush by auctioning off their national patrimony to pay debts, by exporting everything, by cutting wages and by creating massive unemployment in their poor countries.

Writing off Ibero-America

Bush's trip was planned to counteract the perception of most Anglo-American think tankers that he has "written off" Ibero-America. The Woodrow Wilson International Center

published in June an essay by Thomas Carothers, calling Bush "an actor without a script on the Latin American policy stage, improvising as crises arise, hoping only to avoid serious embarrassments before the curtain falls." Carothers proposes (along with "scholars" such as David Ronfeld, Abe Lowenthal, and Georges Fauriol) that the U.S. abandon most of the region to a "New Dark Age," while cementing an American empire with the bigger and richer countries like Brazil and Mexico.

Thus, the comprador Presidents were "tickled pink," as the *Washington Post* aptly put it, by Bush's June 26 proclamation of his "Enterprise for the Americas" initiative. In it Bush offered vague promises that if they surrendered national sovereignty, the fabulous U.S. market would be opened for their exports, and they would receive a flood of U.S. government-guaranteed foreign investment.

Luigi Einaudi, "Kissinger's Kissinger for Latin America," briefed the Organization of American States in Washington Aug. 1 on the "process" Bush sought. He declared, "In September President Bush will travel to South America. That trip will provide major opportunities for discussion of the actions required to shape the process and move it forward."

The president of Kissinger Associates, Inc., banker Alan Stoga, threatened in the *Christian Science Monitor* Aug. 2, that "a case could be made that the evolution of South America is no more than a remote interest to the United States. . . . The seeds of disengagement are well planted." He ordered the five Presidents to "take advantage of Bush's September trip to the region" to convince him they would impose "successful economic stabilization" programs on their countries. Otherwise, they would get iced. The Kiss. Ass. Inc. chief admits, however, "Unfortunately, despite the Enterprise for the Americas speech, Bush is unlikely to come up with either a comprehensive strategy for economic progress in the region, or massive new financing to overcome the lingering debt crisis."

Ibero-American responses

Venezuela's ambassador in Washington, Simón Alberto Consalvi, half-joked that the U.S. government was too broke to afford the fuel for Bush's plane.

Brazilian analysts each had an explanation for why Bush wanted to avoid meeting face-to-face with the South Americans. *Jornal do Brasil* guessed that Bush was angry at Brazil for the close relationships it has had with Iraq. The staid *O Estado do São Paulo* speculated that Bush was upset over a late-July meeting of Southern Cone finance ministers in Brasilia where they had supported Bush's initiative in general, but criticized its "very modest resources in the face of the region's severe scarcity of capital." In other words, "Where's the beef?" U.S. Ambassador Richard Melton felt compelled to issue a statement denying all speculations except for Bush's inability to solve the U.S. budget crisis.