

A strange about-face in Venezuela: Was Colonel Chávez brainwashed?

by Alejandro Peña Esclusa

The author is secretary general of the Venezuelan Labor Party (PLV).

On Aug. 4, the Caracas daily *2001* reported that Lt. Col. Hugo Chávez Frías (ret.), leader of the failed military coup of Feb. 4, 1992, had just negotiated with Colombia's leading narco-terrorist force, the FARC, the loan of 5,000 guerrilla troops for an armed uprising in Venezuela. This report, which has yet to be denied, is one of a series of reports which indicate that Chávez is preparing an insurrection on the model of the Mexican Zapatista guerrillas, to overthrow President Rafael Caldera. In other words, Chávez is trying to do exactly what the international financial oligarchy and Carlos Andrés Pérez, the former President whom Chávez tried to topple, want him to do.

Why this about-face? How is it that the leader of a coup attempt against the top agent of Anglo-American banking interests on the continent, Carlos Andrés Pérez (known as CAP), has now turned into the key player in a British plan to foment "indigenist" revolts all across Ibero-America? Could it be that Hugo Chávez was the victim of a psychological operation? Was he brainwashed during his long months behind bars?

Chávez versus Chávez

It is truly bloodcurdling to compare the public statements of Hugo Chávez in early 1992 with his proposals today:

- In an AFP wire on May 11, 1992, Chávez and other leaders of his Bolivarian Revolutionary Movement (MBR) swore that then-President Pérez was "guilty of treason for his policy of surrendering the country, for implementation of economic programs imposed by the International Monetary Fund [IMF] and the World Bank." According to the daily *El Nuevo País* on March 6, 1992, Chávez and the MBR called for "recovering public morality. Punish the corrupt. Expropriate money stolen from the nation." Chávez demanded that exchange controls be imposed and that a nationalist economic program against corrupt financial interests be implemented.

And yet, two years later, as President Caldera faces down the banking mafia, decrees exchange controls, refuses to implement the IMF program, and lifts constitutional protec-

tions in order to be able to occupy the holdings of corrupt financial groups, Chávez declares that Caldera may be committing "treason against the country" (*El Nacional*, June 6, 1994), that "Caldera resembles CAP more every day" (*Ultimas Noticias*, May 29, 1994), that Caldera "lifts the protections to assault popular sectors" (*Nacional*, June 29, 1994).

The fact is that in 1992, after the famous speech which Dr. Rafael Caldera gave before Congress concerning the events of Feb. 4, where he blamed the corrupt Pérez regime for the coup attempt, Chávez publicly offered the leadership of the MBR to Caldera. Instead, today Chávez is promoting a Constituent Assembly which would be aimed at removing Caldera from power and turning Venezuela over to the members of the Assembly, among them, of course, Chávez himself. The model he proposes is the 1991 Constituent Assembly in Colombia which, under narco-terrorist domination, set in motion a process which served only to erode that nation's fundamental values and to destroy its institutions.

- In 1992, Chávez stated that the MBR was neither left nor right, but a nationalist movement. But two years later, in an interview published by *Ultimas Noticias* on Jan. 3 and Feb. 1, 1994, Chávez said: "I deeply respect especially the social achievements of the Cuban Revolution; we may have differences in focus from its leader Fidel Castro . . . but independent of any differences . . . we recognize that this man has already entered into history and represents a reference point in America. . . . I believe that Marxism as science—because it is a science beyond any political system, as a method of analysis of reality, as a way of dealing with reality and the perspective toward the future—continues to be valid, like all the political currents which exist and have existed down through the centuries."

In the February 1994 issue of *Zeta* magazine (No. 978), Chávez talked about the Marxist insurgency launched in Chiapas, Mexico on Jan. 1, 1994: "Without claiming to analyze in depth this event of such importance for the future of Latin America, I find, however, some similarities with the Feb. 4, 1992 uprising in Venezuela."

- In a document signed by Chávez and other MBR leaders and published by *El Globo* on March 28, 1992, Carlos Andrés Pérez is accused of "treason against the country," for

having encouraged “by all means that the U.S. ambassadors accredited to Venezuela and the OAS [Organization of American States], Michael Skol and Luigi Einaudi, threaten us with a fate similar to that sought by President Pérez for Haiti, in case there were a national reaction against him; through his U.S. press lobby he got the *New York Times* to support the creation of an invasion force against Venezuela.”

