

Kidnap plot on Peru Congress foiled, global narco-terror net exposed

by Luis Vásquez Medina

With the Dec. 1 capture of a terrorist cell of the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA) in the La Molina district of Lima, the Peruvian police succeeded in dismantling one of the most spectacular plots yet advanced by the new narco-terrorist international, the São Paulo Forum. Revelations from ongoing police investigations fully confirm the statements of the president of the Ibero-American Solidarity Movement (MSIA) in Peru, published widely in the Peruvian press Dec. 8, which referred to the Lima cell as "only one of the heads of the Hydra that is the São Paulo Forum, a continental narco-terrorist apparatus which, in combination with 'legal' movements, can revive narco-terrorism in any of the countries in the region." The São Paulo Forum, declared the MSIA leader, "is led by Fidel Castro, and has its headquarters in London."

In the aftermath of the La Molina raids, there have been ongoing meetings among special agents from Peru, Bolivia, Panama, and the United States to coordinate anti-terrorist intelligence. This renewed region-wide collaboration occurs in an environment shaped by *EIR*'s exclusive package, "New Terror International Targets the Americas," published Nov. 10, 1995, circulating across the region, and also being presented in *EIR* seminars, held so far in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, and Peru.

The plot, frustrated through the diligent efforts of the Peruvian police, involved the seizure of the Peruvian national congress and the taking of congressional leaders as hostages, to be exchanged for MRTA leaders currently in Peruvian jails. What the investigations are now revealing is that not only were the orders for the siege issued from outside Peru, but that the entire terrorist scenario was a carbon copy of the seizure of the Colombian Justice Palace by the M-19 narco-terrorists, in November 1985. The M-19, today a legalized political party in Colombia, is a member of the São Paulo Forum. The "thread" picked up in the La Molina raids has led to the unraveling of a vast financial, logistical, and military operation that embraces practically the entire continent. In this sense, the MRTA raids in Lima can be compared with the huge clandestine arsenal that blew up in Managua, Nicaragua in May 1993, revealing not only elaborate kidnapping and other terrorist plots in the works, but the existence of a

narco-terrorist network of global dimensions.

On Dec. 17, the Lima daily *Expresso* reported that hefty bank accounts had been discovered in the United States in Lori Berenson's name, the American arrested in the MRTA busts. More recently, bank accounts have been uncovered in Uruguay and Panama in the names of various MRTA leaders. These vast sums, accumulated not only from the Peruvian drug and kidnapping "industries," but also from those of other Ibero-American countries, have given the São Paulo Forum a financial power which can easily vie with the military budgets of many countries in the region.

At the same time, an arms-trafficking network for the entire continent has been unveiled. The weapons discovered in the MRTA's arsenal in La Molina came from the Farabundo Martí Liberation Army (FMLN) of El Salvador, and had entered Peru via a complex route involving the Sandinista Liberation Movement of Nicaragua, the N-26 Movement of Panama, and the Alfaro Vive, Carajo! movement of Ecuador. It is believed that some of the La Molina arsenal was destined for Bolivia and Argentina as well.

The man who arranged the arms shipments for the MRTA operation was a Chilean named Miguel Cruz Suárez. Cruz had been a member of the Chilean MIR in the 1970s; when the MIR was crushed, he left South America for Spain, where he joined the Basque terrorist group ETA; he later moved to Nicaragua under the Sandinistas, and took on Nicaraguan nationality. He also worked with El Salvador's FMLN. At the time he was caught shipping FMLN weapons to the MRTA, Cruz Suárez was operating out of Panama.

Bolivian arrests

The arrest of a score of terrorists in La Molina, including the number-two leader of the MRTA Wenseslao Rincón Rincón, the American Lori Berenson, and the Panamanian Pacífico Castrellón Santamaría, of the N-26 Movement in that country, within days paved the way for the capture in Bolivia of another international cell, this one composed of Peruvians, Chileans, and Bolivians. The network had been operating for quite a while in Bolivia, and in fact had just collected a \$5 million ransom from the kidnapping of former Bolivian cabinet minister and businessman Samuel Doria Medina.

