

EIR Feature

Ibero-Americans map war-plan against drugs, IMF

by Robyn Quijano

When 200 delegates from 22 Ibero-American nations left Panama after four days of intensive work, planning a "Second Amphictyonic Congress," the groundwork was set for building a continent-wide movement that will convene a heads-of-state summit in 1992 to institutionalize a "Latin American Federation." The first such congress, organized by Simón Bolívar in 1826 to unite the continent's newly formed republics, was the last time all the governments of the region had met for such a purpose.

The delegates, made up of a broad spectrum of Ibero-American leaders including senators, congressmen, labor leaders, historians, scientists, ex-ministers, and retired military officers, were conscious of the historic nature of their task. The final document, the "Declaration of Panama," insists, "It is historically imperative that we achieve Latin American integration, as the only way we can confront and overcome the constant and permanent threats against our countries, stemming from the foreign debt, the drug trade, and imperialism's military and economic aggressions."

Panama's President Manuel Solís Palma told the delegates in his opening speech Aug. 9, "We meet with the purpose of achieving the integration of all our potential for greatness into a single force, that will at last put an end to the servitude imposed upon our peoples."

The delegates concluded that the region must jointly launch an all-out war on drugs (including jailing financiers who work with the drug trade), limit debt payments looting the area's resources, and build great infrastructure projects and scientific research centers to transform Ibero-America into an economic superpower. This action program was presented to the final plenum as the documents of nine workshops. (See below.)

Since the debt crisis first exploded in 1982, when then Mexican President José López Portillo nationalized the banks and unsuccessfully sought Brazilian and Argentine backing for a debt moratorium, continental unity has been on the agenda. At every point at which one President would courageously declare himself at war with the International Monetary Fund, in defense of the living standards of his



The President of Panama, Manuel Solís Palma, with General Manuel Noriega, Commander of the Defense Forces, at a moment of celebration during the conference.

increasingly battered population, operations were run to assure that no united group of nations would declare themselves ready to do battle in defense of the economic sovereignty of the region.

In July 1985, when Peruvian President Alan García declared war against the IMF, and unilaterally decided to pay only 10% of export earnings for debt service, the continent once again failed to respond. Again in February 1987, when Brazil declared a debt moratorium, bankers scurried around the continent making promises to other nations in crisis. Between promises and threats, no continental defense was mounted.

Brazil, the continent's largest debtor, could have turned the tables on the usurers who have designed the total dismemberment of the economies of the region, with a little help from its neighbors. Ibero-America lost a crucial opportunity to end the genocide and start building an economic system based on morality.

Finance Minister Dilson Funaro, the architect of the Brazilian debt moratorium, was forced to resign on April 30, 1987. The defense of the continent was once again postponed. The statistics are still being compiled that will show how many hundreds of thousand of infant deaths resulted from the lack of a joint command of Ibero-American nations ready to fight for the survival of their people.

The historic conference in Panama City, launched the process that will give Ibero-America such a capability.

Were the United States government in the hands of leaders like George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, or Abraham Lincoln, U.S. policy would be to assist the nations of the south to build industrial economies. Such a policy would cause an economic boom that would benefit the United States

economically, and bolster U.S. security. Nothing would be more beneficial to the United States than being surrounded by independent sovereign republics undergoing industrial growth.

Just before the 1982 debt crisis exploded, Lyndon LaRouche wrote *Operation Juárez*, an economic plan dedicated to his friends in the Mexican government, that envisioned the possibility that the United States could be moved to adopt a sane and moral economic policy toward the nations of Central and South America. Such overturning of IMF policy would require strong actions on the part of a unified Ibero-America to demonstrate that they would no longer put up with IMF dictates. Should the Western oligarchy prevail in imposing such policies, Ibero-America could survive by creating a common market, unifying its vast human and natural resources, LaRouche wrote.

The Panama conference brought such economic integration into focus for 200 leaders, who have gone back to organize a war for survival. But before the delegates had even left Panama City, they had already accomplished a crucial part of their task.

