

Report from Rio by Silvia Palacios

Brazil under Kissinger's eye . . . again

Kissinger is promoting a new "special relationship" between the U.S. and Brazil—within the superpower condominium.

The personal intervention of former U.S. Secretary of State and Trilateraloid Henry Kissinger as President Bush's interlocutor toward Brazil is a good indication of the magnitude of pressure being exerted to force this country to accept the designs of the Anglo-Soviet-American condominium of power. Kissinger's intention is to refurbish the "special relationship" that existed between the two countries during the 1970s, but this time in the context of the superpower condominium. The success of such a hemispheric scheme is dependent on the foreign policy direction taken by the new Brazilian government of President Fernando Collor de Mello.

On April 12, in an interview granted both to Brazilian television and to the magazine *Manchete*, Kissinger promoted his hope that Brazil would soon become a privileged trading partner of the United States, on the Mexico model. Brazil's geographic distance, said Kissinger, is unimportant: "Any American foreign policy is going to recognize that Brazil is potentially the most important economy of the hemisphere, after the United States. The distance means nothing." He added, "I have proposed that the Bush government reorient its foreign policy to give priority to the hemisphere, recognizing Brazil's role. With the development of the European and Pacific common markets, it would be a way of reinforcing our negotiating power."

Kissinger also boasted of the power he has with the current administration in Washington: "I spoke of this with President Bush, and more exten-

sively with [National Security Adviser Brent] Scowcroft, and with [Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence] Eagleburger." Specifically, Kissinger emphasized that negotiations over Brazil's enormous foreign debt would be the beginning of his policy: "I believe that we should make a deal with Brazil on its debt."

Kissinger's sudden and urgent interest in Brazil has already led to two meetings with President Collor. The first was in January, when, as President-elect, Collor began an international tour with a trip to the United States. The second meeting was in Portugal, at the conclusion of his tour, at Kissinger's insistence.

And during his Ibero-American tour, U.S. Vice President Dan Quayle announced a diplomatic offensive for a supposed hemispheric integration, which he dubbed "America 92."

Brazil's importance in this renewed Kissingerian scenario is also evident in the behavior of the creditor banks themselves. On April 22, Goldman Sachs Vice President Robert Albertson declared that the success or failure of the Brazilian economic program, and above all of that country's negotiations with the banks, would determine the outcome of the debt crisis and the future presence of U.S. banks and investors in Ibero-America.

Despite Collor's insistence, in his inaugural address, that Brazil's most immediate concern was its relations with its continental neighbors, there exists a group of diplomats within the Foreign Ministry which has taken on the role of representing Kissinger's

ideas. This grouping is known as the "universalists." They propose an unconditional relationship with the United States, an end to timid efforts at hemispheric integration, total "free market" opening of the economy and trade, and ratification of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which Brazil has refused to sign in its determination to safeguard its right to access leading technologies. It was under pressure from the "universalists" that banker Marcilio Marquez Moreira was named ambassador to Washington.

Although the fight is ongoing, the Brazilian government has begun to define its foreign policy, while keeping a prudent distance from the Kissinger grouping. In early April, at an international conference on drugs in London, Brazilian Foreign Minister Francisco Rezek censured the U.S. invasion of Panama: "Energetic combat against drug trafficking is no justification for compromising the territorial sovereignty of states. This was used as the pretext for interventionist actions."

At an April 17 press conference to announce his upcoming visit to the United States, Rezek reported that he will meet with Secretary of State James Baker. "Our visit will be open and cordial. But this doesn't mean that Brazil is going to change its positions on the environment, international law, and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty; that is, those aspects that have caused permanent conflicts with the United States."

It is widely known that Brazil-U.S. relations—currently at rock bottom—began to deteriorate under the Jimmy Carter presidency, primarily due to technological and trade pressures. Thus, this will not be the first time that Brazil experiences the imperial flavor of a Trilateral Commission government.