

## U.S. Soviet 'New Yalta' deal behind war on Panama

by Gretchen Small

All signs indicate that Moscow has given the Reagan administration a green light to do whatever it considers necessary to bring Panama under control. Washington's problem continues to be that not only has it failed in its efforts to crack the nationalist military-civilian coalition that holds power in Panama, but Panama's resistance threatens to rekindle a broader rebellion, led by Ibero-American military nationalists, against the new U.S.-U.S.S.R. world condominium.

Panama's nationalist defense occurs just at the point Moscow and Washington were confident they had forced the majority of the region's politicians to accept their rigged game. With Peruvian President Alan García capitulating, preferring to join his former antagonists in the Moscow-aligned Socialist International rather than continue his independent Catholic nationalist project, Moscow and Washington expected Ibero-American leaders to finally accept the fact that no possibility remained for independent action outside the superpower deal.

### Mad dog Abrams meets Pavlov

The upsurge in military rebellion against the Moscow-Washington deal was the chief issue discussed by Assistant Secretary of State Elliott Abrams and his Soviet counterpart, Yuri Pavlov, when they met to discuss Central America in Rome on April 14, the Spanish news service, EFE, reported at the conclusion of the Pavlov-Abrams meeting. Neither had "foreseen the spiral of tension in Panama, nor the possibility that some armed groups in the region would escape from control of the two superpowers."

Official reporting was close to nil on the Rome talks, the fourth formal negotiations on Central America held under the regional "conflict management" program begun between Moscow and Washington in 1985. The U.S. embassy limited itself to announcing in advance that "the exchange of U.S.-U.S.S.R. opinions tomorrow will cover a broad range of arguments, among which the discussion of regional foci of tension stands out," EFE reported.

But according to EFE's sources, the foci of tension which concerned Pavlov and Abrams, were Panama, and the victory of the National Republican Alliance (Arena) in El Salvador's elections last March.

Arena won by campaigning against the United States' "no-win" approach to the war against Moscow's insurgents in their country. Panama's military has been organizing regional resistance to the Reagan administration's Central America policy on an even broader basis, charging that U.S. support for the IMF is the leading cause of endless war in the area.

Panama's press has begun to pay attention to how the current U.S.-Soviet waltz overlaps the war against their nation. Just hours after Mr. Shultz signed the U.S.-U.S.S.R. deal on Afghanistan, he was demanding more support for his "brutal" campaign against Panama, *La República* columnist Luis Restrepo, noted on April 17. Restrepo also noted that Afghanistan and Pakistan were invited to Geneva, to serve as mere "acceptors" of the superpower agreement on their future.

### Constructive ambiguity, Walters-style

From Rome, Abrams flew to Buenos Aires, to join up with Reagan's ambassador to the United Nations, Gen. Vernon Walters, who had begun a tour of Ibero-America on April 15.

Walters has been discussing one theme in his meetings with foreign ministers and Presidents of Peru, Uruguay, Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, and Paraguay: Panama. Ibero-American diplomats in Lima reported that Walters suggested the United States will condition future economic and military aid for Ibero-America, on support for the U.S. war against Panama. Asked if the United States planned to invade Panama, Walters proved as masterful as Al Haig at linguistics. He insisted he would not answer, because the situation called for such "constructive ambiguity."

Walters was more blunt in Buenos Aires. "Once already

we committed the error of publicly promising that we would reject the invasion of North Vietnam. . . . It was an error. Errors can be committed, but only once. The second time, we would be stupid."

Walters has delivered an ultimatum, Mexico's *Excelsior* correspondent in Buenos Aires reported. Either Ibero-America joins the U.S. efforts to force Defense Force Commander Gen. Manuel Noriega to leave the country, or the United States is going in militarily to do the job. If by May 15, President Manuel Solís Palma has not been removed, and Noriega kicked out, the United States will consider a political solution impossible, *Excelsior* reported Walters had told both Uruguay's President Julio Sanguinetti and Argentina's President Raúl Alfonsín.

From neither did Walters ask for advice or opinion, *Excelsior* added; but only reported on "decisions" taken by Washington, citing "the exceptional situation of Panama as a country through which passes an interoceanic, and fundamentally strategic, Canal." An invasion of Panama "should be bloodless," and finished in a few hours, "perhaps in less than 60 minutes," Walters was said to have assured the Ibero-American leaders.

