

of the state, and of other national and international institutions, to promote real development that guarantees the right of every man to benefit from the abundant resources of the Earth and from man's intelligence," read a statement by the Episcopal Commission on the Family, headed by Puerto Cabello Bishop Msgr. Ramón Linares, and endorsed by the Episcopal Commission on Faith, Morality, and Ecumenicism, headed by Cabimas Bishop Msgr. Freddy Fuenmayor.

Norberto Ceresole: Chávez's Rasputin

by Cynthia R. Rush

As some members of Venezuela's elites have already figured out, most of President Hugo Chávez's proposals aren't the product of his own thought processes—to the degree he has thought processes at all. Rather, they come from Norberto Ceresole, the unkempt Argentine geopolitical freak who landed in Caracas almost immediately after Chávez's victory in the December 1998 elections, boasting that Chávez was his "creation." What is attractive about the new President, he told an interviewer from *Siete Días* magazine, "is that he represents a political model that I designed in the 1960s. *I designed that model*. . . . What's happening now in Venezuela, is something that I dreamed of, that I imagined years ago."

There is surely an element of megalomaniacal self-promotion in Ceresole's outbursts. But they also contain a significant element of truth.

The basic precepts of the "Chávez model" are to be found in Ceresole's lengthy, convoluted, and pompously named geopolitical tract, "Caudillo, Army, and the People. The Venezuelan Model or Post-Democracy," which Ceresole just happened to have ready for Chávez, upon arrival in Caracas in January 1999. Not known for his modesty, he demanded that 100,000 copies of the work be reproduced and widely disseminated, so as to educate the Venezuelan people on the "new state" Chávez intends to build.

Ceresole may not be a household word in Venezuela, but he is well known to *EIR*, whose founder, Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., he has attacked openly. Since the early 1990s, this news service has tracked his activities as an agent of what we have made famous as the British-conceived "Plot" to dismantle the institution of the armed forces, and the sovereign nation-state itself. Predictably, Ceresole can be found wherever the "Plot" is well under way, working with London's São Paulo Forum to promote the model of a "new" military, which won't interfere with London and Wall Street's nation-wrecking policies.

'New revolutionary project'

Starting in 1994, after Chávez was released from jail, Ceresole began shuttling back and forth between Buenos Aires and Caracas in his role as adviser to Chávez, whom he was grooming to become not only the leader of Venezuela's *sans-culottes* "revolution," but a leader throughout the continent as well. "In my opinion," he states in his geopolitical tract, "all the elements needed to make Hugo Chávez a leader of all Hispanic-Creole America exist today. . . . He could also become the necessary referent of the great disinherited masses, and of the humiliated armed forces of all of our Hispanic-Creole America."

In 1994 and 1995, Ceresole accompanied Chávez on a tour of several Ibero-American nations, in each of which the São Paulo Forum's leftist military or ex-communist networks were the contact points. As Chávez would later say, "We are a movement of military men which welcomes ex-guerrillas. . . . I am a revolutionary."

In Colombia, he and Ceresole reportedly met with leaders of the narco-terrorist ELN, and, in December 1994, also attended a conference in Santa Marta, Colombia, sponsored by the São Paulo Forum, which called for creating a new Bolivarian movement "freed from models linked to the past and which proposes to build a new revolutionary project." It is instructive that one of Chávez's big supporters is Enrique Gorriarán Merlo, the terrorist Cuban intelligence agent in Argentina, whose All for the Fatherland Movement (MTP) assaulted the La Tablada Army base in Buenos Aires in early 1989, allegedly to halt a coup attempt by nationalist Col. Mohamed Alí Seineldín and his "Carapintadas" against then-President Raúl Alfonsín. Gorriarán told a reporter for *El Nuevo Informador* that "when Lt. Col. Hugo Chávez Frías takes power in Venezuela, we shall have an ally of iron to extend the revolution to other parts of the continent."

Nazi-communist

Ideologically, Ceresole is a Nazi-communist. A onetime stringer for Soviet and East German intelligence, and reportedly also close to Cuba's G-2, he is an overt racist and anti-Semite, a Hitler-lover who raves that the Holocaust "was a big lie." In fact, after his manic remarks to a Venezuelan interviewer, to the effect that Auschwitz and Treblinka "are made in Hollywood. . . . Today, no one believes in the Holocaust," in mid-March, Foreign Minister José Vicente Rangel was constrained to invite him to leave the country, amidst growing scandal around his role as "adviser" to Chávez. In an interview in the March 1 edition of the Venezuelan daily *El Nuevo País*, Ceresole said that "the political party of the future, is civic-military unity—make the revolution just as Lenin, Mao or Hitler did. . . ."

