

Report from Rio by Silvia Palacios

A Kissinger-Bronfman coup

Collor's cabinet shakeup has given the Anglo-American banks a direct hand in decision-making in Brazil.

During the first week of April, President Fernando Collor de Mello orchestrated the collective resignation of his entire cabinet for the purpose of putting a new face on his government, which is drowning in an institutional crisis that threatens to topple his monetarist economic program.

The crisis considerably worsened in the aftermath of the military coup attempt in Venezuela on Feb. 4, which had repercussions, especially, among the Brazilian Armed Forces. At the height of the flood of corruption charges against the government, Gen. Agenor de Carvalho, chief of Brazil's military cabinet, told President Collor that the Venezuelan military uprising "was seen by [Brazilian] troops as an act of laudable nationalism," according to *O Estado de São Paulo* March 31.

Although certain high-level political observers have noted that Collor's cabinet changes amount to little more than putting lipstick on a cadaver, the fact is that the long-expected cabinet clean-out has given President Collor a team of professionals directly tied into the centers of Anglo-American power represented by former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and Zionist figure Edgar Bronfman.

The most explicit agents of Kissinger-Bronfman influence inside the new government team are Foreign Minister Celso Lafer and Regional Development Minister Angelo Calmon de Sa. Their appointments give continuity to the relationship which President Collor de Mello began shortly before assuming the presiden-

cy with Canadian liquor magnate Edgar Bronfman, who in his capacity as president of the World Jewish Congress, urged that Brazil change its vote at the United Nations condemning Zionism as a form of racism. Brazil eventually did change its vote.

Lafer comes out of an old Zionist family from São Paulo with ties to the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith (ADL). Lafer is also a partner with the powerful Klabin family, which has historic connections to the cream of the Zionist International through the networks of Chaim Weizmann, one of the founders of the state of Israel. Both the Klabin and Lafer families maintain relations with Kissinger Associates. Lafer is also a member of the Inter-American Dialogue, one of the original promoters of the campaign to dismantle the continent's armed forces.

President Collor's first choice for the Foreign Ministry portfolio was Sen. Fernando Henrique Cardoso, a nomination which failed to come off when his negotiations with the opposition Social Democratic Party (PSDB) collapsed. Since Senator Cardoso is also a member of the Inter-American Dialogue, the nomination "stayed in the family," and kept the Anglo-American establishment happy.

During George Bush's war against Iraq last year, Lafer became famous for backing the thesis of Italian Marxist "intellectual" Norberto Bobbio, who defended that massacre as a "just war." The Arab diplomatic community in Brazil therefore sees Lafer's nomination as an insult.

The common denominator of the key figures in the new cabinet, apart from Kissingerism, is a cultural outlook learned directly from the Frankfurt School, the entity which pioneered the counterculture against those principles which fostered western Christian civilization.

For example, while studying at Cornell University, Lafer was a student of Frankfurt School guru Hannah Arendt. Another fervent Arendt admirer is banker Marcilio Marques Moreira, one of the few who survived Collor's ministerial earthquake and remained as economics minister in order to guarantee to the bankers the continued repayment of the foreign debt. Lafer was recommended for the new cabinet by Minister Marques Moreira, who was introduced to Arendt by Lafer.

The international press mounted a campaign to portray the nomination of two new ministers—Mines and Energy's Marcus Vinicius and Regional Development's Angelo Calmon de Sa—as the result of a tacit agreement between Collor and the Armed Forces, since both men are identified with previous military regimes. While untrue, such media lies suggest to what degree the Collor government needs to ease the tensions in the barracks.

The fact is that both Calmon de Sa and Vinicius fulfill President Collor's "quota" with Brazil's international creditors. The new minister of regional development comes out of the Banco Economico, which is expected to repay the government for his nomination by giving President Collor parliamentary support from the political machine of northeastern Brazil. Banker Calmon de Sa is also a member of the international advisory council of American Express, where he rubs shoulders with Henry Kissinger. He also sits on the councils of the Institute of International Banks and of Wells Fargo Bank.