

## Williamsburg: Plot against military meets obstacles

The defense ministers of the democratically elected governments in the Americas met in Williamsburg, Virginia on July 24-26, convoked by the Clinton administration to further coordination on regional security matters. The agenda was dominated, however, by the program for regional demilitarization and globalism known as the "Bush Manual," drafted under the George Bush administration. That utopian, anti-national agenda met with continued resistance in Williamsburg from many of the major countries of the region.

The three themes on the agenda were: so-called "transparency" of military plans and capabilities, based on revealing all to the United Nations; promotion of international "peacekeeping" deployments; and insistence on civilians running shrunken defense capabilities.

Prior to the meeting, U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry stated that the goal of the conference was to identify measures which would make it "possible for each country in Latin America to reduce its military spending," and so "free up economic resources" which would enable Ibero-American countries to "carry the burden of peacekeeping around the world." Perry asserted that the militaries of the region have an "obligation" to assist such international missions.

The Argentine delegation, led by Defense Minister

Oscar Camilion, a member of the Inter-American Dialogue, came into the meeting proposing that Ibero-America send so many troops out under U.N. command, that the region "becomes a quarry for Blue Helmets"—even as the world watched those Blue Helmets *directing* Serb genocide and ethnic cleansing in Bosnia!

U.S. Defense Department officials announced in advance that they would not seek formal agreement on these themes from the other delegations, and, according to reports of participants, listened during the meeting to what others had to offer. But the keynote speech, delivered by Vice President Al Gore (whose views do not always match those of President Bill Clinton), insisted on the utopian idiocy that the time has come for a "major rethinking of what constitutes national security," and for nations to "look beyond the traditional concept of security to new missions," such as international peacekeeping and protecting "eco-systems."

Mexico sent the strongest signal that this agenda is unacceptable, sending only an observer delegation, led by its ambassador to the United States, not even a lower-level official sent up from Mexico. According to press accounts, Venezuela and Brazil argued strongly that military defense cannot be separated from economic defense.

Perry announced that, at the urging of other delegations, he added combatting "narco-terrorism" to his final "Williamsburg Principles." Collaboration between U.S. and Ibero-American forces in fighting drugs is one area where substantial advances have occurred, to the benefit of all.—*Gretchen Small*

Washington and London, was named defense minister in March 1993 to carry out the Dialogue's plans. He has performed well. In early August, the government announced the fourth military budget cut *this year*, cutting another \$31 million on top of the \$160 million already mandated in the 1995 budget. Military sources told the daily *Clarín* that if these went through, the result could be a situation of "ungovernability within the Armed Forces." The commanders of the Joint Chiefs of Staff sent a message to Camilión saying that "with this new cut . . . our forces are no longer in conditions to operate."

In the Aug. 4 *La Nación*, military analyst Eduardo Barcelona reported that the cuts would mean cancelling the annual U.S.-Argentine *Unitas* naval maneuvers, and closing down the Naval College and the Naval Mechanics School. The Air Force has canceled all flights until September, and all other flights in the Army and Navy will be halted as well. The new volunteer army, which the government inaugurated after obligatory military service was eliminated, will be stillborn. The young men and women volunteers will be housed and

fed, but will receive *no military training*, because there are no funds to pay for it!

Revealing of the environment within the Armed Forces is the fact that, four years after Colonel Seineldín elaborated how the *Plot* against the institution had been carried out, some military leaders are being forced to admit that he was right. A case in point is the Aug. 10 speech on Air Force Day by Brig. Gen. Juan Paulik, chief of staff of the Air Force. It is clear to the leadership of the Armed Forces, Paulik said, that "the development of defense cannot be disconnected from the global development of the State, and at the same time respond definitively to the country's concrete possibilities." In a reference to the *Plot*, he pointed to the "existence of theories which generate a strong current of opinion which encourages everything, from an arbitrary reduction of the Armed Forces to their transformation into pseudo-national guards." It would be totally "reckless, to completely rule out [the Armed Forces]," Paulik said, "or excessively minimize them, at the risk of seriously mortgaging vital interests of the Nation."