

U.S., Canada and France Pressure UN Commanders

By Richard Sanders

Gen. Ribeiro's Resignation

In December 2004, Brazilian General Augusto Heleno Ribeiro Pereira, Commander of UN troops in Haiti (MINUSTAH), said he would not bow to "extreme pressure" to use increased violence against opponents of Haiti's transitional government, which had been installed after the illegal coup.

Pereira identified the U.S., France and Canada as the source of this "extreme pressure." He also told a congressional commission in Brazil:

"We are under extreme pressure from the international community to use violence.... I command a peace-keeping force, not an occupation force... we are not there to carry out violence, this will not happen for as long as I'm in charge of the force."¹

As Brazil's Foreign Minister, Celso Amorim, told Brazilian legislators:

"to do this would require a force of 100,000 men prepared to seek and kill in large numbers and this is not our role, nor do we want it."²

However, on July 6, 2005, MINUSTAH forces *did* lead a deadly raid into Cité Soleil, a shanty town in Haiti's capital. In this assault, UN troops inflicted dozens of civilian casualties, including women and children.³

Two months later, he resigned.

Gen. Bacillar's "Suicide"

On September 1, 2005, Ribeiro was replaced by another Brazilian, General Urano Teixeira da Matta Bacillar.⁴ He too came under intense pressure to conduct military raids targeting Aristide supporters in Haiti's poorest neighbourhoods. On January 6, 2006, Bacillar died in an alleged suicide. However, many believe he was murdered.

On the night before his death, Bacillar had a "tense meeting with the president of Haiti's Chamber of Commerce, Dr. Reginald Boulos, and Group 184 leader Andy Apaid."⁵

The Haiti Action Committee reported that "Bacillar had tense meetings with UN, coup-regime officials and the right-wing business elite" which:

"put 'intense pressure' on the gen-



Brazilian General Urano Teixeira da Matta Bacillar



Chilean General Eduardo Aldunate Herman

General Pereira resigned after saying he would not bow to "extreme pressure" from the U.S., France and Canada, to increase violence against Aristide supporters. His replacement, Gen. Bacillar, died of an alleged suicide the day after a tense meeting with coup-regime officials and right-wing businessmen. He was replaced by a U.S.-trained, Chilean who was linked to Pinochet's secret, political police.

eral 'demanding that he intervene brutally in Cité Soleil.'...This coincided with a pressure campaign by Chamber of Commerce head Reginald Boulos and sweatshop kingpin Andy Apaid...who made strident calls in the media for a new UN crackdown on Cité Soleil."⁶

On January 6, 2006, the day of Bacillar's "suicide," his second in command, Chilean Juan Gabriel Valdès, said UN troops would "occupy" Cité Soleil:

"We are going to intervene in the coming days. I think there'll be collateral damage but we have to impose our force, there is no other way."⁷

Reuters reported that Bacillar "had opposed Valdès' plan."⁸

Gen. Aldunate's Dark Past

Bacillar was replaced by General Eduardo Aldunate Herman, a former member of Chilean dictator General Pinochet's dreaded secret police. Aldunate, a graduate of the U.S. Army's School of the Americas (aka the School of the Assassins), had helped storm Chile's presidential palace during the U.S.-backed coup that killed demo-

cratically-elected, socialist president Salvador Allende in 1973.⁹ Aldunate has been accused of involvement in the murder of a UN-employed, Spanish diplomat.¹⁰

In January 2006, Brazilian General Jose Elito Carvalho de Siqueira became the permanent replacement for Bacillar as the head MINUSTAH.¹¹ However, Aldunate then became MINUSTAH's second in command.¹²

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5. "UN commander dead in Haiti amid pressure from elite." <www.haitiaction.net>
6. "New Massacres Loom: Questions Surround UN General's Death," *Haiti Progres*, Jan. 11, 2006.
7. *Ibid.*
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9. Alex Sánchez, "General Eduardo Aldunate," Council on Hemispheric Affairs, Jan. 18, 2006.
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11. "UN Stabilization Mission," *Op. Cit.*
12. "General Eduardo," *Op. Cit.*