

Editorial

The just war

Military forces in Ibero-America have been fighting wars against terrorist subversion for the better part of a decade. In the last year, terrorist activity on the continent has been proven to be the servant of the drug mafia, in Peru, Colombia, and Guatemala. But at the moment when the most military assistance is needed to wipe out terrorist subversion and the drug trade, the United States has cut off military aid to Peru, whose President shut down cocaine laboratories that produced billions of dollars worth of cocaine.

The republics of the continent need strong military forces, well-equipped to win the war against narco-terrorism. This includes some new democracies, like Guatemala, whose first elected President in two decades was sworn in on Jan. 14. These countries need economic development, a national project that allows them to win the peace, in the war against terrorism and subversion. On both counts, the United States has directly aided the enemy, by cutting military aid because of "human rights violations," and by imposing IMF conditions that destroy populations.

In El Salvador, a most fragile democracy, the U.S. embassy forced the government to accept IMF austerity conditions that aid subversives far more than Fidel Castro could afford to do. At a Conference on Low Intensity Warfare sponsored by Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger on Jan. 14, Gen. Adolfo Blandon, chief of staff of the Salvadoran Army, described the "disillusionment" of the populations of Ibero-America with U.S. economic policy, which "forces decisions to be made by our leaders, which undermine the foundations upon which they rule . . . decisions which turn the population into a rabble."

The war against terrorism will not be won unless these IMF policies are abandoned. Instead, there is a loud operation to destroy the military forces of Ibero-America, while imposing economic conditions that encourage narco-terrorists. While the IMF forces the cuts that disarm the armed forces, the media campaign against the military intensifies.

The liberal press blamed the Colombian military

for the death toll—after narco-terrorists assaulted the Justice Palace and murdered half the Supreme Court Justices—even suggesting that the military and not the terrorists burned down the palace to destroy records of military involvement in torture. Now the liberal press, along with the "human rights" mafia, is on the move to try to force Guatemalan President Cerezo to bring the military to trial there, on the model of the Argentine show trials.

The horror of the Argentine trials, which put put former Presidents and military leaders behind bars for life because they waged war against subversion, is that the man who designed the policy of "disappearing" thousands in the dirty war, Henry Kissinger's buddy José Martínez de Hoz, got off scot-free. Martínez de Hoz, economic czar during the military government, designed the policy to silence opposition to his IMF policy, while he pocketed millions of dollars.

The war against narco-terrorism is a just war, necessary to save the nation-states of the region. As such, it must be an open war, fought with the ruthlessness that the purpose requires. Many military officials in Argentina demanded such an open war, in which casualties would be named, in which military trials and executions, as in time of war, would be practiced, instead of "disappearances" that created national psychosis. The constitutional government of Mrs. Perón had decreed such an open war on terrorism. Instead, Martínez de Hoz's dirty war was imposed, designed to crush and paralyze Argentine youth, who lived in fear. It was designed to destroy the armed forces, and to destroy the possibility of winning the peace. It was designed to end in show trials, as a model for how to destroy the continent's sovereign republics.

Let Ibero-America's military fight the just war with the economic weapons to win the peace. And let the liberal press that decries human rights violations and demands military show trials, say why it has not decried the fact that Martínez de Hoz got away. Why has it not called for a trial, for crimes against humanity, of those who designed the policies of genocide?