

Andean Report by Andrea Olivieri

A last call to arms?

Anti-drug warrior Enrique Parejo González is demanding a criminal investigation of Colombia's head of state.

In a dramatic public presentation Oct. 24, former Justice Minister Enrique Parejo González accused Colombian President César Gaviria Trujillo of criminally defrauding the nation, with the result that Colombia continues to be in the grip of the narco-terrorists and of an illegal Constitution.

Parejo González, one of the few surviving heroes of Colombia's one-time war on drugs, recently returned to Colombia after resigning his protected post as ambassador to Switzerland earlier this year to protest Gaviria's deal with the chiefs of the Medellín cocaine cartel. Parejo, who barely survived a mafia assassination attempt in 1987, is currently without any official protection. His decision to return and maintain public opposition to the government's appeasement policy stands as a monument to morality in what is otherwise a vast wasteland of capitulation.

In his presentation at Rosario University in Santafé de Bogotá, Parejo charged that through his pact with the narco chiefs, Gaviria had established the "dangerous precedent" of submitting the nation to narco-terrorist blackmail by abolishing extradition, allowing the cartel chieftains to choose their own jails and guards, and retiring police chiefs on mafia demand. Parejo said that Gaviria had gone even further, by deliberately keeping silent for months about a video in his possession which proved that more than half of the Constituent Assembly, which drafted Colombia's new national Constitution, had been bribed by the drug cartels. "He did not

fulfill his constitutional duty to demand an immediate investigation. On the contrary, he stayed silent. This fact is of enormous gravity. Proof of a crime was hidden for months. The President's responsibility . . . is significant."

As to why the mafia has not continued to assassinate political prominents, Parejo declared: "If now they aren't murdering people with the courage of a Luis Carlos Galán, it is because they can't be killed twice. It would be illogical to attack members of a government which has been so receptive to them." (Galán was the favored presidential candidate who was murdered by narcos in 1989. Gaviria ran in his stead.)

Parejo also questioned the legitimacy of congressional and gubernatorial elections held Oct. 27, which were convoked by the same suborned Assembly that had illegally shut down the previous Congress by assuming self-defined "omnipotent" powers. Not accidentally, the new Congress and governors were elected by the same 25% of the electorate which voted last year to create the Constituent Assembly. A full 70% of Colombia's 15 million voters stayed home, disgusted at the carnival array of 3,000 candidates, who included "amnestied" terrorists, witches, evangelicals, Indian tribesmen, and narco-politicians. Another 5% cast blank ballots in protest.

In a statement from Brazil Oct. 22, Luis Gabriel Cano, co-owner of the anti-drug daily *El Espectador*, declared that the cocaine mafias were poised to take political power in Co-

lombia. He warned, "There exist people closely linked to the mafia" who might be elected as governors of Antioquia, Valle de Cauca, and Sucre departments. This would pose "a grave danger," said Cano, for under such circumstances, the mafia would unite "political power to force and to the economic power they already possess." And one day before the elections, Cano's *El Espectador* editorialized that the population held many "doubts and fears over the legitimacy of the fortunes of some candidates."

An early glance at the election results show that those fears were well-grounded. The governorships of the key departments of Valle and Antioquia were captured by open allies of the cocaine cartels, while the majority of Santafé de Bogotá is also expected to be taken. The narco-terrorist M-19, now an amnestied political party, will be seating 9 senators and 15 congressmen, *despite a hefty 10% drop at the polls*, and is expected to receive cabinet posts on top of the Health Ministry that President Gaviria has already granted it.

Parejo devoted an Oct. 25 column in *El Espectador* to denouncing the Gaviria government's granting of concessions to common criminals in pursuit of an illusory peace. The government is paying a high price, he said, "represented by a loss of dignity and a weakening of the institutions and citizen morality, without having obtained the announced results." Just two days earlier, Gaviria had reopened "peace talks" with the M-19's brothers, the ELN and FARC narco-guerrillas, despite the fact that on that same day no fewer than six terrorist actions were carried out by them. Wrote *El Espectador* columnist Ramiro de la Espriella, Gaviria's decision to return to the negotiating table is comparable to Neville Chamberlain's "surrender at Munich."