

# Carter's Latin American 'Breakaway Ally' Scenario

Jimmy Carter's recent dramatic gestures on "human rights" in Latin America have not resulted in any reduction in levels of repression — nor were they ever intended to. There is ample evidence, reflected even in pro-Carter newspapers, that the blunt U.S. diplomatic provocations, designed by the Trilateral Commission and its satellites, have given the mantle of "patriotic defenders of sovereignty" to the subcontinent's traditionally pro-American torturers and death squad operators, while making those who fight for human rights appear as "traitors" and "American agents."

Equally important, by provoking a public spat with America's fascist allies, the Carter Administration seeks to absolve itself for the increasingly repressive policies which these bankrupt countries will have to use against their populations in order to continue payment of their bloated debts. The one link with the United States which no one in the Southern Cone of Latin America has yet discussed breaking is the crucial debt tie. (In fact, David Rockefeller, Arthur Burns, and last week's report of the Joint Economic Committee's Sub-Committee on Inter-American Affairs have all mandated debt payments with moratoria or renegotiation.)

In Argentina, Carter has effectively aided the "Pinochetista" army factions and the Navy in their intense efforts to destabilize the more centrist President Videla. Videla is now caught in a vise between escalating

pressures for civil liberties, on the one hand, and military hard-liners seeking to dump him and impose even harsher repressive policies against the working class, on the other. And in Brazil, the political moderates who have long fought for democratization are once again running for cover from an expected "backlash by military hard-liners" provoked by Carter, according to the *New York Times*.

A brief review of the chronology of the Carter diplomacy and of the Southern Cone response makes it clear that Carter has indeed activated a deliberate "breakaway ally" scenario for the area — purposefully provoking a hysterical response that could lead into full scale continental war. There are even growing indications that Carter is achieving the long-sought unity of the fascist governments of the Southern Cone, now united in a hysterical reaction-formation against human rights. It is only a small step from the creation of such an alliance to its deployment to squash the strong anti-Rockefeller resistance now being seen in Colombia and Venezuela.

Yet the game of provoking a united "anti-American" shock force of fascist regimes can also backfire — if these governments act like genuine nationalists and break their debt dependency ties to the United States, and quickly expand trade and other relations with Europe and the Socialist Bloc countries.

## Chronology Of Carter's Confrontation With The Southern Cone

- Feb. 24 U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance tells Congress that 1977-78 military sales credits for Argentina, Uruguay, and Ethiopia would be reduced because of "human rights" violations. The cut was a clear political act, since none of the Southern Cone dictatorships actually received more than \$2 million of such credits in 1976.
- Feb. 28 Argentine Foreign Minister Vice Admiral Guzzetti denounces Vance's aid cuts as "interference in the internal affairs of our country and ignorance of Argentine reality."
- Feb. 27 An 8-member U.S. delegation, headed by Under Secretary of State Warren Christopher, a member of the Trilateral Commission, visits Brazil. Christopher is unceremoniously sent flying home after only 5 hours of talks with Brazilian officials in which he fails to pressure them into abandoning their nuclear fuel program. They reject his repeated demands that Brazil depend on uncertain U.S. supplies of enriched

uranium and permit international control over fuel reprocessing.

- Mar. 2 Argentine Defense Minister Jose Maria Klix rejects Vance's proposed \$15 million sales credits, following a military consensus on the question. The Uruguayan Government withdraws all U.S. aid requests. (Total affected, \$11.5 million).
- Mar. 2 Vance reiterates to Congress his intent to use "human rights" against the East Bloc and rightist military dictatorships. Vance refuses to answer question by Rep. Long (D.-Md.) on why military aid is not also cut from Brazil and Chile for their human rights violations. On leaving Congress, however, Vance lies to reporters by stating that the State Department is *not* studying the Brazilian human rights question.
- Mar. 3 Brazil dramatically renounces 1952 covenant under which the U.S. loaned Brazil military surplus.
- Mar. 3 Larry Birns of the Council on Hemispheric Relations announces campaign to persuade Congress to cut the flow of private, as well as public, loans to the southern cone countries.
- Mar. 4 U.S. Ambassador John Crimmins delivers the Brazilian Government a State Department report to

U.S. Congress on human rights in Brazil, and a memo on U.S. aid to Brazil.

