

Bush created Colombia's narco-government

by Valerie Rush

Colombia would not be a pariah state today, under a dictatorship imposed by the cocaine cartels, were it not for the corrupt deals George Bush struck with Colombia's dope traffickers in the 1980s, in setting up his Contra supply operations. As part of the Bush administration deals, the Colombian government made similar pacts with the drug cartels, thus establishing the legal, political, and moral framework for today's takeover of the Colombian Presidency by cartel puppet Ernesto Samper Pizano.

Bush's hypocritical justification for such a criminal alliance was that collaboration with the cartels was a "necessary evil," supposedly in order to fight communist subversion. In the face of unimpeachable evidence that drugs and terrorism are the *same* apparatus, and that allying with one against the other is absurd, the Bush administration developed the official theory that the phenomenon of "narco-terrorism" doesn't exist. With this policy in place, weapons run through the Bush government's secret "Project Democracy" pipeline ended up in the hands of Medellín Cartel butcher José Rodríguez Gacha, and from him to the mafia assassins of Colombia's anti-drug Presidential candidate Luis Carlos Galán.

There are still many in Washington, especially in the State Department, who promote Bush's "no narco-terrorism" lie. For example, U.S. Ambassador to Colombia Myles Frechette told a military seminar at Colombia's Army War College earlier this year, that the United States "has no evidence that the guerrillas are making and exporting cocaine to the U.S.," according to a pro-terrorist journalist for *El Espectador*, who crowed that this buried the doctrine of the "narco-guerrilla."

Frechette's comments, never denied by him or the State Department, were later quoted by an emissary for the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), Oliverio Medina, in a July 28 interview with the Brazilian daily *Folha de São Paulo*. Pressed to respond to Colombian military claims that the FARC is involved in drugs, Medina said, "We have information that U.S. Ambassador to Colombia Myles Frechette said, 'We have no evidence that the guerrillas are drug runners.'"

However, State Department spokesman Glyn Davies responded Sept. 5 to an *EIR* query about the FARC-drug connection: "They have clearly inserted themselves into the narcotics trade." In fact, there are volumes of hard evidence proving that the FARC is the leading drug cartel in Colombia today (see article, p. 42).

A 1991 *EIR Special Report*, "Bush's Surrender to Dope, Inc.," documents the Bush strategy of alliance with the cartels. It states, "Today, Colombia's government—under pressure from the Bush administration—is in the process of negotiating a virtual power-sharing arrangement with the cocaine cartels. With the cartels de facto legalized, the de jure legalization of their product is just around the corner."

The Gaviria Presidency

Colombia's government at the time was headed by César Gaviria, who was swept into the Colombian Presidency in 1990, after the cartels assassinated his party's anti-drug candidate Luis Carlos Galán. It was later revealed that some of the weapons to assassinate Galán came from a stash originally paid for by Bush's Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Elliott Abrams, as part of an anti-Noriega operation run out of Bush's apparatus.

As President, Gaviria oversaw a cabinet made up of the country's leading drug legalization advocates, including M-19 narco-terrorist Antonio Navarro Wolf and cartel employee Ernesto Samper Pizano, today Colombia's narco-President. In 1990, Gaviria shut down the Colombian Congress—without a peep from the Bush administration—in order to facilitate the illegal seating of a 70-man Constituent Assembly which voted to constitutionally ban extradition as a weapon against the drug cartels. Gaviria was given videotaped evidence that the Assembly had been massively bribed by the cartels, but refused to release it. The Bush administration knew he had that evidence in hand; the DEA's veteran agent in Bogotá, Joe Toft, was later to resign in disgust at Washington's failure to act.

Gaviria also decreed a lenient "surrender" policy for the cartel bosses, which has since led to such absurdities as five-year sentences for the country's leading drug kingpins. One year later, Bush Secretary of State James Baker travelled to Colombia and publicly endorsed Gaviria's appeasement policy toward the cartels.

Gaviria also subjected Colombia to Bush's free-trade dictates, which devastated the productive economy and left it ripe for the picking by the drug cartels. On Nov. 21, 1990, *EIR* interviewed Colombian Foreign Minister Luis Fernando Jaramillo, who stated that the Gaviria government was "committed to the process of internationalizing the country, and opening up of the economy." Said Jaramillo, "Now, of course the United States stands to benefit somewhat by this, but this is a tangential result."

As part of its embrace of Bush's "open economy" ethics, the Gaviria government in June 1991 shut down the "sinister window" at the central bank, which laundered drug dollars, and in its place opened up the entire banking system to a "free.exchange" of dollars for pesos, no questions asked. Drug dollars flooded the country, buying up everything in sight.

Today, Gaviria resides in Washington, D.C., serving as secretary general of the Organization of American States, a post granted him by President George Bush.