

are prepared to resort to thuggery and violence. Army Lt. Raúl Alvarez Bracamonte told a Caracas judge on Nov. 12 that a large arms cache stolen by him in March 1992 is now in the possession of Causa R Secretary General Pablo Medina. Alvarez reported that he originally delivered the weapons to Col. Hugo Chávez, the now-imprisoned Army officer who organized a coup attempt against Carlos Andrés Pérez in February 1992, but that Chávez subsequently handed the weapons over to Medina.

In addition, according to reports published in the Venezuelan press, 30 Causa R militants traveled to Cuba to receive paramilitary training, a trip personally organized and coordinated by Pablo Medina. In a second court appearance on Nov. 15, Lieutenant Alvarez provided documentary evidence of his charges, further implicating Pablo Medina as the recipient of the weapons. Alvarez Bracamonte told Judge Ramón Moreno Natera that he was revealing this information to prevent the weapons from being used during the Dec. 5 elections. But he reported that Medina had already distributed some weapons in at least one of Caracas's poorer neighborhoods.

Medina responded on Nov. 16 that Alvarez Bracamonte's charges were false, and that the weapons are on deposit at the Defense Ministry. But according to Interior Minister Carlos Delgado Chapelín, the government "has evidence to back up" Alvarez Bracamonte's testimony and is seriously investigating the case. In a Nov. 16 editorial entitled "An Armed Party?" the daily *Diario de Caracas* warned that Causa R had better clear up the charges against it, because otherwise, "who will want to leave their homes on Dec. 5 to vote on the suspicion that Causa R members might pull out their weapons and unleash violence with or without provocation?"

Moreover, the daily added, "who could doubt the information that they are armed, looking at Andrés Velásquez's words that his party is prepared to defend its vote in the streets?" Mentioning incidents in which Pablo Medina had wielded a weapon during public demonstrations, *Diario de Caracas* warned that "someone is playing with fire." The daily's warnings were further borne out in statements made by Causa R's senatorial candidate Gen. Alberto Mueller Rojas (ret.) who threatened on Nov. 15 that if the government continued its campaign against his party, this "sterile polemic could generate acts of violence. . . . I don't know how [the government] would explain this to the mothers of the conscripts who would die as a result of the country's irresponsible actions."

Recent hysterical statements by some of the hemisphere's leading monetarist economists make clear that the international banking community, and its local Venezuelan allies, have invested heavily in Causa R's electoral success. Former President Caldera poses too big a threat to them. In his recent "Letter of Intent to the Venezuelan People," Caldera rejected the market reforms introduced by Pérez in 1989 and called for international examination of the country's "oppressive

and unjust" public sector foreign debt. He promised that he would not fire public sector employees or lower wages and vowed to repeal the recently imposed value-added tax, which he called "unfair" to consumers.

### Usury by any other name

Even if Caldera were not prepared to completely buck Venezuela's foreign creditors, his posing the policy debate in these terms makes bankers' hair stand on end. At a recent conference in Caracas, Mexico's teeth-gnashing monetarist Luis Pazos went so far as to claim that a Caldera victory would lead to Venezuela's "Africanization," and to Brazilian-style levels of inflation. "Caldera suffers from great mental confusion," Pazos said.

In his comments, MIT economist Krugman complained that "populists" like Caldera would resort to exchange controls, restricting imports, and increasing domestic expenditures to generate employment—all anathema to the austerity-loving malthusians among the banking community. During the same conference, John Williamson, president of the Washington-based International Institute of Economics, lamented that no presidential candidate was openly backing a hike in the price of gasoline, and demanded there be no interruption in free market reforms. In fact, Andrés Velásquez is the only candidate who has said publicly that he will raise the gasoline price.

Given these statements, it's not hard to explain why Causa R's domestic backers include the country's top banks and such speculators as Orlando Castro, a leading figure in the dirty financial empire of the Cisneros clan, financiers of the suspended President Pérez. Among other unsavory activities, Castro's bank has been implicated in drug money laundering.

