

Clash of Civilizations 'Left' Forces Gather

by Silvia Palacios

The international financial oligarchy, pushing for a Clash of Civilizations according to the scenario put out by Harvard Prof. Samuel Huntington, is itself pulling together the "left wing" of this global conflict under the umbrella of the World Social Forum (WSF). This can be seen in the expanded capacity of the radical anti-nation-state brand of globalists, to mobilize thousands to the Second World Social Forum, held on Jan. 31-Feb. 4, in Pôrto Alegre, Brazil. The growth of these "anti-globalist" globalist hordes is due, primarily, to the sponsorship they are receiving from the political and propaganda apparatus of the Anglo-American establishment's own "left wing," through figures like mega-speculator George Soros, Anglo-French ecologist/magnate Teddy Goldsmith, and a network of major globalist news media. All promote the idea that the WSF alone is the opposition to "savage globalism."

This effort is directed at suffocating those genuine forces of opposition which defend the sovereignty of nation-states, and seek to establish a new international financial system based on that sovereignty, as called for by the international movement led by Lyndon H. LaRouche.

With overt oligarchical backing, the Pôrto Alegre meeting attracted nearly 60,000 people, who conducted 800 marathon seminars and round-table discussions over five days. The event concluded with an agenda for international mobilization, primarily involving huge protest demonstrations in parallel to meetings in which major nations' heads of state or government would participate: in Spain on March 16, and in Monterrey, Mexico on March 18.

The WSF organizers also determined that the demonstrations would specifically target the symbols of global capitalism—such as Coca Cola, McDonalds, Monsanto (the leading producer of genetically altered seed grains), and banks such as Citibank—in order to keep a large network of activists hyped-up throughout the year. Beyond this intent, the WSF has cultivated an image of being a critic of the world financial system, demanding that it be "humanized," but in the final analysis legitimizing the speculative practices that characterize globalization.

Thus, the World Social Forum dubs itself the left wing of a world government legislative assembly, precisely as was proposed by Bertrand Russell and his World Federalist movement. Vehement criticism of globalization and its effects is tolerated, but this criticism must fit within a framework that legitimizes a world power structure which takes human

groups outside of nation-states and "destructures" those nations. Thus Toni Negri's book, *Empire*, which endorses a new world empire *against all national powers*, has already become the WSF's bible.

Include the FARC Dope Cartel

In Ibero-America, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and its strategic allies, such as Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez, have already launched a Jacobin insurgency of continental scope. The Anglo-American oligarchy is using this insurgency, which the WSF supports, to justify the eventual deployment of foreign troops to Colombia, Peru, and elsewhere.

Thus conceived, the WSF fits perfectly within the one-world order promoted by former U.S. National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, following the Sept. 11 terror attacks on the United States. Such a one-world government would be the result of a "Clash of Civilizations." The plan is for a new imperialism, in which military capability—primarily that of the United States—would be used in the main against the "foreign enemy," while the anarchist masses of the World Social Forum, and of organized narco-terrorism like the FARC, would destroy nationalist forces in national governments. As an example of this dynamic, the main leaders of the WSF believe that the terror attacks of Sept. 11, and the worsening of the world financial crisis that led Argentina into bankruptcy, are creating the ideal conditions for forcing certain supranational social reforms—which, however, don't touch the international financial system.

The common ground of these two forces of globalization—the Anglo-American geopoliticians and the World Social Forum's hordes—is their Malthusian belief structure, a profoundly anti-Christian concept of humankind. A clear example of this kind of thinking comes from WSF ideologue Susan George, who is both director of the Transnational Institute of Amsterdam, and Vice President of the French group ATTAC (Association for a Tax on Financial Transactions for the Aid of Citizens). George's recent analysis was published by *Foreign Affairs En Español*, the Spanish publication of the New York Council on Foreign Relations, which represents the Anglo-American *crème de la crème*, where they air their ideas on how to impose their "new imperialism."

George's commentary, also published by the Mexican magazine *Proceso* Jan. 14, follows the standard "bin Laden dunnit" explanation of the Sept. 11 attacks, and says that a "Clash of Civilizations" can only be avoided by a post-nation-state new world order. "Sept. 11 announced an era of radical insecurity and post-state conflict. . . . Terrorism has produced a similar moment to that of the 1940s, when Bretton Woods and the Marshall Plan were conceived. What is lacking is a modernized and globalized Keynesian strategy. What is proposed is a planetary pact."

