

drug trade rebounded, and so did the terrorism.

At the same time, the Andean countries resisted—apparently successfully—the U.S. proposal to use its military forces to police international waters and air space surrounding the drug-producing Andean zone. The Andean governments were forewarned of U.S. intentions by the Pentagon's unilateral decision Dec. 27 to deploy elements of an aircraft carrier battle group off Colombia's Caribbean shores, allegedly to interdict illegal air and sea narcotics shipments.

According to a Jan. 7 *New York Times* story, U.S. military planners actually intended an amphibious helicopter ship included in that battle group to become *the* command and control center for Colombia's war on drugs. The ship, reportedly similar to one deployed off the coast of El Salvador, is equipped with electronic equipment capable of monitoring all communications between military units, police, and government posts.

Colombian reactions to leaks of the U.S. military deployment were immediate and furious, with many observers noting the similarity in U.S. tactics to the Panama intervention, and the threat to Colombia's military. The anti-drug daily *El Espectador* editorialized Jan. 11: There is "a clear pattern: first, the armies of our country—pressured in part by Washington—involved themselves in the fight [against drugs] because the police were corrupt. Now the Americans say that because of corruption, they should personally intervene to help us in the anti-drug fight. . . . How far is Bush going to keep 'helping' us?"

In the face of official Colombian objections, President Bush ordered the U.S. flotilla to halt its advance toward Colombia on Jan. 8—until, said U.S. officials, agreement could be reached with the Colombian authorities. However, Colombia's adamant opposition to such a move, which would hand the drug cartels the anti-imperialist mantle they crave, remained steadfast at the Santa Cruz pre-summit, and will presumably remain so at the Feb. 15 presidential summit in Cartagena, Colombia.

Thus, the result of five days of behind-doors confrontation between the drug-producing nations and the U.S. representatives was little more than a weakly worded resolution committing all four nations to combined anti-drug efforts, more military involvement by Peru and Bolivia in battling the drug trade, and increased economic aid from the United States. No dollar figures mentioned, of course.

Washington stands fanatically committed to a policy of destroying military institutions throughout the Americas, as part of its power-sharing arrangement with the Soviets. And a nation without a military capability cannot defend itself from the drug cartels. What Ibero-America is learning—albeit the hard way—is that the basis of any anti-drug cooperation with Washington must be respect for sovereignty. Economically and militarily strong nations can defeat the narco-terrorist threat; weak satrapies occupied by American "Rambos" must—like Panama—fall to the cartels.

Interview: Adrian Vasilake

Romania: Superpowers are miscalculating

by Leonardo Servadio

The Committee for the Rebirth of Romania has been constituted in Milan, made up of Romanian expatriate intellectuals and a handful of Italians. It was born as a Committee for the Liberation, but the rapid fall of Ceausescu suggested the change in name. We spoke with its founder, Professor Adrian Vasilake, a 35-year-old pianist who has lived in Italy for 10 years as a political refugee, about what is happening in Romania, and what the Committee plans to do.

"The Red Cross is doing a good deal," Vasilake told us. "The city of Milan has already sent the first aid, and more will arrive. There are people here who want to help; there will also be a sister-city relationship between Milan and Timisoara. We of the Committee for the Rebirth intend above all to study how to rebuild the economy over the medium and long term. For this, we have gotten in touch with professors at the Faculty of Economic Sciences at the University of Bucharest, asking for information on the situation of the country. But this data does not exist. The Communist government only had data on the elephantine production of steel sought by Ceausescu, who had made Romania, in the early 1970s, into one of the countries with the highest rates of development and with the second highest level of steel production per capita. People did not eat, but they produced steel—in the most unheard-of and least suitable places. What sense does it make to produce steel at all costs in a country which has the highest potential for agricultural yield in the world, when steel is produced in other places with a cost equivalent to less than one-tenth of what it costs to produce it in Romania?"

"But with communism, the *plan* dominated over everything, and the *plan*, utopia, had to be carried out without regard to real conditions. Even though Romania is best fit for agricultural development and small and medium industry, Ceausescu's *plan* called for developing heavy industry. And in communism, if the *plan* does not work, it is not because it is wrong and has to be redone; no, it's the people's fault, and they have to bear the consequences."

Lack of data

"The general state of decay of the economy today is known, but there are no statistics, and the potentials are not

known. Thus, the first action we shall take will be to send personal computers to the University of Bucharest, so they can start to gather data and examine it. It's important to get a picture of what the possibilities are for building up small private industry. There is a basis for doing this: in the textile industry, in clothing, in the production of light machinery, in the services, and naturally in farming.

