

## Colombian terrorism: crisis in the Caribbean

by Dennis Small

Iran came to Latin America last week with the takeover of the embassy of the Dominican Republic in Bogota, Colombia: Armed terrorists of the "M-19" guerrilla movement seized the embassy while a diplomatic reception was going on, and took over 70 hostages including 15 ambassadors. Among them are the Papal Nuncio in Colombia and the U.S. Ambassador, Diego Ascencio.

The M-19 has demanded four things as conditions for the release of the hostages: 1) freedom for 311 political prisoners, who include many of their jailed cohorts; 2) \$50 million in ransom; 3) the publication of M-19 manifestos; and 4) safe conduct and passage out of Colombia for themselves and their hostages. The Colombian government has broken its long-standing practice of refusing to negotiate with terrorists, but in the discussions with them has steadfastly refused to concede to anything except safe conduct to leave the country.

### Igniting the region

As of this writing, a tense period of negotiating and waiting has settled over Bogota, with both sides sticking inflexibly to their positions. Three days from now, on March 9, Colombia's mid-term elections are scheduled to occur, and although the government of President Turbay Ayala has repeatedly guaranteed that the elections will proceed normally, many observers—both inside

and outside Colombia—believe that a bloodbath and even possibly a coup d'etat are quite possible in the days immediately ahead.

The implications of these developments stretch way beyond Colombia. Three points in particular bear the closest attention:

- First the M-19 action has ignited the fuse on the entire Caribbean/Central American theater, and has drastically lowered the threshold for a nuclear confrontation of the superpowers in the area. This point is elaborated in an accompanying article by Contributing Editor Lyndon LaRouche.

- Second, the Bogota embassy takeover—like its Iranian predecessor—is being actively used by the Jesuit One World crowd which controls international terrorism to argue the necessity of entirely revamping the world juridical order. Their target is to undermine the legal basis of the sovereign nation-state itself, as we explain later in this report.

- Third, the embassy incident is likely to trigger protracted left-right civil war in Colombia, which in turn will ignite a spreading "Iranization" of the entire Caribbean Basin from Mexico to Colombia. There has already been a wave of embassy takeovers in the region, and Central America in particular is fully primed for waves of chaos and violence. Mexico, although still a far more stable republic, has also been targeted recently for "left-

ist" attacks against the government's industrialization strategy. The Colombian situation can also lead into a reactivation of the Rand Corporation's "War of the Pacific" plot to provoke border wars in South America.

The economic and political implications of turning the entire Latin American subcontinent into one gigantic Iran are staggering. Almost two-thirds of total U.S. direct foreign investment in the Third World is in Latin America, and there is clearly no way that profitable business activities can occur under Iran-style conditions of regional civil war. One academic sympathizer of the M-19 jovially predicted this week that there will be "a rash" of terrorism in Latin America, and that diplomats and businessmen are just going to have to get used to living under siege in armed fortresses.

Businessmen and others involved in Latin America have been somewhat less sanguine about such prospects, and are insistently bringing up a set of central questions that are on their minds: Who is the M-19 *really*? Who ordered the embassy takeover? And what is their final objective?

### 'The Military knew'

There is a scandal of major proportions brewing in the international diplomatic community over how it is that the Colombian military was placed on full alert because they knew that a terrorist attack on a foreign embassy would occur, fully *two weeks* before the M-19 assault. At least a dozen Foreign Ministers are known to be asking why, if this was known, was there not a *single* soldier on guard at the Dominican Embassy at the time of the assault. The well-trained Colombian military is not known for making "mistakes" of this sort.

A press spokesman for the Colombian Embassy in Washington mumbled apologies to *EIR* when asked these exact questions. "Well, maybe the army was expecting an attack at some *other* embassy," she offered.

The news of the military alert was wired internationally by the Spanish news agency EFE, on Feb. 15—twelve days before the Feb. 27 assault on the embassy (see box). It was printed in at least one major international newspaper (*Excelsior* of Mexico), and after being blacked out of the Colombian press was finally printed March 5 by an enterprising columnist for the Bogota daily *El Espectador*, under the suggestive headline: "It Was Known Beforehand."

This set of facts raises fundamental questions about the nature of the M-19. Far from being an "honest" group of unhappy leftists, the M-19—like its sister organizations, the Baader-Meinhoff and the Red Brigades—is run by oligarchic intelligence circles centered around Europe's Jesuit black nobility.

In fact, both the military "right" and the M-19 "left" in Colombia are controlled by the same individuals at the

## 'Colombian military knew embassy attack coming'

*Following are excerpts from an EFE Spanish press agency wire which appeared in the Mexico City daily Excelsior on Feb. 16 under the headline "Violence increases in Colombia on eve of municipal elections."*

BOGOTA, Feb. 15 (EFE)—The discovery of a terrorist plot against foreign embassies in Bogota and the outbreak of violence on the eve of mid-term elections in Colombia forced the armed forces to be confined to their barracks, well-informed sources revealed here...

According to well-informed military sources, the Defense Ministry today cancelled all leaves in all four military services.

