

Narco-terrorism invades Brazil

by Silvia Palacios

During a presentation of Lyndon LaRouche's "15-Point Program for a Hemispheric War on Drugs" to the first meeting of Brazil's Federal Drug Council in May 1985, *EIR* representatives warned that should LaRouche's recommendations not be heeded, narco-terrorism would soon be invading Brazil. Despite the skeptical reception this warning received, the facts have proven us right.

Today, Brazil is not merely used, along the length of its Amazon border, as a refuge for terrorists and drug traffickers either fleeing military pursuit in Peru and Colombia or seeking a resupply of weapons. Even more serious is that Moscow's narco-terrorist irregulars have installed themselves in the heart of Rio de Janeiro's miserable *favelas*, turning the slums into armed sanctuaries impenetrable by the Brazilian police.

Taking advantage of the terrible state of abandonment in which Brazil's slum residents live, the drug traffickers are taking over, either through presenting themselves as the community's benefactors or by subjugating the population through sheer terror. In the recent period, authorities have been inundated with denunciations of the drug mafia for seizing political control of residents' associations in these areas, assassinating local leaders, and replacing them with hired hands. The federation of Rio de Janeiro's slum residents—from which some of the denunciations have surfaced—represents some 2 million inhabitants.

From their strongholds inside the *favelas*, the drug traffickers run cocaine and marijuana throughout the city and are protected from the law by veritable armies equipped with sophisticated weaponry.

In September 1987, an outrageous incident stunned the nation. Nearly 3,000 slum residents attended the funeral of a drug trafficker, eulogized him as their patron saint, and protested to the police about the murky circumstances surrounding his death. The funeral was also attended by a highly visible contingent of Communist activists from the following of old Comintern agent Luiz Carlos Prestes, who abandoned the leadership of the Brazilian Communist Party and passed over to the Social Democratic Party under Leonel Brizola.

In fact, a large variety of Soviet agents is also fighting—sometimes against the narcos and sometimes with them—for control of the starving population that inhabits Rio's *favelas*. And it is precisely this combination of forces which promises to unleash a narco-terrorist plague in Brazil, perhaps more violent than the M-19 in Colombia or Shining Path in Peru.

The political mafia

However, there is no doubt that the movement which already has hegemony in the slums is that of Brizola. It was launched when, as governor of the state of Rio de Janeiro, Brizola established a political alliance with the mafia that runs the outlawed game of *bicho*, a mafia that was in part absorbed into the drug trade. That alliance was planned and formulated by Brizola's deputy governor at the time, Darcy Ribeiro, who hoped to use that alliance as the springboard for his own succession to the governorship. Anthropologist Ribeiro is a specialist in profiling "marginal" populations.

Just as Shining Path sprang from the brow of anthropologists and sociologists of Darcy Ribeiro's ilk, so too have the *favelas* of Rio and of Sao Paulo been invaded by every variety of sociologist, anthropologist, and theology of liberation advocate, for the purpose of conducting profiles of the population and churning out terrorist armies.

The control the narcos exercise over the slums has evoked fascination, and even points of convergence, among Brazil's more degenerate leftists. "The Red Falange," criminals that traffic in arms and drugs, "have much greater popular support than the urban guerrilla of the seventies," wrote Fernando Gabeira, "former" terrorist and leader of the ecologist Green Party, who went on to assert that one could "smoke a peace pipe" with such a group. In fact, a pact with the drug traffickers would nicely complement Gabeira's demand for legalized marijuana consumption.

Laboratories and marijuana

During the past year, the drug traffickers have made Brazil their most important South American base of operations,

both for cocaine refining and opening up new zones for marijuana production. Recent statistics of the Brazilian federal police indicate that in 1987, cocaine seizures alone had increased 1,000% over previous years.

The police are forever discovering new indications of the international drug mafia's spreading empire in Brazil, including its support for terrorism. For example, on Jan. 2 it was revealed that the French police has solicited the collaboration of the Sao Paulo federal police to fight the Lebanese drug mafia, which possesses numerous laboratories in Brazil for the refining of Bolivian coca. The Lebanese connection, it was reported, finances terrorist groups in Europe.

Confirming these reports was the announcement Jan. 7 by Georges Paquy, spokesman for the French interior ministry, that his nation's anti-terrorist units had discovered an arsenal of the terrorist group Direct Action last September. Uncovered in the forest of Fontainebleau, the arsenal contained pamphlets, maps, and details on the terrorist organization's next victims. It also contained 12 kilograms of cocaine, which prompted the French police to request assistance from Brazil.

Two weeks earlier, Brazilian police had captured two mafiosi of the Lebanese connection. On Jan. 2, federal police officer José Augusto Bellini declared, "They form a powerful organization which monthly transfers nearly 100 kilograms of cocaine to Europe. . . . Sometimes the cocaine proceeds to Syria." He added, "These traffickers have been associated with terrorists."

Brazil is increasingly the favored location for traffickers from Ibero-America itself, not only for its vast and all-protecting jungle, but also for its production of such industrial chemicals as ether and acetone, which are critical to the refining of cocaine. On Dec. 26, 1987, Brazilian police dismantled a cocaine laboratory in Cuiaba, near the border with Bolivia, which turned out to be owned by the partners of Colombia's infamous Medellín Cartel, the godfathers of the narco-terrorist M-19 in that country. The laboratory, deep in the jungle, is the largest that has been discovered in South America, with the capacity to produce 200 kilos of basic coca paste and 50 kilos of pure cocaine each day.

The mafia has also turned Brazil into a vast producer of marijuana, to the point that it has already surpassed Colombia. Marijuana plantations in northeastern Brazil already occupy half the territory of Pernambuco state, which is twice the size of the nation of Holland. Northeast Brazil has been especially hard-hit by the austerity conditionalities of the International Monetary Fund, which, as in countries like Bolivia, has destroyed its real economy and provoked the flourishing of drug cultivation.

As federal police official Wladimir Cutarelli stated to the daily *Jornal do Brasil* last November, if the drought in the northeast gets worse, "the plantations of marijuana will increase, since one hectare of marijuana can sustain an entire family."

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—Lyndon H. LaRouche

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