

tion would be no more than \$2 per barrel. The United States could take a management fee of \$10 per barrel. . . . At 20 million barrels a day, our \$10 management fee could reduce the federal deficit by \$70 billion a year after payment of the occupation costs. . . .

A more imaginative plan would be the internationalization of all Arab oil, thereby rectifying one of God's inexplicable errors in placing such a valuable resource in such an unworthy place.

If this is our plan—and it appears to be—it is as foolish as it was 15 years ago. It is absurd to believe that the Saudi Arabian population and the army would remain docile; and it is beyond belief to suggest that, otherwise, they be exterminated or expelled, as was proposed in 1975. Anti-Semitism (Arab branch) may be acceptable in the United States today, but I doubt that the American people would have the stomach to conduct a racial, genocidal war—even in the interests of such enormous gain.

It would be useful if President Bush told us whether he has excluded the possibility of ending the Kuwait occupation through diplomatic means, and if so, why. If he is preparing to starve or invade Iraq, this should be debated and the American public should know that it will face a rocky road.

If the President is planning a long occupation of Saudi Arabia, he will never admit it; it will just happen. It seems to be happening already.

Narco-terror resurges as the Colombian government retreats

by Andrea Olivieri

On the eve of Colombian President César Gaviria's departure for the United States to speak before the United Nations General Assembly Sept. 27-29, his administration is in shameful retreat in the face of a renewed narco-terrorist offensive by the cocaine cartels. Notwithstanding the President's fervent desire to strike a "gentlemen's agreement" with the cartels, the traffickers have responded with a wave of new kidnappings.

Spitting on the government's offer, known as Decree 2074, of reduced jail sentences and no extradition in return for surrender, the so-called "Extraditables" have ended a relatively quiet period of retrenchment (dubbed a "truce" by the ever-hopeful Gaviria administration) by kidnaping three prominent Colombians. On Aug. 30, Diana Turbay, the journalist daughter of former President Julio César Turbay, was reported missing. On Sept. 19, the 28-year-old managing editor of the daily *El Tiempo*, Francisco Santos, was kidnaped, his driver and guard murdered. Hours earlier, the sister of former President Virgilio Barco's personal secretary German Montoya was abducted.

In a statement released to *El Tiempo* and published Sept. 21, the "Extraditables" acknowledged holding the three kidnap victims, and demanded for their ransom "political treatment" (read: full amnesty) similar to that granted the narco-terrorist M-19 by the government. They further categorically rejected the government's deal, assuring that "no one, absolutely none of us, are thinking of surrendering," and confirmed that their so-called truce was not in response to anything the President had done or offered, but purely their own strategy. State security agencies report that the Medellín Cartel has created "three working fronts" in the cities of Bogotá, Medellín, and Cali to conduct further kidnappings and assaults against government officials and notables in the immediate future.

Also on Sept. 21, the anti-drug daily *El Espectador* published an editorial which described Gaviria's offer to the cartels as "a surrender, the abandonment of a state of law [for a] quietly agreed-upon reign of crime." *Espectador's*

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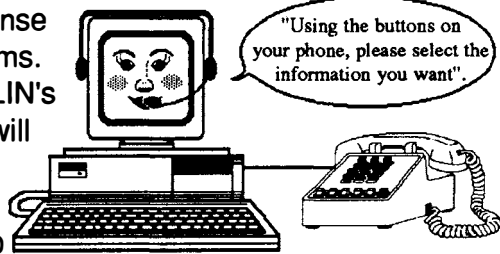
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editors chastised Gaviria, who “had promised us as candidate that he would first strengthen the administration of justice, that he would build secure prisons, that he would guarantee the life and honor of the country’s inhabitants, and then consider modifying the extradition arrangement. He has done the opposite, and the result can be seen in damage to public peace and to individual security. . . . What is the government’s real policy? Silence? Surrender? What is behind all this? Are secret talks going on? Where are we going?”