Mar. 5 Brazilian Foreign Minister da Silveira meets with President Geisel and military leaders. He then returns both documents to Crimins with an angry note rejecting "in advance any military assistance that depends directly or indirectly on prior examination by organs of a foreign government of matters that by their nature are the exclusive competence of the Brazilian government." Brazilian military figures immediately assure that Brazil is now almost self-sufficient in weaponry, and will mobilize its shipbuilding industry to achieve complete self-sufficiency. They applaud Silveira's "defense of national sovereignty."

Mar. 5 Peruvian Interior Minister Cisneros airily denounces United States' traditional power, "over that of the nations themselves, to decide which arms each nation should have. We think this affects our sovereignty." He defends Peruvian purchases of Soviet weapons as needed to prevent Peru from being unprepared in a second war with Chile. "We won't tolerate a second Arica."

Mar. 6 Brazilian opposition party (MDB) supports military government against Carter's interference. Moderates fear Carter campaign will incite a repressive backlash from the hard-liners.

Mar. 6 Argentine, Uruguayan, and Paraguayan ambassadors in Brasilia express support for Brazilian rejection of aid.

Mar. 7 Brazilian presidential press secretary Col Camargo describes Carter's human rights operation as a "chess game" in which the next move is up to Washington. Brazilian press warns that publication of the rights report would provoke Brazil to reduce or break diplomatic relations. Christopher assures that report will be published within two weeks.

Mar. 8 Brady Tyson, a U.S. delegate to the UN Human Rights Commission, strongly denounces the Pinochet government and apologizes for Nixon Administration role in creating it. Tyson's apologies are disavowed by Vance and Carter's press secretary, but reported in Latin American press as expression of Carter Administration views.

Mar. 8 Argentina President Videla announces he will visit Brazil in May. "The international circumstances (U.S. attacks on nuclear development plans and human rights), which surround us have the beneficial effect of bringing the two nations closer together."

Mar. 9 The entire Chilean cabinet resigns. The Pinochet regime is expected to emerge with a slightly different face.

## Press Reports Hardliners In Ascendance

*Die Welt*, March 8

"Carter's Admonitions Enrage South American Regimes," by Heinz Barth (from Rio de Janeiro).

It's as though Jimmy Carter had set out to drive all of Latin America up a wall. In only a few weeks he managed to get the countries of the Southern Hemisphere to rise up against his pointed finger and his Administration...Jornal do Brasil wrote 'The result of Carter's Foreign Policy is the strengthening of the nationalist and anti-American sentiment as well as the stronger rooting of military regimes: exactly the opposite of what Washington says it wants.'...In his televised program 'Call the President', he counselled Americans to combat rising Brazilian coffee prices by drinking tea; he has already joined the tea-drinkers. Apparently he couldn't think of anything better at the moment to make himself hated by Brazil.

*Washington Post*, Mar. 5

"Latins React to Rights Move: Official Anger, Private Hope," by Joanne Omang (from Buenos Aires)

A flood of habeas corpus writs pouring into Argentine courts is one of the repercussions of this military-dominated continent to President Carter's initiatives on human rights.

...It is known that Carter's move has sharpened debate between the Argentine armed forces 'hard' and 'soft'

factions to the point where a planned visit by Chilean President Augusto Pinochet is expected to be reconsidered.

The soft-liners, of whom Gen. Videla is said to be one, are expected to argue that the visit might best be postponed or at least downplayed. The hard-liners have taken the view that what they regarded as admirable restraint up to now in their treatment of suspected terrorists has gotten them a slap in the face and as a result they should be given a free hand. They are expected to argue for maximum fanfare for Gen. Pinochet.

*New York Times*, March 6

"Brazil's Opposition Joins Protest to U.S. over Human Rights Report," by Jonathan Kandell (from Rio de Janeiro)

Leaders of the center-left opposition party today joined the right-wing military Government of Brazil in protesting a report by the Carter Administration that criticized the human rights situation here.