In George's "planetary pact," the WSF itself would head up the implementation of the ecologist Kyoto Accords, for



The opening march of the World Social Forum's conclave in Pôrto Alegre, Brazil, showed the anarchist forces of the anti-nation-state faction. At Pôrto Alegre, the WSF joined strategy and tactics with Fidel Castro's São Paulo Forum groupings.

the purpose of deindustrializing the world economy, and returning to a feudalist state in which "clean sources" of energy, such as solar power, would replace fossil fuels. These measures, which she describes as being of a "social nature" (and which are anti-social, because they will necessarily lead to the depopulation of the world), will obviously have to be enforced, not by national governments, but by a global apparatus of non-government organizations (NGOs).

Within this same one-worldist matrix, other proposals are being aired, such as replacing the World Bank with a World Social Bank, whose credit conditionalities would include strict zero population growth.

Another WSF founder embraces this same line of reasoning: Brazilian businessman Oded Grajew, like former World Bank President Robert McNamara, says military budgets can pay, especially those of developing nations: "The World Watch Institute estimates that the total for six-year program just to protect, reforest, reduce population growth, reform life, increase energy efficiency, and develop renewable energy resources, would cost nearly \$750 million. How much does the world spend in weapons in just a year?"

The supranational focus of the WSF is even clearer in its Feb. 3 statement, entitled "Manifesto for a World Without Wars." This manifesto proposes that four of the world's "warlike" conflicts should be handled by the United Nations Security Council: Colombia, Mexico, Palestine, and Spain's Basque region. The manifesto states that "A world without wars is possible, on condition of the existence of an interna-

tional agency with the power and legitimacy to mediate conflicts, and which represents the majority will of humanity. This agency could be the United Nations, if it were democratized by doing away with the veto capability of the imperial powers which abrogates their right to be permanent members of the Security Council."

'Solidary Globalization'

The WSF's role, as described by Negri in *Empire*, is universally acclaimed by its leading exponents, independent of their origin. Miguel Rossetto, deputy governor of the Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul and a prominent radical leader of Brazil's Workers Party (PT), published an article on Feb. 23 in the newspaper *Zero Hora*, where he says, "The WSF was erected as the bearer of a true plan for solidary and democratic globalization, since it rescues the historic notion of interna-

nationalism which unites and draws together all peoples and nations."

Michael Hardt, Negri's co-author, told the newspaper *Folha de São Paulo* on Feb. 4, while participating in the Pôrto Alegre deliberations: "There are two approaches to confronting globalization: one is that the response should be to reinforce national sovereignty, as in France. This is not good, since national sovereignty carries with it a form of hierarchy which is not positive. The other is to defend an alternative globalized network. This seems to be more appropriate." PT sociologist Emir Sader declared during a roundtable discussion organized by the newspaper *O Globo* Feb. 8: "There is a consensus in the WSF that polarization is not between globalization and anti-globalization, but rather between two models of globalization: the current neo-liberal globalization, and solidary globalization, which we seek to build."

Whatever their apparent differences, these two main factions in the WSF are growing. One is centered around the old French colonial interests from which the Mitterrand family emerged, openly hostile to the pro-nation-state leadership represented by Gen. Charles de Gaulle. Labelled as social democrats, this group identifies with Bernard Cassen, director of *Le Monde Diplomatique* and one of the mentors of ATTAC. The other, more extreme, faction, promotes radical actions against "the system."

But all the groups and factions want to legitimize the ideas for world government of H.G. Wells and Bertrand Russell.