Army Commander Gen. Manuel Alberto Murillo González was emphatic on how his forces would proceed to deal with the situation, describing the kidnappings as the “incongruous response organized crime has given to the government’s recent offers. For such organizations, there is no place in the political arena; on the contrary, they have shut all the doors and necessarily it is impossible to achieve anything with them. The military forces will continue in their battle against those who violate the law, since there has never been a truce with criminals and they will continue to be treated for what they are: criminals.”

Unilateral disarmament

The timing of the cartel’s move is not accidental. The traffickers have sat back and watched the government demilitarize cartel strongholds like Medellín, in response to nothing more than a temporary halt in hostilities. With Gaviria’s issuance of Decree 2074, the on-again/off-again policy of using extradition to the United States as a weapon against the cartels was once again interred. Justice Minister Jaime Giraldo Angel told the Congress that judges would be encouraged to *personally* seek out and appeal to cartel members to voluntarily surrender under the decree guidelines. The Attorney General declared all prior attempts to confiscate cartel assets “a judicial failure” and too costly to the state to continue.

Then the famous “loopholes” in the Colombian justice system were reactivated. Some 21 detainees from the military’s “Operation Apocalypse II,” directed against the Medellín Cartel’s logistical networks, were peremptorily released by an obliging judge, with not a peep of protest from the government. Another five, considered principal security advisers to cartel chieftain Pablo Escobar, were released by a judge Sept. 18. That same day, the suspected assassin of presidential candidate Luis Carlos Galán escaped from jail, reportedly with inside help.

All along, the Gaviria government has allowed the Armed Forces to be the fall-guy for its own failure to adequately prosecute the war on drugs. President Gaviria himself has repeatedly warned against military “abuses of human rights,” a favorite charge of the pro-drug left, and the “restructuring” of the Armed Forces along the lines of a Panamastyle police force now appears to be near the top of the government’s agenda.

Because the government has thus unilaterally disarmed

itself, it is the Colombian government—and *not* the drug traffickers—which now finds itself cornered and about to lose all its hard-won and costly advantage against an enemy which only months ago was on the run.

Caught with its pants down?

With Decree 2074 so definitively spurned by the traffickers, the Colombian population is awaiting new marching orders from the government it elected to win the war on drugs. Yet the Gaviria administration appears to have been caught with its pants down. In fact, on Sept. 17, just before the cartels publicly launched their kidnaping spree, President Gaviria gave a speech in Mexico City in which he assured his listeners that “the criminal organizations have suspended their terrorist activities.” Not because of the military campaigns against them, he hurried to add, but “fundamentally because those criminal organizations were convinced that terrorism is the wrong path, and that Colombian society was not going to alter its decisions because of terrorist actions.”

During Gaviria’s trip, he joined with Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari in issuing a communiqué urging the need for an “Agreement to Limit Conventional Offensive Weapons in Latin America.” This, from a country at war with a mafia equipped with Stinger surface-to-air missiles!

After the kidnappings came to light, the government convoked a hurried meeting of the National Security Council. Afterwards, national security adviser Rafael Pardo Rueda told the press that “various hypotheses” had been discussed: “There has been a resurgence of different kinds of violence, such that one cannot say there is someone directly responsible for what is happening nor who is behind this.”

In a Sept. 21 press conference, Justice Minister Giraldo admitted that the government was unprepared to use any other instruments in dealing with the cartels than Decree 2047. He denied that the decree had been a failure, despite the traffickers’ unequivocal refusal to accept its conditions. Giraldo told the press, “Decree 2047 is barely two weeks old, and it is too soon to say whether it has failed or not.” He also insisted that there was no proof that the Extraditables were behind the Santos, Turbay, and Montoya kidnappings. Worst of all, he asked for press self-censorship regarding the narco-terrorist resurgence, since “we all have families and we are going to suffer if this terrible war is renewed.” President Gaviria went further, threatening the media with sanctions if they publicized “unconfirmed” reports or “anonymous” messages.

A campaign to force government negotiations with the narco-kidnapers has already been launched, headed by the Santos family’s *El Tiempo* and by *La Prensa*, the newspaper of the Pastrana family, which first launched the campaign to offer the narcos a plea-bargain. It is expected that further narco-terrorist acts will be carried out in parallel with this campaign, to give additional weight to the Extraditables’ demands.