Presenting the MRTA's Carlos Serna Ponce to the press on Dec. 29, Bolivian Government Minister Carlos Sánchez Bersain described the latest arrests as "a step forward in unveiling the kidnapping of Doria Medina and of an international network now operating in Bolivia."

It should be noted that the government of Bolivian President Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada, who is a member of the Washington-based bankers' think-tank, Inter-American Dialogue, may be reaping what it has sown with its tolerant attitude toward the narco-terrorists which have fled Peru in recent years. More than two years ago, Peruvian intelligence warned that Bolivia, thanks to the complaisance of its authorities, was giving refuge to MRTA and Shining Path terrorists fleeing Peruvian President Fujimori's anti-terrorist offensive. Indeed, as recently as Dec. 29, Bolivian Interior Secretary Erik Reckling gave permission to 250 such Peruvian subversives to reside in Bolivia as "political refugees."

A 'narco-revolution'

The MRTA action in Lima had been intended primarily as a propaganda effort, initiating a gigantic "Chiapas" in the Peruvian and Bolivian jungles, where the MRTA and other narco-terrorist organizations, such as Bolivia's Tupac Catari, have been infiltrating the ranks of the coca-growing peasantry. In Bolivia, leader of the Chapare coca-growers Evo Morales—who is also an official member of the São Paulo

Forum—has declared that his region's coca-farmers are ready to respond with violence to any attempt to eradicate their coca crops.

In Peru, both the MRTA and "Red Path" (the still active remnant of the nearly dismantled Shining Path) are successfully penetrating the coca-growing organizations of the Hualaga Valley and Apurimac River region. As such pro-terrorist "analysts" as Carlos Tapia have declared, what the narco-terrorists seek, is to recruit from the ranks of the 250,000 Peruvian peasants who make up the so-called *Rondas Campesinas*, the peasant self-defense organizations which, under the direction of the Peruvian Army, had been highly effective against Shining Path, but which now, seriously affected by the economic devastation wrought by the Fujimori government's neo-liberal economic policies, are more vulnerable to the subversive arguments of their old enemies.

In Colombia, the São Paulo Forum's FARC narco-guerrillas are doing the same thing in the departments of Guaviare, Caquetá, and elsewhere; a few marches, some high-profile protest demonstrations against eradication efforts, and separatist threats by the FARC's peasant front groups have already won major concessions from the Samper narcodictatorship in that country.

The intimate relationship between the drug trade and the MRTA, FARC, and other terrorist groups of the São Paulo Forum suggests that we are not merely witnessing a continent-wide terrorist upsurge which draws on the drug trade for support. In fact, what we are facing is a revolution by Dope, Inc. itself, which is seeking to capture control of the continent by extending the "Chiapas phenomenon" to other parts of the hemisphere.

In the face of this, a government action taken in the last days of 1995 could prove suicidal for Peru and could dramatically accelerate the ongoing narco-revolution. President Fujimori announced that his government would be withdrawing the Armed Forces from the war on drugs. The argument is that this will prevent the corruption of the Peruvian military by the drug trade, a corruption that has been overstated by the non-governmental organizations and by pro-drug mouthpieces, like Lima's *La República Medios*, precisely to accomplish the demilitarization of the war on drugs.

It comes as no great surprise that immediately following President Fujimori's announcement, coca-leaf prices, which had been suffering a steady decline in the past 12 months, primarily due to the international war against the Colombian cartels, suddenly began to rise again. These had fallen from 120 soles for 11 kilograms, to a mere 5 soles in the recent period. And yet, by the first week of January 1996, following Fujimori's foolish decision, that same weight of coca leaves was selling for 25 soles. If the Peruvian Armed Forces are not reincorporated into this war against narco-terrorism, the superior weaponry and budgets of the drug traffickers will devastate the ill-trained and ill-equipped police force which has been appointed to step into the breach.

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