Toward that end, the WSF continues to cultivate the ca-

capacity of its Jacobin hordes to mobilize themselves as militant warriors for the Clash of Civilizations. The guru of “Liberation Theology,” Brazilian WSF “intellectual” Leonardo Boff, said last November, “I think that one plane falling on the Pentagon isn’t enough. It should be 25 airplanes. It is necessary to destroy the entire Pentagon.” He later had to publicly apologize for his “*lapsus mentis*.” But again during a Nov. 22 conference entitled “Fundamentalism and Globalization,” Boff nominally attacked Samuel Huntington for his “Clash of Civilizations” thesis, but then went on to justify terrorism by suggesting that the world faces various sorts of fundamentalism: religious, political (whose paradigm is the Bush government), and economic. The Islamic militant, he stated, is responding to capitalist globalization which exacerbated consumerism after the fall of the Berlin Wall. “With globalization, fundamentalism offers itself as a kind of defense,” was his conclusion.

Pôrto Alegre, a Tenuous Disguise

Although the organizers of the WSF gathering in Pôrto Alegre tried to give it a façade of moderation—for example, by not issuing official invitations to members of the FARC and Basque terrorist group ETA, who nonetheless attended “as individuals”—the truth is, that the entire pro-terrorist São Paulo Forum (SPF) is being absorbed into the WSF, and could even be dubbed its armed branch. The SPF was created a decade ago by the Cuban Communist Party and the Brazilian PT to pull together the neo-Communist movements of Ibero-America following the fall of the Berlin Wall; it includes the most diverse narco-terrorist groups of the entire continent.

According to various press and internet news reports, an SPF seminar was organized in the midst of the WSF discussions, where the foreign affairs secretary of the Brazilian PT, Deputy Aloysio Mercadante, declared that the Forum should be expanded “to allow the participation of other forces, especially from Europe. . . . Currently, the Forum includes nearly 100 parties and organizations of the Latin American left. What we want is to expand this Forum on a world scale, so that we could eventually come to dominate the Pôrto Alegre Forum, and this could be accomplished for the first time at the Third World Social Forum, in 2003,” Mercadante declared.

Brazilian trade unionist Kjeld Jakobsen, a member of the organizing committee of the second WSF, greeted the SPF representatives, and applauded “the possibility of building a great integrated front with parties and social movements worldwide.” From the Castro side, leading SPF promoter Roberto Regalado, of the Cuban Communist Party’s Central Committee, department of foreign affairs, supported the idea of keeping SPF activities within the WSF framework. In today’s turbulent world, the oligarchic sponsors of the WSF are cultivating all of its internal factions for deployment.

Venezuela

Chávez Clings to Power, Radicalizes Revolution

by David Ramonet

In the midst of noise as protesters clanged pots and pans that could be heard throughout the capital, Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez Frías announced, on Feb. 12, a package of austerity measures—including devaluation—with which he hopes to confront the effects of falling oil prices, capital flight, and escalating demands from the opposition for his resignation. Chávez hopes, above all, to convince the United States and international financial institutions that he can continue to adhere to the dictates of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Chávez began the year determined to “radicalize” his “Bolivarian revolution,” by 1) confronting the leaders of the business community, 2) refusing to recognize the leaders of the Venezuelan Workers Federation as the legitimate mouthpiece of organized labor, 3) dubbing the Venezuelan Bishops Conference a “tumor” to be removed from society, and 4) accusing the mass media of a “media conspiracy” against him. He took concrete steps to intensify his strategic alliance with the narco-terrorist Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), steps which have simultaneously provoked unease within the Bush Administration in Washington. Given this picture, the general clamor of Venezuelan civil society is that President Chávez either “change course, or get out.”

Galvanizing His Enemies

On Jan. 23, a quarter-million people marched through the center of Caracas, chanting “Chávez out now!” The President dismissed this huge protest, which came from every social strata. And when the Papal Nuncio Msgr. André Dupuy, expressed his concern with Chávez’s “radicalization” during his annual greeting to the diplomatic corps, Chávez charged him with interfering in Venezuela’s internal affairs by echoing the opposition. The President went on to warn the Nuncio that the Catholic hierarchy is one of Venezuela’s big problems; the next day, Chávez declared himself an “evangelical,” then turned around and denied it two days later.

A short time later, he proclaimed that Feb. 4 was a national holiday, in commemoration of the military rebellion he had headed ten years earlier. In contrast, the opposition declared Feb. 4 a day of national mourning, and continued its protests.

The U.S. government expressed its concern with the tense political situation in Venezuela, on Feb. 6. Secretary of State