

Colombia's President Samper is behind narcoterrorist insurrection

A local judge in Colombia's southern jungle province of Caquetá has ordered the arrest and month-long imprisonment of Army Commander Gen. Harold Bedoya, and of other high-level military officers, because they refused to obey the judge's order to lift military barricades around the capital city of Florencia, an action which would have permitted 20,000 or more coca farmers under the armed leadership of the FARC narco-guerrillas to storm the city.

Some 70,000 or more of these peasants, enslaved to the cultivation of coca (the raw material for cocaine) by a combination of desperate poverty and FARC terrorism, have been mobilized since July across the country's south and northeast regions, to protest the government's drug eradication program, and to demand concessions ranging from legalized coca cultivation to territorial autonomy. Their mobilization has been accompanied by escalating terrorist attacks on towns, police and military posts, airports, and oil facilities, by the FARC itself, in an all-out "Tet offensive" by the drug cartels and their terrorist allies against the nation of Colombia.

The phenomenon of "narcoterrorism"—a deadly alliance between the drug traffickers and the terrorist guerrillas—was, at long last, publicly acknowledged by a U.S. State Department spokesman on April 6, in response to an *EIR* query on the subject: "There's no doubt that guerrilla fronts are directly engaged in this coca cultivation and processing, and in protecting the fields, the laboratories, and the markets."

FARC atrocities

The FARC's greatest propagandistic coup was carried out on Aug. 30, at the military base of Las Delicias, in the southwestern department of Putumayo. Some 300 FARC terrorists took the base by storm, killing 40 soldiers and taking another 60 captive. The FARC seized one army sergeant, conducted a "trial," and hung the man by his testicles before burning him alive. The 60 kidnapped soldiers are being used as a human shield, to facilitate "peace talks" in which the FARC seeks control over half of Colombian territory, and 20% of the population.

In a communiqué, the FARC has demanded a cessation of all military operations in the country as the precondition for handing over the 60 soldiers to the International Red Cross. The announcement has turned the families of the captive soldiers into a pro-FARC pressure group, demanding an end to military operations against the narcoterrorists. At the same time, the government of pro-drug President Ernesto Samper Pizano has named a commission to receive the captive

soldiers, headed by Augusto Ramírez Ocampo, the former head of the United Nations mission for El Salvador, which turned that country into a virtual UN protectorate.

This offensive is being conducted in clear coordination with Samper's forces within the government itself. When the first anti-eradication protest demonstrations were begun, back in July, Samper tried to use these marches as a means of demonstrating to the international community that the drug trade could not be eradicated in Colombia, because it would adversely affect the "poor peasants." In this, Samper has had the backing of innumerable non-governmental organizations (NGOs), both domestic and foreign.

The Clinton administration's decision back in July to withdraw Samper's entrance visa to the United States, due to his evident collaboration with the drug cartels, prompted Samper to organize a trip to Europe, in search of backing from Great Britain and France. French President Jacques Chirac, who was involved in the 1980s Bush operation to finance the Nicaraguan Contras with drug money, attempted to give legitimacy to the cartel-orchestrated protests in Colombia, by proposing, as an "alternative to repression," the creation of "an international fund, for the purpose of buying the coca leaf from the growers, at the price the drug traffickers are paying them." This proposal, made on Aug. 1, served as a green light for launching the FARC insurgency two days later.

The Colombian military has never hesitated to define the marches, in which thousands of peasants are being used as cannon fodder by the terrorists, as a cartel ploy. The marches are not only coordinated by FARC chieftains dressed like "peasants"—arrests of some of the "peasant" leaders have already uncovered their FARC membership—but include armed commando forces who maintain the discipline of the marches, distribute food and other necessities, and keep personnel rosters. Those marchers who abandon "the cause" are punished with death. At least one case is documented, in which the FARC beheaded a child in front of his parents and siblings, because of the father's refusal to join the protests.

The opposition daily *El Nuevo Siglo*, was explicit in its Sept. 10 editorial, that Interior Minister Horacio Serpa Uribe, Samper's right-hand man, is the main promoter of the "peasant" marches inside the government. Serpa, known as "Comandante Serpa," is accused by *El Nuevo Siglo* of deliberately delaying orders to contain the marches until they had turned into a full-scale terrorist insurgency. "These are public charges that have been repeatedly made on television by mayors and civic leaders from the south of the country," says the editorial.