

# Surrender to narco-terrorism meets growing resistance in Colombia

by Javier Almario and Valerie Rush

Peruvian Armed Forces commander Gen. Nicolás Hermoza spent several days in Colombia in November on the invitation of that country's military high command. The purpose of his visit was to coordinate a joint strategy for defeating the narco-terrorist armies plaguing both their countries. The invitation to General Hermoza takes on special significance in light of the fact that Colombian President Ernesto Samper Pizano has publicly committed his administration to implementing a United Nations-mediated "negotiated peace" with the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC) and National Liberation Army (ELN) guerrillas, on the model of El Salvador. Such a "peace" would be a power-sharing arrangement with narco-terrorism, and, as such, is unacceptable to the Armed Forces.

According to a Colombian Defense Ministry communiqué on General Hermoza's visit, the talks between the two countries' military leaders "respond to the policy of the governments of Peru and Colombia of increasing integration between their armed institutions for the purpose of encouraging mutual confidence and development of regional security." As the Peruvian press put it, the Colombian military is anxious to learn about the "success in the pacification of Peru by the forces of order, with the support of the population."

The Lima daily *Expreso*, in referring to the meetings in Colombia, reported that an estimated 10,000 terrorists currently operate in Colombia and along its borders, ranging from the hired guns of the drug cartels, to the murderous drug-trafficking cadre of the Cuba-trained FARC and ELN guerrilla movements, to paramilitary bandits. Strategists across the continent are "extremely concerned" by this regional destabilization threat, the newspaper said.

## A model to emulate

The invitation to Hermoza was extended after the Peruvian general addressed a gathering of Ibero-American military attachés in Lima 45 days earlier. At that meeting, representatives from Colombia, Chile, and Ecuador, in particular, praised the Peruvian national security model and expressed a desire to learn from Peru's successes. While in Colombia, the meetings with General Hermoza centered around both psychological and military operations undertaken by the Pe-

ruvian Army in combatting the bloodthirsty Shining Path narco-terrorists.

During the meetings, Colombian officials confessed that the Army had heretofore been unsuccessful in winning the backing of entire villages which have been under the control of the drug cartels and/or the narco-guerrillas. They displayed maps to the Peruvian delegation showing large chunks of territory which, in their words, are "lost to Colombia" due to the subversion of the cartels and the guerrillas.

General Hermoza affirmed that "the relation between subversion and the drug trade is undeniable, such that in defeating Shining Path, we have had greater effectiveness in the fight against the mafia." Hermoza detailed the Peruvian strategy of decapitating Shining Path through the capture of its top leaders, combined with a limited "Repentance Law" which facilitated the desertion and surrender of some 5,000 of Shining Path's combatants.

One significant outcome of the meetings in Colombia is the Peruvian government's decision to establish a military base at a key point along the Putumayo River, which forms a natural border between both countries and which has long provided a convenient escape route for narco-terrorists in Colombia. That border region is also a major center of cocaine processing and shipment, and was heavily targeted in 1985 by joint anti-drug raids carried out by the Peruvian and Colombian governments, in collaboration with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration.

It is noteworthy that Great Britain's International Union for the Conservation of Nature proposed as far back as 1978 that that very border region be turned into a tri-national park reserve of some 6 million hectares, which would carve a vast "Amazon International Park" out of the countries of Colombia, Peru, and Brazil. According to a Sept. 19 report in the daily *El Tiempo*, the protected national park system has provided refuge to Colombia's narco-terrorists.

## The plot

On the day that General Hermoza arrived in Colombia, *EIR*'s Ibero-America Director Dennis Small appeared twice on national television, where he was interviewed by NCT-TV on *EIR*'s book, *The Plot to Annihilate the Armed Forces*

and Nations of Ibero-America. Small was asked to elaborate on the proposed U.N.-mediated peace talks with the narco-guerrillas, to which he responded that any El Salvador-type negotiations would be a disaster for Colombia, because it would constitute a surrender to terrorism and to drug trafficking.

Only weeks earlier, the head of the Ibero-American Solidarity Movement in Colombia, Maximiliano Londoño, appeared in a national television broadcast with the retired head of Colombian Army intelligence, Gen. Hernando Zuluága. Londoño and Zuluága offered millions of Colombian viewers an in-depth review of the plot to dismantle the armed forces of Ibero-America, and also slammed government efforts to negotiate a deal with the nation's enemies.

