

## Andean Report by Cynthia Rush

### Inter-American Dialogue is tongue-tied

*The think-tank for the Clinton administration's Ibero-America policy has been put on the defensive in Peru.*

On Aug. 17, at the conclusion of the Inter-American Dialogue's two-day meeting behind closed doors at Lima's El Olivar Hotel, former United Nations Secretary General Javier Pérez de Cuellar and Peter Bell, both co-chairmen of the Washington, D.C. think-tank, joined other of the group's leaders at a press conference. But much to their embarrassment, and in front of journalists from 20 of the country's most important media, they were subjected to a well-deserved roasting by *EIR*'s Lima correspondents on the Dialogue's plans to destroy Peru and Ibero-America.

*EIR* correspondent Sara Madueño first held up a copy of *EIR*'s just-released book, *El Complot para Aniquilar a las Fuerzas Armadas y a las Naciones de Iberoamérica* (*The Plot to Annihilate the Armed Forces and Nations of Ibero-America*), and said: "I have in my hands a book . . . published by *EIR Resúmen Ejecutivo*. This book makes reference to the Inter-American Dialogue as one of the entities behind this plot. Now, in Chapter 2 of its recent report 'Convergence and Community,' the Dialogue proposes collective defense and . . . limited sovereignty. . . . And in your 1986 report, you call for the selective legalization of drugs. Thus, this book is not off the mark when it claims you are part of this plot. Do you care to comment?"

As the audience buzzed, a visibly shaken Peter Bell replied: "What I would say is that this is a sort of disinformation, propaganda from the Lyn-

don LaRouche group."

"But, is it true?" she insisted.

"No," Bell lied.

At that point, another journalist referred to the editorial in that day's issue of *Expreso* exposing the Dialogue's push for a multinational force to "intervene in defense of democracy," as in the case of Peru. Pérez de Cuellar said that the editorial was "based on incorrect information. . . . It has never been the Dialogue's intent to isolate Peru."

*EIR*'s Manuel Hidalgo interrupted: "Dr. Bell, on page 35 of the Dialogue's report . . . you refer specifically to the cases of Haiti and Peru. . . . On page 37 you talk about the possible sanctions in case of an 'interruption of democracy,' as in the case of Peru. Among those sanctions you list: denial of visas; withdrawal of ambassadors, of diplomatic recognition, and giving financial assistance directly to opposition groups; suspending bilateral economic assistance programs; a full trade embargo, cutting off all economic and trade ties; and suspending military assistance.

"Second," Hidalgo continued, "I want to ask if you support the stance of Mario Vargas Llosa, a Dialogue member, who said last year that if the Peruvian Army disappeared, it would be no great loss for Peru. That would corroborate the charges made in the book. . . . Third . . . you, Dr. Bell are also the president of Human Rights Watch, to which Americas Watch belongs, whose people in Peru are always finding mass graves and

bodies."

Bell, very perturbed, replied: "Well, those are three questions. . . . It's true that I am the president of Americas Watch. . . . That's a voluntary job. . . . Now, regarding Mario Vargas Llosa, he is a member, one of the 100 members of the Dialogue, there are six members. . . . It is obvious that each of us has our own ideas . . . are free to speak. . . . On the other hand, we get together each year to deal with important issues relating to the Americas. In that regard, we try to reach agreement, a consensus, and we produce a report such as the one you have in your hands. Regarding your first question, those options listed on page 17—"

"—37," Hidalgo corrected him.

"Sorry, 37—those are possible options for responding to an interruption in a given country, a rupture of democracy. There was no agreement within the Dialogue that the inter-American community should implement all those options, because there are a series of possible options among which the community can select those that correspond to a given situation," said Bell. He shut down the news conference five minutes later.

After the first question, "former" communist Luis Pasara, who scribbles a column for *Caretas* magazine, an Anglo-American mouthpiece, came up to ask what media the correspondents represented. When told *EIR*, he said, "Ah, the LaRouche people," and ran to tell the Dialogue's Peter Hakim and Abraham Lowenthal. A Reuters correspondent, however, saw the humor in Bell's scarcely credible disclaimers, and commented that if, as claimed by Bell, everything that members said was their own opinion—not the Dialogue's—then what they said was not newsworthy, and she couldn't figure out what to file in her story.