

spectively]—and even with our national territory. Pope John Paul II demanded that the foreign debt not be paid with the people's hunger. Enough is enough!

Humanity is experiencing a revolutionary period of its history. Scarcely two years ago, the entire population of eastern Europe went out into the streets in search of freedom and sovereignty; Moscow's puppets fell. Less than a year ago, the people took to the streets in the former Soviet Union to reject the dictatorship: the communist powerbrokers fell. It is now Latin America's turn.

Venezuelans, we invite you from today forward to wear some patriotic symbol (flag, coat-of-arms, tricolor armband) in show of support for the following:

1) the immediate resignation of Carlos Andrés Pérez; resignation of the Supreme Court of Justice; resignation of Congress; a new constitution, to do away with rule by the party elites;

2) formation of an emergency government, with civil and military participation;

3) suspension of payment of the foreign debt for a minimum of five years, strict exchange controls, and implementation of an emergency program to assure jobs, food, housing, clothing, health, education, and public services, such as water;

4) trial of the corrupt, especially of the economic groups which have been the front-men of foreign colonial interests and which are linked to the narco-economy;

5) respect for the human rights of Commander Chávez and the rest of the military men who participated in the events of Feb. 4;

6) Latin American integration, but not based on the "Enterprise for the Americas" initiative or Bush's "new order," which seek to loot and colonize us until we have become Wall Street's backyard; who want to turn us into drug-producing countries to guarantee the flow of narco-dollars to finance their immense deficit. Rather, we want a powerful and developed Latin America, united around great agricultural and industrial projects, works of transportation and infrastructure such as the continental railroad, and a Latin American common market.

Venezuela urgently needs a nationalist movement, one which is not dependent on any "International" [organization], which promotes a return to morality and to patriotism. Instead of a "class struggle," Venezuela needs a "harmony of interests" more in accordance with the concept of human dignity. The country needs to be politically reorganized, and the population assured of genuine participatory democracy—not by voting every five years, but through non-partisan forums and town, union, and business meetings, and where each and every individual can deliberate and decide, in accordance with the proposals of the encyclicals *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno*.

Venezuelans, the hour of struggle for our rights, for our families, and for our dignity has arrived.

U.S. prepares to hit Iraq again

by Joseph Brewda

The United Nations, under Anglo-American domination, is preparing to bomb Iraq again, possibly in April, as part of its general policy to spread war in that region, and also to attempt to restore the fortunes of George Bush's reelection campaign. On Feb. 28, the U.N. Security Council issued a statement which "deplored and condemned" Iraq for its alleged failure to implement various United Nations resolutions, and warned of unspecified "serious consequences" if that "failure" continues. The statement is purportedly based on the findings of a recent trip to Iraq by Swedish Ambassador to the U.N. Rolf Ekeus, who has been charged with destroying Iraq's "weapons of mass destruction." Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz will travel to New York in early March to respond to the latest U.N. charges.

Iraqi industry is the target

U.N. Resolution 687, passed last year, had demanded that Iraq destroy its weapons of mass destruction, purportedly to bring peace to the region. These weapons, according to U.N. definition, include the highly inaccurate Iraqi Scud missile. While Iraq has destroyed its Scuds, which the U.N. acknowledges, it has requested that plant and equipment used to make the Scuds be converted to civilian use rather than be destroyed. In November 1991, the Iraqi Foreign Ministry had requested that Iraq be allowed to convert this equipment to the "production of liquid fuel tanks, rubber separators for the oil industry, and for the production of civil explosives used in road construction, cement industries," and for building short-range missiles not proscribed by the U.N.

The Feb. 28 Security Council statement condemned this Iraqi request and related refusals to carry out the destruction of plant and equipment as a violation of U.N. resolutions. Only the U.N., it claimed, has the authority to judge what equipment will or will not be destroyed. The Iraqi request not to destroy industry constitutes a violation of its alleged responsibility to accept all U.N. demands "unconditionally," the statement read.

Following the release of the Security Council statement, U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Thomas Pickering warned that Iraq "must be aware of the serious consequences of continuing breach of" U.N. orders. British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd elaborated, in remarks on British television,

that "we do not rule out going back to military action." He continued, "We are not at that point yet, but they have to understand that they have to obey the United Nations."

