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## Interview: Brazilian Brigadier Hugo Piva

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# Why I helped Iraq develop advanced technologies

*The eruption of the Middle East crisis unleashed an enormous pressure campaign by the Anglo-American Establishment and its mouthpieces, particularly the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith's (ADL) Zionist lobby, against Brazil's relations with Iraq. The campaign's main target was Brazilian Air Force reserve Brigadier Hugo de Oliveira Piva, who directed a team of engineers and technicians which cooperated with the Iraqis in a project to build air-to-air missiles.*

*On Oct. 10, the New York Times accused Brigadier Piva of being "one of the fathers of the Brazilian atom bomb." The origin of these attacks was a report presented to the U.S. Congress by Gary Milhollin, director of an obscure "Wisconsin Project on Nuclear Arms Control," an organization promoted by the U.S. government to snoop on Third World nations' scientific and technological initiatives considered harmful to the Establishment's interests. The same slanders were published in the October edition of the ADL's Latin American Report.*

*What is behind the campaign against Brigadier Piva is not an alleged plan to build a Brazilian atom bomb, but rather the crucial role played by him in the development of that country's aerospace program, which is one of the most advanced in the Third World, and in the training of skilled scientific and technological personnel. Such "audacity," in the eyes of the superpowers, is to be prohibited to any nation below the Tropic of Cancer.*

*Brigadier Piva was the director of the Brazilian Aerospace Technology Center between 1984 and 1989, at which time he retired from the Air Force and founded a consulting company, HOP, through which he did consulting work for the Iraqi government. He provided the following concise answers to questions posed to him by EIR's Brazil correspondents, Silvia Palacios and Lorenzo Carrasco.*

**EIR:** As a result of the current Mideast crisis, you became the center of attacks by the international press for the work you did with a private company in Iraq. What is this persistent campaign due to?

**Piva:** That campaign against HOP is directed by the more developed countries, which feel harmed by our success. HOP

obtained a technical aid contract to help an Iraqi group in the development of an air-to-air missile. HOP's bid displaced

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## Argentina, Brazil bury nuclear hopes

The Presidents of Argentina and Brazil signed a bilateral accord on Nov. 28 that submits their respective nuclear programs to each other's inspection, and very possibly to that of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), while promising never to engage in nuclear weapons research and development. Over the following week, each nation also reached a bilateral agreement with the United States, which gave the anti-nuclear Bush administration de facto veto power over their nuclear programs, the most advanced in all of Ibero-America. The set of pair-wise agreements, concluded on the eve of President Bush's tour of five Ibero-American nations—and at his personal insistence, according to well-informed Brazilian sources—marks the beginning of the end of independent nuclear research and development anywhere in South America.

The Argentine-Brazilian treaty was signed amid great fanfare in the border town of Foz do Iguacu, and in the patronizing presence of a representative of the IAEA. Both nations committed themselves to file full specifications of all nuclear facilities and material with the IAEA within 45 days, and are expected to agree to full IAEA surveillance shortly.

The IAEA is controlled by the United States and the Soviet Union, which have a monopoly on nuclear weapons and wish to maintain Third World countries like Brazil and Argentina in a state of technological backwardness. Its supervision is viewed by many in the developing sector as an unacceptable limitation on

competitors belonging to the developed countries, capturing part of their business.

**EIR:** What kind of technical and scientific collaboration did you provide in Iraq?

**Piva:** HOP gave technical assistance to an Iraqi group which was developing an air-to-air missile similar to the Sidewinder and the Magic. The main objective was to teach them research and development methodology, using the air-to-air missile as the subject matter. It must be noted that Iraq possesses hundreds of those missiles provided by the U.S.S.R., France, and the United States (Sidewinder G); thus, our work would never bring about any imbalance in the short term.

**EIR:** What do you foresee as the future of Brazil-Iraq rela-

tions, which were broken after more than a decade of fruitful collaboration?

**Piva:** I hope that, after the conflict, Brazil-Iraq relations will return to the level they were at before.

**EIR:** You have said that the attacks on you come from the superpowers. Could you explain this a bit more?

**Piva:** The superpowers always try to prevent Third World nations from developing. They need an underdeveloped Third World to be able to exploit us as colonies. HOP, with its highly trained engineers and technicians, was creating a development pole which was highly prejudicial to the colonizing interests of the industrialized nations.

**EIR:** During the decade of the 1950s, Adm. Alvaro Alberto,

national sovereignty and the right to fully develop all modern technologies.

Argentine President Carlos Menem announced that, as part of the accord, he would ask his Congress to ratify the Tlatelolco Treaty, a regional anti-nuclear treaty which Argentina had long refused to sign because it allows international inspection of all nuclear facilities in the country. Brazil is already a signator of the treaty. Both Presidents declared, however, that they would not go so far as to sign the international Non-Proliferation Treaty, or NPT, which is much hated throughout the Third World since it virtually prohibits any nation which is not now a member of the nuclear club from developing this crucial technology.

### **Nuclear bomb hysteria is used as bludgeon**

The stick used to beat both countries into accepting the accord, was a months-long international campaign that screamed that both nations were building atom bombs—or might do so someday. The Brazilian military, in particular, was vilified both inside and outside the country for purportedly having a secret plot to build a bomb, and for favoring high-technology cooperation with other Third World nations like Iraq. Brazil's Science and Technology Secretary José Goldemberg, desperate to please President Bush on the eve of his arrival in that country, publicly proclaimed that never again would the Brazilian military be allowed to work on nuclear weapons, and urged that the new Argentine-Brazilian accord provide "a framework for President Bush's visit" by "ending insinuations and accusations about clandestine programs."

The Brazilian government was particularly anxious that Bush agree to lift a U.S. ban on the sale to Brazil of an IBM supercomputer which had been held up on the grounds that its parallel processing capabilities could be used to simulate nuclear explosions, and could therefore

be used by the Brazilians to help build a bomb.

President Bush, during his visit to Brasilia on Dec. 3, did approve the computer sale—but, as the *Washington Post* noted drily, "the sale will not become final until the two nations agree on safeguards." That means that Bush will keep the computer dangling in front of Brazil's nose until the government agrees to *all* aspects of nuclear supervision and supranational control—very possibly including signing the NPT.

Meanwhile in Argentina, the government of Carlos Menem followed up its deal with Brazil, by signing an accord with the United States on Nov. 30 for the exchange of nuclear information between the two countries on experimental and commercial nuclear reactors. The Argentine National Atomic Energy Commission and the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission were the specific signators in the agreement. The pair of accords de facto puts Argentina's once-proud nuclear program under the thumb of the Bush administration, which is committed to dismantling it.

Opposition voices to these policies are being heard in both countries. In Argentina, many of these voices are associated with the nationalist military elements around Col. Mohammed Alí Seineldín which were repressed by the Argentine government on the eve of Bush's visit there. In Brazil, it is expected that there will be strong opposition within the Congress to the ratification of the new Argentine-Brazilian accord. Congresswoman Maria Rattes, the president of the congressional committee responsible for overseeing the Brazilian military's nuclear program, will shortly present a motion to formally invalidate the just-signed agreement, since it permits IAEA inspection of Brazilian nuclear facilities. According to the Brazilian daily *Gazeta Mercantil* of Dec. 1, Rattes views this as a threat to Brazil's national sovereignty.—*Dennis Small*