From the first day of his government on Aug. 7, Samper Pizano has pursued precisely such a strategy. He has already formally appealed to the United Nations to serve as mediator in the "internal conflict" caused by the FARC and ELN, and by a minuscule splinter of the Maoist former People's Liberation Army. The power of these groups—which many consider antediluvian, especially since the fall of the Berlin Wall—has nothing to do with either their popularity (they have none) nor their present military strength (which is not very large), but rather lies in the decision of the Colombian political class to allow them to operate with impunity. The "Project Democracy" forces of the Inter-American Dialogue and British intelligence use these anachronistic guerrilla bands as useful weapons against the national sovereignty and military institutions of the countries of Ibero-America.

### The 'El Salvador' model

On Oct. 27-29, the Samper government jointly sponsored with the U.N. a seminar in Colombia on the activities of the U.N. in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Chiapas, Mexico. In El Salvador, for example, thanks to U.N. mediation, the Salvadoran Army was reduced by more than 50% and the FMLN narco-terrorists were invited to take part in government decision-making. In the words of one of the Colombian diplomats who helped to apply the model, "the U.N. began as a mediator of the conflict, and now runs all of El Salvador, absolutely everything." That is, El Salvador is now a colony of a supranational dictatorship known as the United Nations.

Participating in the seminar were various U.N. officials, like former Colombian Foreign Minister Augusto Ramírez Ocampo, who explained that accepting continued terrorist activity during the ongoing negotiations in El Salvador was strategically important because "the cease-fire is a product of negotiation." Taking his cue, President Samper announced on Nov. 4, just after FARC terrorists massacred a busload of soldiers and students in Cauca province, that "the peace process will continue," no matter what.

Playing the Samper government like a piano, the ELN is now demanding as a condition for "dialogue" with the

government that its imprisoned leader Francisco Galán be their spokesman at the negotiating table. The FARC wants as its spokesman Francisco Caraballo, also imprisoned. Caraballo ordered the assassination of at least 200 of his former comrades when they opted for abandoning the armed struggle. Government acceptance of these conditions would imply their immediate release from prison—still more impunity.

### Resistance spreads

While the Samper government pursues its suicidal path, both civilian and military resistance to this scenario is spreading. The invitation to Peruvian General Hermoza was but one indication. Another was the decision by the Attorney General's office—no friend of the Colombian Armed Forces, to be sure—to suspend its ongoing investigation of active-duty generals Juan Salcedo Lora and Manuel José Bonnet, who had written two articles strongly critical of the government's efforts to strip the military of the crucial precepts of "due obedience" and "military legal jurisdiction," and which accused the government of serving as an agent of an international plot against national sovereignty and the armed forces.

It is strongly suspected that the decision of the Attorney General's office, along with the office of civilian Defense Minister Fernando Botero Zea, to suspend their witchhunt against the two outspoken generals, resulted from intense pressure from certain political and military quarters. The rumored forced "retirements" of generals Salcedo Lora and Bonnet have also apparently been abandoned, at least for now.

Also, in an uncharacteristic editorial in its Nov. 9 issue, the Santos family's newspaper *El Tiempo* called on Colombia to adopt the anti-subversion methods of Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori. "The Peruvian experience regarding the fight against subversion merits a detailed analysis by a country like our own." The Peruvian case, "despite its proximity [to Colombia] and its analogies to our own situation, receives less attention here, for example, than the comings-and-goings of the declining British royalty."

"Nearly four years later," the editorial continued, "Peru's internal security has been reestablished . . . and last year Peru showed the largest growth in Latin America (7%). Economic recovery responds in large degree to the successes of the Fujimori government's anti-subversive campaign. . . . Fujimori's achievements, despite the severity of many of his measures, has encountered a favorable climate of opinion today. Even his fiercest critics recognize his success in this area. And applaud it. Because the degree of anarchy to which the demented terrorism of Shining Path had brought Peru is something to which no reasonable Peruvian wants to return."

Nor does any reasonable Colombian want to continue to suffer.

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