

Narco-terrorist coup in Colombia made in Washington

by Andrea Olivieri

George Bush chalked up another victory for his new world order June 8, when the President of Colombia—one of Bush's favorite South American "democracies"—dissolved the National Congress and installed a narco-terrorist *soviet* in its place.

Claiming that a purge of the Congress was necessary to clear the way for urgent constitutional reforms, President César Gaviria Trujillo signed a pact with the co-presidents of the so-called National Constituent Assembly to suspend the current Congress, arrogating to himself dictatorial powers until new congressional elections are called *in the indefinite future*. The Constituent Assembly, an illegally constituted body made up largely of "former" terrorists and cocaine cartel frontmen, is rewriting Colombia's national constitution, scrapping its natural law premise in favor of a narco-terrorist "new order."

The last time a South American President tried to order the suspension of Congress through the mechanism of an illegally convoked "referendum" was in 1973, and Chilean President Salvador Allende was militarily overthrown for his attempt to dismantle one of the country's national institutions.

Gaviria's pact was signed by his former health minister, amnestied terrorist chieftain Antonio Navarro Wolf, with former President and mafia godfather Alfonso López Michelsen, with former attorney general and narco-apologist Horacio Serpa Uribe, and with others of their ilk, all in the name of "peace" and "a new beginning." Not surprisingly, one of the first acts of the Constituent Assembly—now that the obstacle of Congress is apparently cleared away—has been to hear a proposal for the legalized production, sale, and consumption of drugs.

Although the initial reaction of a number of members of

the dissolved Congress was to threaten impeachment proceedings against Gaviria and to call on the Armed Forces to defend their elected mandate, they have since tempered their protests and are now describing Gaviria's pact as a *fait accompli*. Many are now said to be readying their campaigns for the new congressional elections, whenever that should be.

A 'democratic' coup

Gaviria's alliance with narco-terrorism to shatter Colombia's national institutions has already been denounced as a "coup d'état" by Senators Hugo Escobar Sierra and Edmundo López Gómez. Anti-drug former Interior Minister Carlos Lemos Simmonds, a dissident delegate of the Constituent Assembly, has charged that the terrorist M-19 "has accomplished in the political arena what it couldn't through armed struggle"; namely, the dismantling of state institutions.

Former President Misael Pastrana Borrero, one of the Assembly's more prominent delegates, was the first to resign from that body on June 13, in disgust at what he called a pact to establish "a dictatorship." Even one of the signers of the pact, Assembly co-President Alvaro Gómez Hurtado, has caused a scandal inside the Assembly by charging that López Michelsen—believed to be the actual architect of the pact—manipulated the signers into giving dictatorial powers to the President.

On June 12, Lemos Simmonds devoted a column in the daily *El Tiempo* to charging Gaviria with "treason" against his own Liberal Party, and to warning that the pact would lead to disaster for the country. Referring to Gaviria's earlier promise that the Constituent Assembly would not have the power to fire anyone legitimately elected, Lemos wrote that the pact "indicates that in Colombia a pledge, even at the

highest level, is now worth nothing; all is subject to change, compromise and negotiation. It also indicates that it is the morality of the amnestied guerrillas which finally prevailed. . . . Dr. Navarro Wolf is above all a revolutionary, and his ethics are not ours but those of the revolution to which he devoted his life. . . . As with Castro in Cuba, the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, or Allende in Chile, the revolutionaries know how to disguise their intentions, if this serves their ascension to power." This process, concluded Lemos Simmonds, "can end up leading genuine democrats into such sad episodes as that of Munich."

What Lemos failed to note is that the collapse of constitutional rule in Colombia is the direct result of the Bush administration's experiment in "democracy" in that country. By promoting the dismantling of Ibero-America's militaries, while simultaneously refusing to provide the political, financial, and technical support for a serious war on drugs in 1989, when Colombia was briefly stirred into action, George Bush has de facto encouraged the Colombian government into precisely the kind of appeasement policies whose results are so painfully exemplified by Munich 1938.