Now that Caldera is leading the national reaction against CAP and his perverse policies; now that Caldera is opposing the invasion of Haiti; now that Caldera is being attacked by the media lobby of Pérez in the United States; now that the team of Luigi Einaudi is destabilizing Venezuela with the ultimate aim of overthrowing Caldera; Chávez is not defending the Venezuelan government, but attacking Caldera through interviews given to the *New York Times!*

Not content with this, Chávez is turning into a tool of Einaudi and British intelligence to promote “indigenous” uprisings designed to provoke chaos, civil war, and the balkanization of the continent into tiny, weak political satrapies. This past February, Chávez said: “What is happening in Mexico is a reencounter with our roots. To go back to Zapata is to go back to Zamora, to America’s roots, to Tupac Amaru, to Guaicaipuro, Tamanaco, to the present indigenous peoples who struggle to recover the lands which have belonged to them more than ten thousand years.”

According to 2001 on July 28, forces loyal to Chávez are preparing the secession of Bolívar state from Venezuela, exactly as “Commander Marcos” is trying to do with Chiapas in Mexico. When Chávez’s public statements are compared to those of Marcos, they speak an identical language. It must also be recalled that Bolívar is ruled by Causa R (Radical Cause), a party linked to the terrorist umbrella group known as the São Paulo Forum, to which Marcos’s Zapatistas also belong.

Demagogic tool of Pérez

As can be seen, that young officer who dared to rise up against the most corrupt government that Venezuela ever had; that individual who appeared on Feb. 4 on the television screens boldly admitting his defeat; the person whom all of Venezuela—ourselves included—supported, because he represented a hope, has now turned into a dangerous demagogue, a tool of Pérez against Caldera, a tool of British intelligence against all of Ibero-America.

What happened? What happened during his imprisonment?

We can imagine Chávez on Feb. 5, 1992: having failed, alone, betrayed, not only threatened with 30 years in jail, but publicly threatened with death by then-Sen. David Morales Bello (“death to the coup-makers,” the senator said to Congress on Feb. 4). There is Chávez—incommunicado at times, denied legal counsel, moved to Yare Prison under strange and perilous circumstances; in short, he is terrorized. It ought to be asked of a certain former defense minister tied to Carlos

Andrés Pérez why all those irregularities occurred.

We can imagine various figures visiting Chávez in prison and telling him: “Don’t worry, you are the reincarnation of Bolívar,” “You are the new Che Guevara.” He is offered the support of Latin America’s guerrilla forces, he is promised fame, women. We see military men and civilians, close to Pérez, experts in psychological warfare (perhaps advised by the U.S. embassy?), profiling Chávez’s weaknesses, stroking his ego, channeling his rage against Pérez against a different target. We can imagine the use of certain techniques to degrade him with low passions; women brought to his prison; he becomes docile toward his controllers.

Fear, rage, lust—ideal ingredients to manipulate the victim. Abracadabra, months later, out comes the new Chávez: self-worshipping, lusting for power; his main rival is no longer Pérez, but anyone or anything which gets in the way of his “historic destiny”; now only trying to please whoever offers him power, even if they are enemies of the nation. He is only interested in arriving. Only *he* can rule.

A few months later, on Nov. 27, 1992, Chávez was already so full of himself that he could not conceive of “competitors.” In his book *Military Insurrection of 27-N-1992*, Admiral Gruber, top leader of the second failed coup attempt, states that Chávez sabotaged everything—to the benefit of Pérez.

Now, Chávez repeats Castro’s and the British slanders about Ibero-American history: “At the end of the 16th century the Conquistadores inspired by [Sir Thomas] More wanted . . . to impose the so-called ‘New Order,’ without regard for the fact that America with its autochthonous development was for centuries already a utopia, with a political and socio-economic movement already present in the Aztec, Mayan, and Inca cultures, and not only did they not respect it but in the name of the sword and the cross they erased it from the continent. . . . The political institutions produced by this degeneration arose out of relations between conqueror and native, relations of exploitation, domination, elimination, and imposition” (*El Nuevo País*, July 26). Chávez doesn’t say that the Aztec culture was based on human sacrifice and cannibalism, and that it was the evangelization by Spain which rescued the other Mexican tribes from Aztec imperialism. Thus, with his distorted vision of what the evangelization of America was all about, Chávez is ready to back the “indigenist” separatist movements against national sovereignty and the armed forces; exactly what the British are promoting.

No one expressed more concern over the new personality of Hugo Chávez than his own comrade-in-arms, Cdr. Francisco Arias Cárdenas, in a letter in *El Nacional* on Sept. 1, 1993, in which he attacks messianic populism and states that “I am somewhat calmed by the decline of the Chávez ‘myth.’ ”

Truly, it would be worth investigating if Hugo Chávez has been brainwashed.