

press conference to prove that he was “a free man” and had made no promises to his captors. Later Gómez was to write a book, *Soy Libre (I Am Free)*, which painfully, if unwittingly, detailed the brainwashing process to which he had been submitted during his captivity. One week after Gómez’s release, the M-19 won a second “summit meeting” with the Colombian political elite, which began the process of its legalization.

In early 1989, the Barco government announced an official agreement with Carlos Pizarro León-Gómez, the man who had ordered Gómez Hurtado’s kidnaping. One of the initial agreements was to hold a series of “round-table discussions” at which the M-19 would present its “proposals for change” to the country’s political and social organizations, which would then be submitted as legislation to Congress. In effect, the government had authorized the creation of a kind of parallel Congress, with narco-terrorists wielding the gavel.

The case of Gómez Hurtado, now a fierce advocate of dialogue with the narco-terrorists, of drug legalization, and of negotiations with the drug cartels, tested the mettle of the Colombian political elite. They proved more than ready for the next phase.

Drive for drug legalization

The Gómez kidnaping was to prove but a foot in the door for the real objective: the legalization of the drug cartels themselves.

On Jan. 18, 1988, the Extraditables kidnaped Andrés Pastrana Arango, the son of former Conservative Party president Misael Pastrana Borrero, and the most favored candidate at the time for mayor of Bogotá. On Jan. 25, they kidnaped and assassinated anti-drug Attorney General Carlos Mauro Hoyos. Also in January they attempted to kidnap the Conservative candidate for mayor of Medellín and former director of the daily *El Colombiano*, Juan Gómez Martínez.

Pastrana was freed by the police on Jan. 25, but during the week of his captivity, the Pastrana family had already begun negotiations with the Extraditables to win his release. According to Pastrana’s own statements after release, his captors treated him well and he was able to establish some camaraderie with them. Pastrana, who went on to become Bogotá’s mayor, never again touched the theme of the drug trade in his political campaigning. He also became notorious for sponsoring Bacchanalian drug/rock fests through his office where, according to police reports, the attendees “smoked everything but the lawn.”

Today, Andrés Pastrana is an open advocate of drug legalization and suspension of extradition of drug traffickers. On April 23, 1990, Pastrana attended a Washington, D.C. conference of mayors as a special honored guest, where he told reporters that he favored striking a deal with the traffickers:

“What I am saying today is that there is a proposal that

was made about two months ago by the Extraditables . . . [where they] offered surrender, handing over laboratories, land, the paramilitary groups . . . and above all the definitive extermination of the drug problem. We are in a war that has victors and vanquished; these vanquished—in this case the Extraditables—have said they would accept Colombian law, and that there should be a response from the government.

“In the Colombian judiciary, we have nothing written into the law about ‘plea bargaining,’ that is, flexibility such that those persons in some way or another could admit to being criminals, accept Colombian law, agree to be tried. I believe that this possibility could be sought, that in the case where they confess, accept, surrender those laboratories, dismantle them as they have said, the matter should be looked at from the standpoint that regarding the penalties established by Colombian law, there could be a pardon for them.”

Pastrana displayed clearly that he had been brainwashed by terror. Asked if the traffickers could be trusted to abide by any such deal, he responded: “I believe so. You don’t realize that everything they have said, they have done. They

U.S. State Department sabotages the war on drugs

The U.S. State Department has for years been a hotbed of “closet”—and not-so-closet—supporters of an accommodation with the drug trade. Such supporters go right to the top—as proven in the fall of 1989, when former Secretary of State George Shultz not only went public with his support for drug legalization, but announced that he will be campaigning for that cause.

On Oct. 20, 1989, the *Washington Times* reported that “certain officials” of the Bush administration were preparing “contingency plans” to negotiate with the drug-trafficking mafia should the Colombian government which takes office in August 1990 decide “to make a deal with the narcos.” The daily also said that “the U.S. would entertain Colombian proposals for commutation of sentences, or partial amnesty in specific cases, as long as that would satisfy the objective of halting the flow of drugs to the United States.”

One week later, on Oct. 25, Secretary of State James Baker weakly told reporters, “As far as I know, that is not the government’s policy.” Bush’s official spokesman Marlin Fitzwater told another journalist inquiring about the *Times* report, “I don’t know, I refer you to the office of [national anti-drug coordinator] William Bennett.”

said that in the matter of kidnaping people, killing politicians, they have killed two presidential candidates. They have said they would set off bombs. They have set off bombs. They have told us they would carry out terrorist acts, and they have carried out this series of terrorist acts.”

