

Report from Rio by Silvia Palacios

Ecologists launch new offensive

The anti-science mafia is demanding that Brazil shut down its nuclear energy program.

During the tenure of former President Fernando Collor de Mello, the Brazilian environmentalist movement kept a low profile, since with radical environmentalist physicist José Goldemberg in the cabinet, the government was fulfilling to the letter the commands of the "new world order" that Brazil subject itself to a regime of "technological apartheid" and deprive itself of advanced technologies.

But since the impeachment of Collor last fall, these circles and their international sponsors among the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have returned to the offensive, and have directed their efforts above all toward destroying what remains of the Brazilian nuclear program.

The well-financed supranational ecologist organization Greenpeace, the most influential of the environmentalist NGOs, targeted Brazil starting in April 1992, when two militants demonstrated at the Angra nuclear power station, placing hundreds of crosses, symbolizing the alleged deaths at the Chernobyl nuclear plant in Ukraine, in front of the plant.

Since March of this year, Greenpeace has been escalating its campaign to shut down the Angra I nuclear plant, publicizing a supposed radiation leak in the primary circuit of the plant's reactor. The political influence of the organization was put to the test when several of its leaders held a meeting with Brazilian President Itamar Franco, during which they rejected the technical reports showing that the alleged leak was a complete farce. Nonetheless, in July, based on

Greenpeace's denunciations, the attorney general of Brazil filed a suit against the supervisor of Angra I.

The latest assault, being pressed by "ex-terrorist" Carlos Minc, a parliamentary deputy from Rio de Janeiro state, is to promote the conversion of the half-built Angra II into a gas-fired thermoelectric plant, despite the fact that such a conversion was already attempted once before at Angra, in 1989, without success.

The environmentalist movement is planning a petition campaign in Rio de Janeiro, with mass leafletting, demonstrations, and debates. In a debate on July 22, engineer Guido Gelli from the Environmental Foundation, detailed the U.S. experience with the Midland nuclear power plant in Michigan, which was converted to natural gas because of protests from the environmentalists. Gelli admitted that he was one of the founders of the Brazilian Green Party, and that he had been invited by the U.S. Embassy in Rio to visit the Midland plant.

Meanwhile, members of the Brazilian Society for the Progress of Science (SBPC) have come out demanding that Brazil submit itself to international supervision of its nuclear installations. Physicist Moises Nussenzveig authored a motion in favor of "control of nuclear experiments."

The SBPC is a Brazilian outgrowth of the Pugwash Conferences, which were created by the Anglo-American-Soviet condominium to restrict the use of high technology by the Third World. At its 45th annual reunion, SBPC analyzed the accord

among Brazil, Argentina, and the International Atomic Energy Agency, which is now being debated in the Brazilian Congress. Under this treaty, Brazil will be treated the same way Iraq has been treated since the Gulf war, dismantling its nuclear capacity.

One of the pioneers of the SBPC, former minister José Goldemberg, doesn't hide his anger at the fact that there has been resistance within the Brazilian Congress to this policy of surrendering Brazil's sovereignty. In an article in *O Estado de São Paulo* on July 27, Goldemberg wrote that "within the Defense Committee of the Chamber of Deputies voices have risen, using the language of the 1960s, opposing the ratification of the four-party accord. . . . There is no reason to march against the flow of history by not ratifying the accord, which will only increase the country's credibility abroad, which will bring us collateral benefits."

The SBPC members are arguing for ending "military control" of nuclear research, such as the effort to build a nuclear-powered submarine, which they say should be transferred from the Navy to some civilian organization, along the lines proposed by environmentalist Pinguelli Rosas. This happens to coincide exactly with the demand of the Anglo-American establishment in its operations to dismantle the armed forces of Ibero-America. In this effort, the SBPC is joining the offensive by some NGOs against the Brazilian Armed Forces, especially their role in designing policy for the Brazilian Amazon.

Not content with waging war on the nuclear program, the activists of the SBPC are also out to destroy public morality. At their annual meeting they voted up a resolution which was sent to the Congress, demanding the decriminalization of drug consumption.