

Kissinger, drug mafia seek Betancur overthrow

by Valerie Rush

One of Ibero-America's leading cocaine traffickers has joined with at least two of Henry Kissinger's Central American puppet-presidents in making unprecedented attacks against Colombian President Belisario Betancur and against his historic peace initiatives both at home and abroad.

The attacks against Betancur are a scarcely veiled call for a coup against his government, on the part of those forces internationally who are terrified that his amnesty program for guerrilla groups will not only succeed in stabilizing Colombia—the gateway between violence-torn Central America and the rest of South America—but may also serve as a model for how the Contadora group, founded on Betancur's initiative, could achieve a similarly negotiated ceasefire in the Central American free-fire zone.

In a well-publicized open letter to Colombian Bishop Darío Castrillón dated Sept. 4 and sent from "somewhere in exile," fugitive cocaine king Carlos Lehder Rivas charged that Betancur's war against drugs was a farce and demanded that Betancur admit—"if not publicly, then at least to his confessor"—that he had accepted close to one million dollars from the country's leading drug traffickers in addition to using their private airplanes and helicopters in his 1982 electoral campaign.

Joining Lehder's campaign was El Salvador's President Napoleón Duarte, who charged that Betancur's truce with the Colombian guerrilla movement was "superficial and inconsistent" and guaranteed not to last 24 hours—an accusation all the more outrageous since Duarte made it on the eve of a scheduled Sept. 19 visit to Colombia to meet with the target of his attack.

Duarte is run by Henry Kissinger's networks based in Venezuela, in particular former Foreign Minister Aristides Calvani.

Colombians from across the political spectrum were shocked at the crudeness of Duarte's accusations and publicly charged the Salvadoran President with showing "disrespect" toward his Colombian colleague. Duarte's ambassador in Bogotá was forced to "clarify" his President's comments by explaining: "The Colombian example is praiseworthy, but

each country has its own dynamic for solving its own problems."

Just days earlier, another top Central American Kissinger-crony, Costa Rican President Luis Alberto Monge, issued a public attack on the Contadora Group—something no regional president has dared to do until now—and made it clear that he much preferred the framework of the Kissinger Commission on Central America to deal with the region's crisis.

Monge's assertions that the Contadora peace efforts have been ineffectual and that other negotiating frameworks should be sought were rejected by Colombian Foreign Minister Augusto Ramírez Ocampo who insisted that the crisis in Central America meant that this was a time for "great decisions" and not the time to turn one's back on Contadora.

Enemies from within

Inside Colombia, Betancur has had to contend with a rumor campaign orchestrated by his enemies to the effect that a military coup was imminent because of Betancur's "concessions" to the guerrillas.

Two separate stories, both published on Sept. 1 by the anti-government daily *El Tiempo*, helped launch the rumor campaign. The first was taken from the Kissinger-linked Madrid magazine *Cambio 16*, which alleged that a "colonels' coup" against the government had just barely been averted that very week. According to the *Cambio 16* report, the middle-level officers involved in the coup attempt had justified their rebellion by pointing to guerrilla violations of the just-signed amnesty as proof of its unworkability.

The second article was based on a just-released report by the New York-based risk analysis firm Frost & Sullivan which predicted "an at least 25 percent chance of a military coup in Colombia sometime during the last year of Betancur's term." Contributing factors to the coup threat, according to the Frost & Sullivan report, are Betancur's "increasingly leftist foreign policies" and his "growing concessions to the guerrillas."

A continent-wide destabilization

The attacks against Betancur are the leading edge of a campaign against all the leading anti-drug fighters of the continent. In Bolivia, where President Hernán Siles Zuazo has been threatened directly by the Nazi International (see *International Intelligence*), Interior Minister Federico Alvarez Plata placed the armed forces and police on alert Sept. 7, in response to rumors of plans to assassinate political, military, and labor leaders. The impoverished nation of Bolivia has become the cocaine center of Ibero-America, and Alvarez Plata is under heavy fire for his alleged violation of the drug traffickers' "human rights."

As we go to press, unconfirmed rumors are circulating that the continental ministerial-level meeting set for Santa Cruz, Bolivia on Sept. 11 to discuss the next step in the war on drugs has been cancelled.