## MSIA warns against Causa R dictatorship

*The following statement, entitled " 'Radical Cause' Party Wants to Install a Narco-Terrorist Dictatorship in Venezuela," was released from Caracas on Nov. 16 by Alejandro Peña Esclusa for the Ibero-American Solidarity Movement (MSIA) and the Venezuelan Labor Party. It is being circulated throughout the continent.*

The Radical Cause ("Causa R") political party is organizing an armed uprising for the purpose of installing a narco-terrorist dictatorship in Venezuela, on the model of Fidel Castro. The plan, which apparently has the backing of the U.S. State Department, is already under way and there is little left to stop it. It will be set off around Dec. 5, the day of Venezuela's presidential elections. The facts are as follows:

Four days ago, Venezuelan Army Lt. Raúl Alvarez Bramonte publicly revealed that the FAL rifles and Uzi submachine guns which he had stolen from an Army post back in March 1992, "are in the hands of the general secretary of Causa R, Congressman Pablo Medina." Two months earlier, the Caracas press had reported that 29 Venezuelan citizens had travelled to Cuba to receive paramilitary training for subversive ends, the trip having been "coordinated and financed by Causa R and its leading figure, Pablo Medina" (*Diario 2001, El Diario de Caracas*); in November 1993, the daily *Ultimas Noticias* reported that Pablo Medina had distributed weapons in the low-income neighborhood called "23 de Enero," with the intention of promoting subversive activities.

For the past three weeks, Causa R has been hysterically proclaiming that it has already won the elections. It is an open secret across Venezuela that if their supposed victory is not recognized, they will send their shock troops out into the streets, rouse the population, and seize power by force of arms. To this end, Causa R is seeking support from within the Armed Forces, trying to lure those men who participated in the Feb. 4 and Nov. 27, 1992 coup attempts.

There is every reason to believe these charges, given that we know that Causa R belongs to a narco-terrorist organization controlled by Fidel Castro, known as the São Paulo Forum. Also belonging to the São Paulo Forum are: The Cuban Communist Party and the guerrilla movements of Colombia (FARC, ELN, M-19), El Salvador (Farabundo Martí Liberation Front, or FMLN), Nicaragua (Sandinista Front), Guatemala (URNG), Uruguay (Tupamaros), and Argentina (MTP). Also part of the São Paulo Forum is the Workers Party (PT) of Brazil, the Mexican PRD of Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, the Lavalas movement of Jean-Bertrand Aristide, and liberation theologians like Leonardo Boff and Frei Beto. The main political formations within the São Paulo Forum are also intimately tied to the huge weapons cache recently discovered in Nicaragua, along with sophisticated plans to carry out kidnappings and other terrorist actions.

If this macabre plan succeeds in Venezuela, the narco-terrorist project will extend throughout Ibero-America, where São Paulo Forum members will attempt to replicate the Causa R strategy. One mustn't forget that the Dec. 5 elections in Venezuela are the first of a series of presidential elections across the subcontinent, through which local affiliates of the São Paulo Forum are vying for power.

In April 1993, Pablo Medina and other key leaders of the São Paulo Forum travelled to the United States at the invitation of Princeton University. There, Medina publicly attacked Ibero-America's armed forces. Immediately afterwards, they travelled to Washington, invited by the Inter-American Dialogue (IAD) to meet with high-level Clinton administration officials, some of them members of the IAD themselves. The IAD was created in 1982 by the Woodrow Wilson Studies Center, an institution financed and directed



*Alejandro Peña Esclusa, leader of the Venezuelan Labor Party.*

by the U.S. government. The IAD promotes drug legalization and the reduction of Ibero-America's armed forces.

Former U.S. Ambassador to Venezuela Michael Skol openly supported Causa R, meeting periodically with Pablo Medina and Andrés Velásquez, the party's presidential candidate. Last July, Skol coordinated Andrés Velásquez's trip to the United States, during which he held meetings with spokesmen for the State Department and Inter-American Dialogue. In September, Pablo Medina was again invited to Washington by the Inter-American Dialogue, during which visit he requested the intervention of United Nations Blue Helmets allegedly to resolve the problems of the Venezuelan Amazon. When the new U.S. Ambassador Jeffrey Davidow arrived in Venezuela, he met with the leaders of Causa R before anyone else.

Clearly, we are dealing with the flagrant intervention of the U.S. government in Venezuelan internal affairs. Is the United States perhaps supporting the idea of a narco-terrorist group seizing power in Venezuela? Does the United States want Cuba's allies to seize power by anti-democratic means? Does the United States perhaps want to install other "Aristides" in power throughout Latin America? Will it impose economic embargoes and threaten armed invasions to achieve these ends, as is happening today in Haiti?

I call on all Venezuelan patriots not to back this bloody plan. The existence of this corrupt partyocracy cannot be the justification for backing a narco-terrorist dictatorship. In 1988, we were the only ones who warned of the danger which Carlos Andrés Pérez's election represented for Venezuela. We called him "the favorite candidate of Fidel Castro and the State Department." Today, we warn of the danger which Castro and the U.S. State Department's new puppets pose to Venezuela. I also call on the international community not to permit the assassins of the São Paulo Forum to set fire to Ibero-America.