"Romanian land is fertile. Romania used to be the breadbasket of central Europe. It can produce all types of agricultural goods and foodstuffs. Small industry will be the basis of the Romanian economic revival. We of the Committee will seek to encourage this development, among other things by seeking to encourage interchange with Western industries.

"Naturally we will not neglect culture. Soon we will hold a concert for Romania. Exiled Romanian musicians, who work in various European orchestras, all at the highest levels, will come here to Italy. The proceeds of the concert will be used to give scholarships to Romanian students, so that they can take rapid specialization courses here, in order to return quickly to the country and help with reconstruction."

We talked about how the development of infrastructure is absolutely necessary, including high-speed rail networks similar to those which are projected to bring together the West and East German, Polish, Hungarian, and Czech economies (see *EIR*, Jan. 12, 1990). "Certainly, it is urgent to develop a transport network in Romania and between Romania and the Western world," Vasilake confirmed. "There is a lack of roads and railbeds. There is a total lack of telephone lines. The development of telephones will be one of the first objectives of the economic rebirth of the country. Ceausescu had completely isolated the country. Suffice it to consider that even just to approach a foreigner in Romania, it was necessary to have a special permit. To get dollars, it was necessary to get a special permit. Just to buy, for example, a train ticket to go abroad, dollars were needed. When I invited my parents to take a trip to Italy, I had to send them dollars to pay for the ticket."

Gorbachov's manipulations

Even now, we observe, a shadow hangs over events in Romania. People say that in reality the upheaval now occurring was desired by Gorbachov, who is continuing to act according to the logic of "spheres of influence," in the effort to save the communist system at the moment of its ideological and economic downfall. "Sure," Vasilake agrees, "We know it: The 11 members of the Executive Committee of the National Salvation Front are all Communists. Iliescu is a friend of Gorbachov. Roman is the son of one of the first Romanian Communists. There are quite a few dissidents in the Front, but it's the Communists who are giving the orders. It is possible that events were influenced behind the scenes by Gorbachov. He knew that the end of the tyrant was coming, that the Communist

Party was going to fall, that the King would be called back, and that the historical parties that existed at the beginning of the century would be re-formed. So he acted in order to keep the fall under control. Naturally, the Russians do not want to lose control of the countries subjected to them. Seventy percent of Romania's food and farm production went to the U.S.S.R., and made up one-fourth of Soviet agricultural imports. Czechoslovakia has a very strong industrial tradition. Skoda produces not just automobiles, but also weapons—modern weapons.

"But the calculations on spheres of influence are wrong. The countries of Eastern Europe, like Romania, have had a strong democratic tradition. It is not like in Russia. If the markets are opened up, the push toward democracy will be unstoppable. After Romania was formed in 1860, with the union of Valakia and Moldavia, it was governed by a constitutional monarchy. In the inter-war period there was full democracy. There were different parties. The Communists practically did not exist; there was only a left wing of the Socialist Party. At the end of World War II the Communists would have been at most a thousand. It was a period when there was still a strong economic development. The land had been given to the peasants.

"But in 1948, through the 'Democratic Front' and with Stalin's support, the Communist Party succeeded in taking power and the land was collectivized. Since then the economy has gotten worse and worse. There was only one short period of development, from 1968 to 1972, when in tandem with the Dubcek reforms in Czechoslovakia, Ceausescu permitted the development of small private enterprises. This generated wealth. It almost seemed that the system of privileges, typical of Communist regimes, would disappear. Then the system hardened. Ceausescu made a trip to China and decided to copy the Chinese model: Small business was wiped out. Things started getting worse and worse. In the 1970s we were worse off than in the 1960s, and in the 1980s, worse off than in the 1970s.

"The people in Romania scoff at and hate the Communist Party, and now they don't want to hear of it—they want to wipe it out. Don't forget that in 40 years of Communism more than 1 million inconvenient people were eliminated, especially intellectuals. Every day two or three dissidents were eliminated. Only those dissidents whose names were known abroad could be saved, because the regime did not want negative publicity. But whoever was not known outside Romania got eliminated.

"But Romania is a country whose culture is Western. Bucharest is a city that greatly resembles Paris: There were the Liberty-style villas, the cafés. Cultural ties with France have always been very close. The same with Italy, due also to ethnic and linguistic affinities; there is reciprocal sympathy between the two populations, and now, this sympathy in Italy has appeared even more evident to me. Sure, Bucharest was destroyed by Ceausescu. But now it is time to rebuild."