Abrams and Walters, joined by the Defense Department's Robert Pastorino, then held an all-day meeting with all U.S. ambassadors to Ibero-America on April 20.

On April 22, many U.S. media reported that a new phase of Walters's "constructive ambiguity" had begun, with the opening of negotiations between the Civic Crusade and the Solís Palma government in Panama. While most emphasized that the Crusade's change of tactics was ordered by the State Department, the *Washington Times* headlined its coverage, "U.S. Now Trying Talks in Panama—But Goal is Same."

### Changing the face of the enemy

The Reagan administration's war on Panama matches the introduction of a new definition of the enemy to be defeated in the Americas, one more acceptable to the one-world condominium: "narcomilitarism." While the term "narco-terrorism" has successfully been banned from the Washington lexicon, "narcomilitarism," a buzzword first coined by Moscow's terrorists in the region as the warcry through which they seek to mobilize broad sectors of the population against the militaries of the region, is more acceptable in the summit-crazed atmosphere dominating the Reagan administration.

Language classes are sometimes necessary to understand policy shifts in Washington, D.C. The battle over how to fight—or not fight—the drug trade, was waged in the field of semantics. No official could use the term "narco-terrorism," because that term implies recognition that the marriage of narcotics and terrorism is the principle form of Soviet irregular warfare upon the Americas today. So, U.S. military men spoke of "paramilitary criminality," to describe a reality Washington officialdom cared not to hear about.

Now Washington has adopted the Soviet agenda for the

Americas wholesale, and any nationalist military institution in the region has been declared the enemy of democracy. The dismantling of Panama's Defense Forces is just the first step in the plan to weaken, and subdue, the military throughout Ibero-America, spokesmen for the secret government's *Project Democracy* now admit publicly.

Washington's Panamanian opposition front, the Civic Crusade, is leading the charge. The Crusade's Harvard-trained editor, Roberto Eisenmann, lectured the Women's Democratic Club on April 12, on "narcomilitarism" as the new "political phenomenon in the Americas."

Eisenmann, whose Miami bank, Dadeland, has been used for drug-money laundering by some of Eisenmann's closest friends, has made the elimination of Panama's military a personal crusade for years. He proposes that, once General Noriega goes, the 15-20,000 Defense Forces be reduced to a 2,000-man special force, drawn from the nation's (white) elite, instead of the "poor" (and black) Panamanians who currently form the ranks of the PDF.

Eisenmann's address was "groundbreaking," because of its sweeping presentation on "the ominous birth of 'narcomilitarism,' an unholy and historic alliance of Latin Marxists, the rich narcotics cartels, and unscrupulous military opportunists such as Gen. Manuel Noriega," intelligence leaker Georgie Anne Geyer expounded in an April 18 *Washington Times* column.

Geyer demanded the U.S. "take military action, get General Noriega out unconditionally, reorganize the Defense Forces"—soon. She also specified that Panama's Defense Forces are not the only ones targeted for "reorganization," insisting on the "multinational threat of narcomilitarism."

On April 16, Crusade director Gilberto Mayol lectured a Miami meeting of the Jacques Maritain Institute of Cuba, on "Narcomilitarism," describing this as the combination of militarism "created by the United States," and international drug-trafficking. Panama is not the only country in the hemisphere endangered by this threat, Mayol stressed to his listeners; narcomilitarism is also growing in Honduras, Colombia, and Costa Rica.

Mayol, speaking to a group of anti-Castro Cuban exiles, was careful to present himself as ideologically anti-Soviet. But two days later, his arguments against narcomilitarism were repeated, line for line, in Washington—by Colombian Senator Pedro Alcántara of the Communist Party's United Patriotic Party! Alcántara has been touring the United States, demanding the U.S. quit working with Colombia's military—currently running a mop-up campaign in the Medellín heart of the cocaine trade—because they are "corrupt" and "repressive."

In Washington, Alcántara was speaking on behalf of Amnesty International and its new report on violence in Colombia, which charges that Colombia's military, not its narco-terrorists, are responsible for the mass killings taking place in that country.