A week before the March 9 elections, a "Flag Plan" coordinated by the Army and the Police to maintain public order during the electoral process will enter into effect throughout the country.

At the same time, the formation of the highest security agency (CIES) became known here. Its mission will be to protect state security, after a terrorist plan by leftist forces designed to sabotage the elections became known.

This plan provided for terrorist sabotage emanating from the National University, the most important in the country, to force the temporary closure of that center of higher education.

A top source in the office of the chief of staff of the secret police (DIPEC) said that they had discovered a terrorist plot against foreign embassies in Bogota, consisting of bombs being placed in those embassies two weeks before the mid-term elections.

top, which means that the embassy takeover was deliberately orchestrated from the beginning. The mastermind of the operation inside the country is Conservative Senator Alvaro Gómez Hurtado, whose father Laureano Gómez was nicknamed "The Monster" by Colombians for his bloody 1950-53 dictatorship.

Gómez Hurtado, Jr. is a self-avowed fascist, a self-avowed Jesuit, and a self-avowed proponent of legalizing marijuana production in Colombia.

Gómez Hurtado runs the Colombian military through Defense Minister Camacho Leyva, a partisan of staging a Chilean-style coup in Colombia. He runs the misnamed Justice Ministry through his brother-in-law, Hugo Escobar Sierra. And, most significantly, he created

and runs the “leftist” M-19 through emplaced military intelligence personnel (see below).

It therefore comes as no surprise when Gómez Hurtado brazenly states, as he did this week, that the embassy takeover politically favors his Conservative Party.

## Violence

Over the past days, many of the nations whose ambassadors are being held hostage have engaged in feverish diplomatic activity to pressure the Colombian government to not cave in to military pressure to storm the embassy—Entebbe style—and provoke a bloodbath. The diplomatic community’s concern is well taken. Earlier this week, Colombian President Turbay Ayala told the press that “not a single peso, not a single prisoner” would be handed over to the M-19, as the terrorists are now demanding. Turbay has agreed in the course of negotiations only to providing them an airplane and safe conduct so that they can leave the country. The M-19, however, is emphatic that they want all political prisoners released, and most knowledgeable observers agree that they will begin to assassinate the hostages two-by-two—as threatened—if the Colombian government stalls for too long. At that point, crack antiterrorist squads can be expected to launch a lightning raid of the embassy.

The press is reporting that top Israeli and American antiterror units have arrived in Bogota to aid the Colombians in such an assault. Sharpshooters have carefully taken up positions in the environs of the embassy. And one freed hostage reports that the M-19 guerrillas, in addition to being highly trained and heavily armed, have wired the embassy with explosives and will blow it up should a raid be launched.

Nothing would please Gómez Hurtado and his Black International allies more than to set off such a bloodbath. It would mean the end of what little democracy remains in Colombia, and would usher in a military dictatorship. This in turn would mean civil war—a return to the conditions of the 1948-58 “La Violencia” period when almost half a million Colombians were killed in fratricidal battle. Under current conditions, and with prompting from further terrorist acts, the entire region would quickly become one large Iran.

Even as the tense negotiations over the seized embassy continue, political violence is spreading in Colombia. This past week, three terrorist bombs were set off in three different cities, including one at the Mexican consulate in Medellin. A radio station was also reportedly seized by ultraleftists in the port city of Barranquilla. In response, Defense Minister Camacho Leyva authorized his troops to kill any “suspicious” individuals or those who fail to obey a “halt” order. As a result, over half a dozen people have been killed in two days by trigger-happy troops.

# Caribbean now new center of war danger

by Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr.

In my nationwide half-hour NBC-TV address of Jan. 27, I stated that I was omitting discussion of the potential for an early thermonuclear war crisis in the Caribbean. With a terrorist attack on the Dominican Embassy in Bogota, Colombia, the Caribbean nuclear confrontation with Moscow was set into motion.

Now, as in the case of the taking the U.S. citizens hostage in Iran, the official Carter administration coverage of the Bogota hostage crisis is predominantly a pack of lies.

Avoiding as much as possible the kind of information which would be immediately understood only by high-level intelligence circles, I report the most relevant of the more easily understood facts of the new hostage crisis as we have them in hand at this moment.

## A plot known well in advance

A heavily armed terrorist group stormed the Dominican Embassy in Bogota, Colombia while a large part of the diplomatic community was there, attending the celebration of a major Dominican national holiday. About 60 hostages are reportedly being held, in addition to an undetermined number of dead and injured. The hostages include the ambassadors of Brazil, Mexico and the United States. The U.S. ambassador is currently negotiating, by walkie-talkie, on behalf of the terrorist group holding himself and other hostages.

This attack was widely advertised in advance.

In the Feb. 16 issue of a leading Mexico City daily, *Excelsior*, it was reported that the Colombian military had been placed on a full-scale alert, because of the discovery of a “terrorist plot against foreign embassies in Bogota.”

In the Feb. 22 edition of a London intelligence publication, *Latin America*, the following item appeared under the slug “Colombia/Alert”: