

'Peace plans' for Central America leave Moscow's drug army free rein

by Gretchen Small

If United States policy for stopping Soviet advances in the Western hemisphere continues to be debated as a choice between supporting the narcotics-trafficking Nicaraguan Contras, or accepting promises of good behavior from the narcotics-trafficking Sandinistas and FMLN, then Soviet domination over large chunks of this hemisphere will merely be a matter of time.

There has been a flurry of apparent action this August on the Central American front. But, except for the release of the "LaRouche Plan: The Strategic Mission of the United States in Central and South American Conflict with the U.S.S.R.," on Aug. 6 by the LaRouche Democratic Campaign News Bureau (see pp. 48-53), no one has moved out of the doomed "Contras or Sandinistas" box.

Review the "action" which has caused such a flurry thus far this month.

On Aug. 2, wire services carried the report that Nicaraguan Defense chief Gen. Humberto Ortega had announced that Nicaragua would soon receive MiG fighter jets from the Soviet Union. U.S. officials told reporters that the United States would not tolerate that.

On Aug. 5, a new tune was sung. Representative Jim Wright and President Reagan announced a new bipartisan "peace plan" for Central America. The plan advocated negotiating a deal with the Sandinistas, centered on Nicaragua accepting democratic reforms and international supervision of its domestic affairs, and a program for regional disarmament, including "reductions of the standing armies of the region." Alleged successes of the Contras in the battlefield, and the desire to participate in the Reagan administration's Caribbean Basin Initiative, will force the Sandinista regime to accept, it was argued.

Then, on Aug. 7, the Presidents of Central America signed the Arias plan, after Costa Rica's President Oscar Arias. This document calls for each country to declare an amnesty for insurgent forces throughout the area, followed by "dialogue" between the governments and those groups, now unarmed, which accept the amnesty, by Nov. 7. All substantive agreements on how to enforce the peace agreement, are put off for future negotiations.

The U.S. State Department "welcomed" the agreement,

asserting that it was in accord with the Wright-Reagan plan in most essential respects, other than the timing of its implementation.

Nicaragua's radical chic dictator Daniel Ortega flew off to Cuba to meet with Fidel Castro, and they, too, decided that the Arias plan was "highly positive and a new event in the history of the region." The Cuban news agency Prensa Latina reported that "Fidel expressed to Daniel" his willingness for Cuba to withdraw its military advisers, if the United States removes all of its advisers and bases from the region. Associated Press sent out the news around the world: Ortega returned to Nicaragua "after winning support from Fidel Castro for an end to the presence of all foreign military advisers in Central America."

Nicaraguan Vice President Sergio Ramírez announced that the Sandinista regime is already preparing decrees reversing the state of emergency, and reinstating press and religious freedoms—which they will promulgate as soon as all U.S. aid to the Contras ends. But if the United States votes up more aid to the Contras, the whole plan is off.

In the United States, Contra supporters began screaming, so Republican presidential hopeful Robert Dole proposed a compromise. The U.S. Congress should pass legislation allocating \$150 million to the Contras before Sept. 30, when current funding runs out, but not disburse the money—unless the peace plan falls apart.

The return of the Carter Democrats

The *Miami Herald* of Aug. 8 claimed it was Nancy Reagan who pushed the President to go with the Wright plan, a Central American version of the "zero-option" deal which she is said to have been pushing for Europe, in hopes of having her husband go down in history as a "man of peace."

In their Aug. 14 syndicated column, Washington watchers Evans and Novak named Secretary of State George Shultz as an author of this plan. His "heart set on putting the Nicaraguan problem behind the administration," Shultz allied with White House Chief of Staff Howard Baker to push the plan through, they say, because Baker "wants to defuse Nicaragua to facilitate a superpower summit with Mikhail Gorbachov."

Evidence is mounting that it is the old Carter crowd—

which handed power to the Sandinistas back in 1979—which has put together this latest “peace” package, with Carter negotiator Sol Linowitz taking the lead. Linowitz set up the Inter-American Dialogue, an informal policy group led by the cream of the liberal Eastern Establishment (including McGeorge Bundy, Cyrus Vance, and Robert McNamara), and their South American followers, which is campaigning for a hemispheric policy centered around legalizing narcotics, negotiating Central American policy with the Soviet Union, and limiting the military power of the Spanish-speaking nations (see the Dialogue’s 1986 *Annual Report*).

On July 3, the *New York Times* published a commentary by Linowitz calling for a “Bipartisan Policy on Nicaragua.” What is most needed now, Linowitz argued, is that Washington become “engaged in the diplomatic process” in Central America—and back the Arias plan.

On July 31, the *Times* published a similar proposal, signed by Viron Vaky, Assistant Secretary of Inter-American Affairs in the Carter administration, and Rep. Lee Hamilton (D-Ind.). Vaky and Hamilton called for a “negotiated settlement” with the Sandinistas, based on a “direct deal: We will stop trying to overthrow the Sandinistas if they leave their neighbors at peace and improve their domestic record. . . . We will use force if necessary to uphold an agreement.”

Then, former CIA director William Colby, a major behind-the-scenes player in the “secret government” which Oliver North referred to as “Project Democracy,” weighed in on the side of the “peace accord,” in a piece published Aug. 4 by the *Washington Post*. Don’t pin everything on the Contras, who cannot win militarily, Colby warned. Instead, remember that the Kissinger Commission plan has to be the center of U.S. Central American policy. Colby mooted that the Arias plan could be a vehicle for this program. In 1984, the Kissinger Commission on Central America proposed that the economy of the region be modeled on that of “Hong Kong”—the British colony whose freeport economy is based primarily on narcotics transshipment and money laundering.

Meanwhile, the news leaked out that the Inter-American Dialogue had met secretly in Washington in the first days of August.

How the nut can be cracked

In his Central American plan, Lyndon LaRouche proposes a nation-building perspective for the entire region, backed up by a joint war against the narcotics infrastructure upon which the terrorists depend. These policies, he argues, provide the “nutcracker” with which to crack the Nicaraguan “nut.”

Asked on Aug. 13 by a U.S. radio interviewer what he thought of the new Reagan-Wright peace plan, LaRouche replied: “There is nothing I would dignify with the word ‘plan’ in the scheme proposed. It is a short-term diplomatic tactic, whose usefulness is limited to the very short term, for buying a few weeks of time until a real policy is chosen. If

this ‘plan’ were to be viewed as U.S. policy in the region over longer than a breathing-space of some weeks or so, it would create a vacuum in the situation, to the effect that the United States would be simply trading a recent and current disaster for a worse one not far down the road.”

Both the Arias and the Reagan-Wright plans continue the policy contained in the disastrous Contra strategy: the idea that the United States cannot, indeed, must not, help develop strong military institutions among its allies in Central America. To even speak of reducing the armies of the region, under current conditions of warfare, should better be done in Russian.

The tip-off that the “peace” policy represents no serious change, is the Reagan administration’s continuing war on Panama and the Commander of its Defense Forces, Gen. Manuel Noriega. Over the past three years, Noriega has become the leading voice in the region organizing to replace the Contra strategy with a regional military alliance that would cooperate with the United States, basing itself on the conception of the military as the defender of both the sovereignty and the economic well-being of the nation.

In June 1986, Noriega proposed the formation of a “military advisory group” of regional military leaders, to advise the Contadora Group (Panama, Mexico, Colombia, and Venezuela) in seeking a way out of the stalemate in Central America. In December, regional military leaders met in Panama to revive Condeca, the military alliance which had not functioned formally since 1979.

Not surprisingly, Linowitz’s Inter-American Dialogue is at the forefront of the campaign to overthrow Noriega, as an obstacle to their plans to use Central America as a bargaining chip in a global deal with the Soviet Union.

Real issues ignored

Neither the Reagan-Wright plan nor the Arias plan addresses the central issues in the escalating conflict in Central America: Soviet-run narco-terrorism and the effects of International Monetary Fund (IMF) austerity programs upon the economic and political stability on the region.

The Faribundo Marti Liberation Front (FMLN) has virtually taken over the labor movement in El Salvador as a result of U.S.-imposed economic programs. The narcotics mafia is buying up the businesses and portions of the political elite of Honduras and Costa Rica at bargain-basement prices, because of those same economic programs. There is no insurgency in the area which does not participate in, and depend upon, the narcotics trade, in which Cuba and the Sandinistas play a central role.

The Wright-Reagan plan not only avoids the IMF problem, but even advocates the Kissinger Commission’s program for creating “Hong Kongs” in Central America.

For peace to be secured, this foolish and short-sighted approach must be jettisoned, and quickly, by the U.S. government.