His geopolitical writings, which are largely unreadable, are filled with references to such forebears of Nazism as geopoliticians Friedrich Ratzel and Halford Mackinder, as well as the "clash of civilizations" thesis of ethnic warfare

peddled by that other British-owned geopolitician, Samuel Huntington. What is all-important for Venezuela's "revolution," Ceresole writes, is a Nazi-like "caudillo-masses" relationship, mediated through a new civic-military "party," while all other institutions are to be "pulverized." "I believe," he says, that Chávez should "wear his military uniform with ever greater frequency, because only a civic-military 'party' can act effectively . . . between the leader and the masses." Who needs existing institutions? Ceresole asks. "We should burn everything that we've read and learned up to now. . . . Nor can a revolutionary process of the type generated here in Venezuela be shared with other 'institutional' entities."

Ceresole's hasty departure last March wasn't the first time he had to leave Venezuela under less than ideal circumstances. On June 15, 1995, Venezuelan military intelligence (DIM) and state security arrested and deported Ceresole, accusing him of subversive activities, leading the campaign to discredit Venezuela abroad, and with advising Chávez's Bolivarian Movement (MBR-200), a member of the São Paulo Forum, in preparing a coup d'état against then-President Rafael Caldera. At that time, Caldera had made himself unpopular with the International Monetary Fund, by resisting its demands that he impose its harsh austerity dictates on the Venezuelan people.

Ceresole tried to bluster his way out of deportation, boast-

ing of all his high-level contacts and seminar plans in several countries, including his friendship with his former sociology professor, Brazilian President Fernando Henrique Cardoso. He sputtered: "I, I'm not just anyone. I travel to important places." The Bolivarian Movement, he added, "already has its connections in many countries."

Ceresole later claimed that his deportation was run through the Israeli intelligence service, the Mossad, because he was about to publicly reveal his findings that "the Jews" were behind the 1992 bombing of the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires as well as the 1994 bombing of a Jewish social welfare agency, AMIA, in the same city.

'Get LaRouche and Seineldín'

When Ceresole was deported, some Venezuelan and Argentine media lied that he was the liaison between Chávez and the Argentine Army nationalists, or Carapintadas led by former Colonel Seineldín. But in a June 18, 1995 letter to the Venezuelan President, Seineldín denied any such link, explaining that, like Caldera, he, too, had been attacked by both Ceresole and Chávez. Warmly praising Caldera for defending "his Fatherland from the global action of local and foreign financial interests," Seineldín reported that Ceresole had visited him in prison, and tried to sell him on his crazy theories. But today, he said, "and after the events which have been publicly reported, I am certain that his visits [to prison] hid his intention of selling us 'the project' which Hugo Chávez later bought."

In fact, much of Ceresole's "Chávez project" revolves around putting malleable Hugo Chávez forward as a new continental leader who, unlike Seineldín, will follow London's orders.

As early as October 1992, as Seineldín and his allies were launching a new nationalist Movement for National Identity and Ibero-American Integration (MINEI), Ceresole openly attacked Seineldín and, especially, Seineldín's open association with the ideas of Lyndon LaRouche. In a press release dated Oct. 1, 1992, Ceresole announced that the MINEI's principles were "diametrically opposed to our own political conception," and protested that LaRouche "deploys in our country and in other Latin American [countries] . . . with confidential information which could affect our national security."

Ceresole organized Chávez's tour of Argentina in early April 1995, as an explicit attack on Seineldín, and as the platform from which Chávez would launch his Presidential candidacy. From Buenos Aires, Chávez predicted, "We don't think Caldera will make it to the end of his term . . . we are prepared to govern, now." During his tour, Chávez went to great lengths to clarify that "I've had no contacts with . . . Mohamed Alí Seineldín."

On this trip, Chávez also hooked up with Ceresole henchman, Raúl de Sagastizábal. De Sagastizábal is the former head of the Argentine Navy's Albatross unit, who was briefly jailed

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with Seineldín after the December 1990 rebellion against the Army high command. After being released from jail, De Sagastizábal broke with Seineldín and hooked up with Ceresole to found the Argentina in the World Studies Center, the organization which sponsored Chávez's trip to Argentina.