Attorney General Carlos Mauro Hoyos was a different matter. When his kidnapers dragged him wounded from his car, he was heard to shout, “Kill me, you bastards!” Carlos Mauro Hoyos preferred to die a martyr than become a mouth-piece for his bitterest enemies. His corpse was found later that day.

Pastrana, who was freed that same day, told the press that Carlos Mauro Hoyos’s assassination had been “an error by the Extraditables. I am sure that their intention was not to kill him.”

After a failed kidnaping attempt and numerous mafia efforts to destroy his newspaper, Medellín’s Juan Gómez Martínez practically begged pardon for anything his newspaper might have published against the drug traffickers. He went on to become Medellín’s mayor and, after the mafia

murder of presidential front-runner Luis Carlos Galán in August 1989, became one of the most dedicated proponents of drug legalization and of dialogue with the cartels.

In December 1989, the Extraditables kidnaped the son of Germán Montoya, the general secretary and leading adviser to the Barco presidency. Montoya’s efforts to involve the entire Barco government in peace negotiations with the drug traffickers became a public scandal. The outcome of his efforts are dealt with elsewhere in this report. On April 3, 1990, the Extraditables kidnaped Sen. Federico Estrada Vélez, after he issued several statements opposing dialogue with the traffickers. Three days later he was released, and his first statements were to propose creation of a high-level commission to institutionalize dialogue with the cartels.

After the kidnaping of Alvaro Gómez Hurtado, the drug traffickers were fully convinced that if one can kidnap and break the will of a political notable, one has every right to belong to the political elite. The families of the drug traffickers would—per force—become as respectable as the Kennedy family in the United States.

On Feb. 7, 1990, U.S. Ambassador to Colombia Thomas McNamara told the Colprensa news agency that “extradition is not the solution” for the drug trade. On the eve of the presidential “anti-drug summit” in Cartagena, Colombia, McNamara added that the United States would not interfere if the Colombian government were to opt for a deal with the drug cartels.

In March 1990, the State Department’s Bureau of International Narcotics Matters issued its annual report, stating: “While extraditions of major traffickers should continue *during the next year*, success ultimately rests on Colombia’s ability to prosecute and jail traffickers in Colombia.” The implication: The U.S. is willing to concede that extradition should be phased out, if that would facilitate a deal with the cartels.

On March 29, 1990, the *Washington Times* published an interview with David Wilson, the head of financial investigations of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, who declared that U.S. policy is to urge Colombia’s President Barco *not* to concentrate anti-drug efforts on closing down money-laundering operations, for fear this would “detract” from efforts to capture drug traffickers and destroy their infrastructure.

The March 1988 issue of the State Department’s International Narcotics Control Strategy Report had stated outright that the profits of the drug trade could be positively “beneficial” for otherwise debt-burdened Third World economies: “From different vantage points, there are both positive and negative perceptions of the effects of narcotics money laundering. Proceeds from drug trafficking are

used to finance other criminal activities . . . to threaten governments . . . and support insurgencies. . . . Despite these serious problems, laundering criminally derived money can provide benefits to some otherwise economically unattractive countries. Such monies create an influx of capital which can lead to a stimulation of the country’s economy. The increase in capital created by the criminally derived money increases money reserves, lowers interest rates, creates new jobs, and, in general, encourages economic activity.”

On April 28, 1990, the Bush administration reported that it was “angered” by a Republican congressional move to supply four Cobra helicopter gunships to the Colombian Armed Forces, to assist in their battle against the drug traffickers. John Walters, chief of staff to drug czar William J. Bennett, said, “We do not consider it an appropriate piece of equipment. We are very concerned that lethal aid be limited in a manner that prevents excessive use beyond what is necessary for programs we’re proposing in conjunction with the Andean countries. This particular weapon system involves firepower in excess of anything [government experts] believe is appropriate.”

“Excessive” firepower against the narcos? On May 8, it was revealed that the Colombian drug cartels had attempted to purchase 120 anti-aircraft Stinger missiles on the U.S. black market, and were willing to pay millions in cash for their purchase. The missiles, which use infrared heat-seeking mechanisms to hone in on their targets, were allegedly wanted for terrorist assaults on the aircraft of the President and his cabinet.