

Samper sends gestapo against his enemies

by Andrea Olivieri

Just two days after returning to Colombia from Washington, where he spent a week and a half lobbying Congress and the Clinton administration to decertify the Samper government in Colombia as “a cooperating partner in the war on drugs,” the president of the Ibero-American Solidarity Movement, Maximiliano Londoño, received a handwritten death threat, giving him 48 hours to come out publicly in favor of certification and drug legalization, and against extradition of Colombian drug traffickers to the United States, or “your children and your wife will die and your head will roll. CIA DEA snitches die like rats.”

Press coverage of the latest threat to Londoño has appeared in Venezuela and Argentina, and the U.S. State Department responded to a briefing on the case by deploring such tactics. That threat, the latest in a series of threats to which Londoño and his associates, such as *EIR* correspondent Javier Almario, have been subject for the past year or more, forms part of a pattern of harassment, intimidation, and outright assassination that the narco-regime headed by President Ernesto Samper Pizano is using against its political opponents, in a desperate attempt to prolong its stranglehold on political power in that country.

As respected journalist Diana Duque Gómez declared in a Feb. 29 newspaper column, in order to save the President “at all costs,” the criminal Samper regime “is applying the law of *omerta*, the mafia law of silence, or retaliation” to its enemies. First to fall was Dario Reyes in August 1995. Reyes was the chauffeur of Interior Minister Horacio Serpa Uribe, and was a leading witness for the prosecution against Serpa’s links to drug-money infiltration into the Samper Presidential campaign.

In November 1995, former Sen. Alvaro Gómez Hurtado was assassinated. He headed a large, and growing, bloc of political influentials demanding Samper’s resignation. On Feb. 1, a leading drug cartel witness against Samper, Elizabeth Montoya de Sarria, was assassinated. On Feb. 16, the son of Gen. Ricardo Emilio Cifuentes was murdered while on a brief visit to Colombia. One month earlier, General Cifuentes, commander of the II Army Division, had resigned his commission in a public statement which sent tremors through the Colombian Armed Forces: “The President of the Republic does not merit my support.”

The opposition daily *La Prensa* devoted its lead editorial on Feb. 28, entitled “Gestapen,” to blasting Samper’s use of

the Colombian political police, the DAS, to threaten, intimidate, and perhaps murder, his opponents. *La Prensa* is owned by the influential Pastrana family, whose scion Andrés Pastrana lost the Presidential race to Samper by a narrow margin in June 1994. Why is Andrés Pastrana hiding out in the United States, in fear of his life? asks the editorial: “ ‘We cannot guarantee his life,’ say the officers of repression, with blood in their smile. ‘We don’t want to see him around here. If he wants to come back, he might get killed.’ They said the same of Alvaro Gómez. Of the witness Elizabeth de Sarria. Of the son of General Cifuentes. . . .”

Beyond Samper

Just as Samper’s mafia tactics are now being exposed for all to see, another Cali Cartel ally is squirming in the limelight. The Ibero-American Solidarity Movement (MSIA) in Mexico is demanding that Colombia’s ambassador to that country, Gustavo de Greiff, be declared *persona non grata* and expelled from Mexico for being “one of the main cover-up artists of the narco-scandal in which Colombian President Ernesto Samper is involved.” An MSIA demonstration in front of the Colombian embassy in Mexico City on Feb. 27 received coverage in Mexico’s leading daily *Excelsior*, and also in the leading Colombian daily *El Tiempo*.

According to a press release issued by the Mexican MSIA, De Greiff—who was the chief prosecutor in Colombia at the time of Samper’s election to the Presidency and who personally moved to shut down an investigation into Samper’s known mafia connections “for lack of evidence”—is “an accomplice” in the crisis afflicting Colombia. “The fact that at this late date, [De Greiff] is acknowledged as ambassador in Mexico raises serious questions about our country, as it turns us into the garbage dump of the underworld,” says the press release. De Greiff is not only an avid proponent of drug legalization, but has been linked—both directly and through his daughter Monica de Greiff—to the Cali Cartel.

Questioned about the MSIA’s charges, De Greiff stated, “No matter what they say, I say it is all lies.”

The *El Tiempo* coverage of the Mexico City protest rally notes that *EIR* has produced a widely circulated document on “Why the Clinton Administration Must ‘Decertify’ Colombia,” which accuses President Samper of having installed a “narco-dictatorship” in Colombia. The *El Tiempo* journalist interviewed MSIA president in Mexico Marivilia Carrasco, who argues that U.S. certification of Colombia would constitute undue interference in that country’s internal affairs, because it would prop up the cartel’s government there. Further, adds Carrasco, “we oppose the political manipulation by U.S. senators like D’Amato and candidate Bob Dole, who have wanted to tar Mexico with the same brush as Colombia. The U.S. should not certify Colombia, but it should not confuse that country with any other country on the continent.”