Laundering the cartels

While Gaviria was carrying out a coup d'état against his own government in the name of "fighting corruption," a luxury villa was being built—under Gaviria's orders—to house Pablo Escobar, one of the world's most wanted drug traffickers and assassins. Escobar stands accused, along with running the world's largest cocaine smuggling ring, of the murders of three presidential candidates, numerous cabinet ministers, countless law enforcement officials, judges, journalists, politicians, and hundreds of innocents through random terror bombings.

He and his bodyguards are expected to surrender imminently to Colombian authorities, under a plea-bargaining agreement *designed by the U.S. Justice Department*. The deal involves confession to a single crime, in exchange for protection from extradition and a reduced prison sentence—apparently to be served under his own terms and conditions. His "prison," a collection of luxury suites protected by high-technology equipment and Escobar's hand-picked guards, was constructed on mafia-owned land in the city of Envigado, the drug kingpin's hometown and a wholly-owned "subsidiary" of Escobar's Medellín Cartel. It is even said that Escobar paid for the construction of his "five-star" jail himself.

Few law enforcement officials, be they U.S. or Colombian, have any illusions that Escobar's surrender will mean the end of cocaine trafficking in Colombia. It is an open secret that Escobar's cartel partners, the Ochoa brothers, have continued to run their business from their luxury jail cells ever since their surrender earlier this year. The daily *El Espectador* of May 30 revealed that Gaviria's "Operation Surrender" includes a pledge not to touch Escobar's vast fortune, and to retire the most effective anti-drug fighters within the National

Police force.

It is also an open secret that the so-called Cali cocaine cartel, whose long-standing links to the U.S. government have been the subject of numerous exposés by *EIR*, continues to operate with total impunity. The Cali Cartel has not only cornered more than 50% of what used to be Medellín Cartel operations, but is said to be dramatically expanding into Europe and Asia.

'Peace at any price'

The capitulation doesn't stop here. President Gaviria's chief "peace adviser," Jesús Antonio Bejarano, has been deployed to Caracas, Venezuela to conduct amnesty negotiations with the country's leading narco-guerrilla forces, the Colombian Armed Revolutionary Forces (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN), even while those forces continue to traffic in drugs, and kidnap, terrorize, and murder in the name of "revolution." The negotiations, heartily endorsed by the U.S. State Department and sponsored by Venezuela's Socialist President Carlos Andrés Pérez, are modeled on the U.N.-backed talks ongoing with the FMLN guerrillas of El Salvador. And just as with that Central American country, the negotiating agenda of the Colombian rebels is topped by demands for 1) the dismantling of the Armed Forces, and 2) concession of political power.

M-19 chieftain Antonio Navarro Wolf flew to Caracas in early June, to offer his brethren in the FARC and ELN an easy route to power through guaranteed quotas in the Constituent Assembly and through early elections to the new Congress, in which they would be allowed to participate if they accepted the government's amnesty offer. Reportedly, the FARC-ELN are still holding out for proof that Navarro's Constituent Assembly is ready and willing to dismantle the Colombian Armed Forces, which still have a constitutional mandate to combat the narco-terrorists' armies nationwide. Turning them into a civilian police force, is, in fact, a key agenda item for the remaining few weeks of the Constituent Assembly.

What the Armed Forces will do come July 20, when the nation's constitutionally elected representatives have been prohibited from taking their seats, remains to be seen. One can only assume that nearly a decade of bloody warfare and the sacrifice of tens of thousands of men to the narco-terrorist forces now sitting in power has certainly not predisposed Colombia's defense forces to Bush's new-style "democracy."

Neither does Colombia's narco-dictatorship come with a "made-in-the-U.S." warranty. The stage is already set for civil war, which would likely spill over national borders and ignite several hot spots in the region. The Bush administration, ever on the lookout for a military adventure, has already begun to put a little distance between itself and its "Frankenstein's monster" in Colombia, and the sudden discovery of a "U.S. national security threat" there, as in Panama and Iraq, cannot be ruled out.