The host nation, Panama, was not only the site of the first Amphictyonic Congress. It is the nation most under siege, a republic that requires urgent back-up from its neighbors. The continental show of support for Panamanian President Solís Palma and Defense Forces commander Gen. Manuel Noriega was demonstrated in the final declaration, which condemned "the systematic political and economic aggressions against the Republic of Panama on the part of the Reagan administration," and condemned U.S. intentions to unilaterally abrogate the Panama Canal Treaties, "under threat of invasion."

The day the conference closed, the Peruvian government

announced formal recognition of the Solís Palma government, and regret that Panama had been removed from the Group of Eight nations comprising the Contadora support group. The Reagan administration's months-old operation to enlist Ibero-American nations in its war against Panama suffered a harsh setback.

Gen. Manuel Noriega closed the conference, reminding the delegates, "Panama is the mirror in which the rest of the governments and peoples below the Rio Bravo can see themselves reflected. . . . Like us, so too could every country

shout out the aggressions it has endured." He praised the crucial steps already accomplished. "There were no ideological positions, nor radical postures. . . . In Christian fashion, we sought out that which unites us, rather than that which divides us."

The tactics used for over 160 years to divide the continent—border conflicts, racial and ethnic conflicts, and the ideological conflicts of right and left—were overcome, while the delegates deliberated on the crucial mission that Ibero-America, united, must now fulfill.

Declaration of Panama

The delegates of the nations of Latin America and the Caribbean to the Meeting Toward a Second Amphictyonic Congress of Panama, meeting in Panama City from August 8-12, 1988, declare:

WHEREAS:

1) Hardly had they obtained independence, when the old Spanish colonies, united by the swords of the Liberators Bolívar and San Martín, were fragmented and balkanized by the concerted action of the exporting oligarchies and the foreign imperialist powers. With the *Patria Grande* divided, its Republics began to be the victims of innumerable violations of their sovereignty, of their territorial integrity, and of their dignity, by foreign powers who have imposed upon us new forms of neo-colonialist and imperialist domination.

2) As a result of the perpetuation of that domination, the development of our peoples has been impeded, submerging them in unemployment, malnutrition, hunger, illiteracy, backwardness, and violence that constitutes the social drama of our peoples down to the present day.

3) That this ignominious situation is aggravated by an unjust International Economic and Juridical Order, which has encouraged the overdevelopment of imperial powers at the cost of the exploitation of our human and natural resources.

4) That the relations of dependency based on that unjust International Order have led us into an indebtedness greater than \$400 billion, whose interest costs constitute a heavy burden on our weak economies, establishing a relation of domination by international finance capital.

5) That in this period, there exist numerous points of tension that constitute a flagrant violation of the peace, security, territorial integrity, sovereignty, independence, and human rights of the hemisphere, such as the occupa-

tion of the Malvinas by an extra-continental power, the aggressions by the United States against Nicaragua, El Salvador, in Central America, and against Panama.

6) That with systematic political and economic aggressions against the Republic of Panama on the part of the Reagan administration, the intention of ignoring the Torrijos-Carter Treaties is made clear, and is confirmed in the United States Congress by a resolution that seeks its unilateral abrogation under threat of invasion.

WE DECLARE:

1) That all these facts define for us a scenario that gives currency to the call made by the liberator Simón Bolívar when, in warning of the danger that threatens our nations through the expansionism of the Colossus of the North, he convoked the First Amphictyonic Congress of Panama.

2) That, for the purpose of the 1992 commemoration of the Fifth Centennial of the meeting of two cultures, the Latin American and Caribbean heads of state meet with the intention of forming or institutionalizing the Latin American Confederation.

3) That the concretization of that project of the *Patria Grande* that Bolívar conceived must be the result of the conscious will of all our peoples, and will only be achievable through the consolidation of national democracies in our states.

4) That it is historically imperative that we achieve Latin American integration, as the only way in which we can confront and overcome the constant and permanent threats against our countries, stemming from the foreign debt, the drug trade, and imperialism's military and economic aggressions.

WE REITERATE!

We energetically reject the aggression by the United States government, and we offer our firm determination to raise the voice of the *Patria Grande*, from Mexico to Argentina, in defense of the integrity and sovereignty of the Panamanian people.

We are determined to win this initial battle for the dignity of all of Latin America and the Caribbean.