Shortly after Chávez's visit, De Sagastizábal supported Army Chief of Staff Gen. Martín Balza, whose public *mea culpa* for having waged war against terrorism in the 1970s, was used by the human rights mafia to step up demands for the Armed Forces to be dismantled, and officers incarcerated for human rights violations. De Sagastizábal also vehemently asserted that "we have no type of contact with ex-Col. Mohamed Alí Seineldín, with whom we have profound differences, which go far beyond politics."

A project that was 'Made in Britain'

by Gretchen Small

Hugo Chávez's relationship with the British government first publicly emerged on March 12, 1995, when an *El Nacional* columnist reported that the political counsellor of the British Embassy, Paul Webster Hare, had been seen dining with Commander Chávez at a deluxe restaurant in Caracas. Columnist Jesús Eduardo Brando featured his report under the subhead: "Perfidious Albion."

Chávez soon revealed that his relationship with the British Embassy involved much more than being treated to sumptuous dinners. Speaking later that month in Buenos Aires, Argentina, at a press conference organized for him by his notoriously anti-Semitic Argentine controller, Norberto Ceresole, Chávez whined that he faced political "persecution," his human rights violated by the government of Venezuelan President Rafael Caldera, which objected to the "official conversations" which he had been holding with the British Embassy. Chávez reported that British Ambassador John Flynn had been organizing a visit to London for him, but the trip had been cancelled, after President Caldera personally protested to the Ambassador that if such promotion of Chávez continued, perhaps the Venezuelan government would meet with leaders of the Irish Republican Army.

The Chávez radicals were proud even then that they had British support, boasting in the publication of the Revolutionary Bolivarian Movement-200 that their man Chávez—fresh from his meetings with Fidel Castro in Cuba and with Colombian narco-guerrillas in Santa Marta, Colombia—had been meeting with Ambassador Flynn.

Defending the Cali Cartel's men

At the same time that it was laundering Chávez as a "democrat," the British Embassy was engaged in its own campaign against the Caldera government, which had dared violate "free trade" by imposing capital controls, after the national banking system had collapsed. The virulence of the campaign was best expressed by the London weekly the *Economist*, which labelled President Caldera a "cockroach," during this time.

In 1997, the British Embassy opened another war against the Caldera government, this time coordinating with networks openly linked to the Colombia's narco-terrorist Cali Cartel. In April 1997, the Venezuelan military captured one of the last remaining kingpins of the Cali drug cartel, Justo Pastor Perafán, who had been hiding out in Venezuela for more than a year. Because the multibillionaire Perafán was a well-known socialite in Colombian high society (e.g., he had been a special guest at President Ernesto Samper Pizano's 1994 inauguration), he could provide hard evidence on the "gentlemen above suspicion" who protected the drug trade in both Colombia and Venezuela, should he decide to talk.

The Clinton administration immediately filed papers for Perafán's extradition to the United States. His networks in the Venezuelan Congress, based in the Interior Affairs Committee of the House of Deputies, went into action, seeking to block his extradition by cooking up a case to have Perafán extradited instead to Samper Pizano's Colombia, on the legal technicality that he entered Venezuela illegally.

Caldera's Minister of Interior Relations, José Guillermo Andueza, a hard-liner on narcotics, denounced the Congressional maneuver. He soon found himself the target of a cooked-up "corruption" scandal, based on material provided by . . . the British Embassy. Perafán's supporters in the Interior Affairs Committee of Congress charged that Andueza had illegally negotiated with a German government company, for a contract to revamp Venezuela's national identity card program, ignoring a bid for the contract placed by Britain's De la Rue company. The Congressmen, waving around documents provided by the British Embassy on the advantages of De la Rue's services, launched war against Andueza, and called hearings into his alleged "corruption."

Perafán was, finally, shipped up to the United States, but the new British Ambassador, Richard Wilkinson, immediately jumped into the middle of the De la Rue fight. Wilkinson, who announced that he considered his mission to be to aid in "the modernization of the Venezuelan state," used an interview with the Venezuelan newspaper, *El Globo*, to blast the Caldera government for acting "without any transparency," when it signed with the German government company, rather than with Britain's De la Rue. De la Rue not only prints the national banknotes of some 100 countries, but also specializes, interestingly enough, in providing "security and cash processing equipment to the banking, retail, leisure and trans-