

Report from Rio by Silvia Palacios

Military nationalism resurfaces

A grouping in the Armed Forces is fighting destruction of the Army, military industries, and state enterprises.

The Army Command and General Staff College (ECEME), think tank of Brazil's military elite, opened its doors to the public Nov. 5-8, to hold a symposium on applied strategy. This unusual event served to demonstrate the military's rejection of Anglo-American pressures which seek the dismantling of the Armed Forces and of the country's military industries, as well as the surrender of Brazil's powerful state companies, especially the state oil monopoly Petrobras.

This nationalist resurgence within the Armed Forces was also evident in the pages of the newspaper *Ombro a Ombro*, the widest-circulation military publication in the country. In its November 1990 issue, *Ombro a Ombro* asserts that the drive to privatize Petrobras is the work of bankers who for a long time have been pushing a scheme first formulated by former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, to exchange foreign debt paper for holdings in state companies.

With this campaign, says *Ombro a Ombro*, "it is sovereignty itself which comes under international attack, in the final phase of the offensive launched in Vail, Colorado in 1983. In that U.S. city, an official of the Council of Americas told the magazine *Executive Intelligence Review* the following: 'In Latin America, the concept of bankruptcy has to be introduced into the public sector. There must be a change in the legal jurisprudence in Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico. . . . Either they be permitted to go bankrupt, or if they need money, they must be opened to foreign private in-

vestment. This is equally true for a company like Brazil's Petrobras.' "

Ombro a Ombro's editorial concludes, "On Jan. 8, the *Los Angeles Times* published an interview with Henry Kissinger, in which the former secretary of state affirmed that the Bush administration's strategy for Ibero-America is precisely that planned by his advisers since 1983."

The ECEME seminar was the first response critical of President Fernando Collor de Mello's alignment with Washington, especially with regard to the crisis in the Middle East, which led Brazil to jettison its own longstanding relations with Iraq. Among the Armed Forces, there exists a consensus that the forces allied against Iraq in the U.N. Security Council will be precisely those which would intervene against the Amazon, also alleging the need to protect the interests of humanity. Those one-worldist forces are the same which demand that Brazil sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and that it take the country's nuclear programs out of the hands of the military.

Virtually every one of these issues was addressed in the seminar. In welcoming the participants, school commander Gen. Luciano Phaelante Casales observed that he had been born in the 1930s, when Brazil was an "eminently agricultural country"; today, he said, we are a country which has "industrialized, and we have formed ourselves into a nation." Brazil needs to defend this advance with "national solutions to our problems," he said.

In exposing the nature of Great Britain's goals, Col. Jayme Moreira Crespo Filha, head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the Army First Division, stressed that that country's policy is "arrogant," contemptuous of the Third World, and has not changed since the last century, when its goals were imposed by cannon. England swears that it backs peaceful solutions, he said sarcastically; "of course, that could be easily seen in the Malvinas War against Argentina."

With Brazil, the treatment would be no different. England participates in the worst attacks against Brazil's sovereignty, under the guise of concern for the environment. The previous week, reported Colonel Crespo, Prince Charles sent a message to an ecologists' gathering in Brasilia in which he decreed the Amazon to be "the patrimony of all humanity." Finally, Colonel Crespo denounced the colonial taint that England has imposed on NATO by shifting it into out-of-area deployments. In early 1990, the British press commented that such deployments are for intervening in those countries that might emerge as intermediate powers, and mentioned Brazil and India by name.

Col. Maynard Marques de Santa Rosa, of the Army's Policy, Strategy and Management Course, confirmed the United States' 180-degree turn in its relations with the country once considered its best ally in the hemisphere. Santa Rosa compared current U.S. policy with "Roman methods," and described its attitude toward its presumed allies as "opportunist." The United States, he said, is more interested in establishing an imperial relationship with the countries of the hemisphere, viewing them as a source of raw materials. Said Santa Rosa, the United States especially fears the emergence of Brazil as a power in its own right.