On March 2, Tariq Aziz told the Iraqi press that, as part of his coming mission to the U.N., "We will ask the Security Council, 'Is your aim to destroy Iraqi industry or implement Resolution 687?' If your aim is to carry out 687, you have our approval. But if your objective is to annihilate Iraqi industry and deny Iraq the chance of becoming a prosperous industrial country, that would be a different matter."

On Feb. 23, U.S. Army Chief of Staff Gen. Gordon Sullivan released a statement to the *Washington Post* in which he said that the post-Gulf war, post-Cold War world had defined a new assessment of strategic threats to the United States. "Unfair or governmentally restricted competition" by other states and the proliferation of "modern military technology" to the Third World are two conditions defining a *casus belli*, said the general. The U.S. military destroyed 85% of Iraq's electrical power capacity, among other civilian infrastructure, valued in excess of \$200 billion during the war.

On March 1, the *Dresdner Morgenpost* of Germany reopened the "Islamic bomb" scare story justification for bombing Iraq. The paper claimed that Iraq has recruited more than 50 Russian nuclear scientists who are now working on a nuclear bomb in a complex near Baghdad.

Human rights pretexts

To help prepare the climate for a hit, the U.N. Special Rapporteur on human rights in Iraq, former Dutch Foreign Minister Max van der Stoel, released a report on Feb. 20 which claimed that Iraqi human rights violations are so grave and widespread that few parallels can be found except the Nazis. Van der Stoel, drawing on accounts of the U.S.-funded "Iraqi opposition," claimed that Iraq has tortured "hundreds of thousands" of people in the recent period, and has prevented food from reaching the Shiites in the south and the Kurds in the north. He called for a "resolute effort to save human lives."

Speaking in response to Van der Stoel's claims, British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd warned that the Gulf war allies would "not stand idly by" while this "repression" continues. For such reasons, Hurd said, the U.N. sanctions and embargo against Iraq, which de facto block food and medicine from reaching the country, must continue. The embargo has killed approximately 200,000 children under five years of age since it began in August 1990.

One Iraqi Kurdish leader on the Anglo-American payroll, Massoud Barzani, met British Prime Minister John Major and French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas in a late February-early March tour of Europe. The meetings were intended to build support for a hit on Iraq based upon alleged repression of the Kurds. Dumas told the press that, for the French, the issue was a "sacred cause."

Pakistan

Is Sharif government running out of time?

by Susan B. Maitra and Ramtanu Maitra

There are strong indications that Pakistan's 15-month-old government, headed by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, has about reached the end of its rope. Pressured by Washington to open up its nuclear installations and support the United Nations Plan on Afghanistan, and pushed by London, through the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front, for self-determination of Jammu and Kashmir, Prime Minister Sharif has made vital concessions, and these are coming back to haunt him.

By making the concessions, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has stepped on a hornet's nest—otherwise known as Jamaat-e-Islami, the orthodox Sunni political grouping which has brought down a number of duly elected governments in Pakistan and which is an active, now estranged member of the Islamic Democratic Alliance (IJI) team that won the November 1990 elections.

Prime Minister Sharif's trouble with the Jamaat began in the early days of his administration in the Sindh province, where he, without a political base of his own, began to court the powerful Mohajir Qaum Movement (MQM) to keep the Pakistani People's Party (PPP) away from office.

It was evident that the IJI needed all the help it could get in Sindh, and the MQM was willing to give it. But the Jamaat considers the MQM as its mortal enemy, and fights it physically and politically in Karachi and other major Sindh towns. Thus Prime Minister Sharif's move to get closer to the MQM was taken as an affront by the Jamaat-e-Islami.

While Nawaz Sharif's pro-U.S. position on the Gulf war was disliked by the Jamaat, it did not create any major fracas. However, the United States did figure as a major issue of conflict between the two following the Gulf war, when U.S. pressure on Pakistan to open up its nuclear installations and sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty increased multifold. Sen. Larry Pressler's January visit further aggravated the situation, as the South Dakota senator claimed that Pakistan possesses nuclear weapons and is also involved in putting together an Islamic fundamentalist bloc of nations by bringing the nuclear weapons-possessing Central Asian republics into the fold. Pressler, author of the notorious