"We carry out opposition to the Government, not to the nation," said Mr. Ramalho, whose party (Brazilian Democratic Movement) has protested violations of human rights here in the past.

The opposition party, which is dominated by moderates, is worried that the incident with the United States could lead to a backlash against Government opponents by military hard-liners.

"Argentina and Uruguay React Sharply to Washington's Reduction of Military Aid," by Jean-Pierre Clerc:

Considering the nature of their regimes, these two countries can't afford to promote their quarrel with Washington. The hyper-liberal political economy which prevails on both sides of the Rio de la Plata necessitates good relations with the US, the main master of private investments and of the credit of international financing organisms. The reaction of Uruguay where the economic crisis is very deep is even less credible from this point of view.

...Washington knows the eternal and present limits of the latinos.

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### Carter Will No Longer Be Blamed For Southern Cone Repression

The following excerpts are from an interview with an American historian specializing in Brazilian military history.

Q: Doesn't Carter's move strengthen the right wing in Latin America, instead of promoting democracy?

A: The present strengthening of the right-wing should be viewed as part of a transitional situation of hysterical right-wing reaction to the United States. But they won't be able to say any more that they are being supported by the United States...

Q: There appears to be coalescing an alliance of the Southern Cone governments against the United States. Is there any chance that they could be provoked so much as to break with US economic hegemony?

A: Yes, Brazil and Argentina are coming closer together against the United States. But it can't last. Besides, if the United States doesn't finance them, who will? Are they gonna get support from the Soviets? No, they can't. They're anti-communists.

### Brazil Does Not Fear U.S. Economic Pressure

In the conservative daily O Estado de Sao Paulo Feb. 25, well-informed columnist Carlos Chagas quotes at length from an interview he had with "one of the most important presidential aides on the ministerial level." The following statements from that interview are probably from Foreign Minister da Silveira or his immediate circle.

Brazil doesn't believe, but most importantly, doesn't fear whatever economic or financial pressures the United States might generate to try to change our position on the nuclear question...Before 1964, despite all the leftist and anti-American postures of the Brazilian government, we did not have the slightest real capacity to confront pressures. We were completely vulnerable. Today, things have changed, even though as members of the Western and capitalist system, we do not intend to get into fights with our neighbors in North America. We are now, however, in condition to protect our sovereignty and fight for our interests. The time for blind obedience has ended.

...the Brazilian government does not believe that the U.S. would start playing with economic pressures, which would be harmful not only to the relation between the two countries, but also for the entire Western community.

...In any case, the government does not fear attempts to freeze our credit or impede our financing from international credit institutions. It just happens that the World Bank, for example...does not do us any favors. They give us credit because we religiously meet our commitments to repay fully interest and principle. Therefore, why would financial entities associated with the World Bank want to get rid of such a good partner?

...The same reasoning applies to the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). The majority of its operations are with Brazil, one of the only countries on the continent in condition to contract large loans and repay them properly. To suspend operations with Brazil would result in the IDB's stagnation and even endanger it.

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## Mass Strike Challenges World Bank Rule In Colombia

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### COLOMBIA

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Colombia, long touted as one of the few remaining "democracies" in Latin America, is today rapidly heading toward full-scale militarization, Chile-style. In the past days, the Colombian government has assumed a deliberately intransigent position in the face of working class demands for wage increases and an end to inflation, thus forcing a mass strike wave which it intends to meet head on with full military force. The govern-

ment's deliberate confrontation strategy marks the launching of Phase Two of Finance Minister Espinosa's announced plans for the imposition of a world Bank-dictated "war economy:" i.e., political war against the working class.

The government's provocative offer earlier this month of an 18 percent wage increase, in the face of an officially acknowledged two-year cost of living increase of 60 percent, has predictably touched off waves of protest in all sectors of the working class. A 100,000-strong protest march in the capital city of Bogota last week registered the rage of 7,000 oil workers from the state company Ecopetrol, over 200,000 teachers, 60,000 health workers, con-