

Did the 'Bush Manual' policy set up Gómez Hurtado for murder?

On Aug. 12, U.S. Ambassador to Colombia Myles Frechette told a television news interviewer that he had been approached exactly one year earlier by a group of Colombian civilians, who wanted to solicit Clinton administration support for a possible civilian-military coup d'état to remove narco-President Ernesto Samper Pizano from office. Ambassador Frechette refused to name names, except to say that they were representing certain "concerns" of the military. He said he had told his visitors, "Forget it!"

Although the Samper government waxed indignant, claiming they had never been officially advised by the U.S. embassy of this meeting, the State Department insisted that it did inform President Samper, and relevant members of his cabinet, of the coup plot at that time.

Colombia's *Semana* magazine of Aug. 20, 1996, had another version of what is evidently the same story. They reported that various prominent anti-Samper individuals, both



Alvaro Gómez Hurtado in Bogotá, Colombia in June 1985. His assassination dampened serious challenges to the narco-dictatorship of Ernesto Samper Pizano. Did U.S. policy blunders play a role in his murder?

civilian and military, had in fact been meeting at the time to discuss a civil-military insurrection against the President. In late August 1995, according to *Semana*, the groups met with Alvaro Gómez Hurtado, former senator and Conservative Party Presidential candidate who was Colombia's most outspoken political figure leading the opposition to the Samper regime. *Semana* says that Gómez had agreed to head up the insurrection, which was set for Nov. 11, 1995, at 2 a.m.

The consolidation of a narco-regime

On the morning of Nov. 2, however, Gómez Hurtado was assassinated in broad daylight, in the fashion employed by drug cartel hit men. The country's political opposition has been headless ever since. One of the alleged coup conspirators, historian and publisher Hugo Mantilla Correa, told the press afterwards that "the death of Alvaro Gómez has facilitated the consolidation of the ignominious regime Colombia endures today."

Although *EIR* has no independent confirmation of *Semana's* claim that Gómez Hurtado was part of the coup plot denounced by Frechette, it is a matter of public record that, in the months before his murder, he had become the most prominent national figure to demand that "the corrupt system be overthrown." For example, on Oct. 23, 1995, just a week before his death, Gómez wrote in his daily *El Nuevo Siglo*:

"It is clear that the President cannot remain. A country which doesn't advance, which daily shows more symptoms of dissolution, will eventually find a solution. We have said it many times: The regime must be overturned."

At the time of his death, Gómez Hurtado was looked to by Colombian patriots as the one man with the political will and stature to stand up to Samper's thuggery. Political elites in Colombia privately confided in the aftermath of the Gómez assassination that none now dared challenge the Samper government. The cartel's message had been delivered, loud and clear. Samper declared a state of emergency following Gómez's murder, which enabled him to consolidate his narco-dictatorship even further. Public pressure for his resignation dramatically declined.

At the time of Gómez's assassination, *EIR* laid the blame at the doorstep of the Samper regime. In light of Ambassador Frechette's admission that he had alerted the cartel-run government of Colombia to the coup threat, it is appropriate to now ask as well: What responsibility do the U.S. State and Defense departments have in the elimination of Samper's leading political opponent?

The Bush 'Plot' against the military

Ambassador Frechette has on numerous occasions elaborated that the State Department is unalterably opposed to any tampering with what they choose to describe as "democracy" in Colombia, i.e., the hypocritical sham of narco-terrorist President Ernesto Samper Pizano, "elected" to office with the

help of \$6 million from the drug cartels. The State Department, and the Defense Department under Secretary William Perry, have more broadly demanded that the military in Colombia—and across Ibero-America—be downsized and dismantled, reducing their participation in national political life to insignificance, all in the name of promoting “democracy.” The Defense Department’s September 1995 document, *United States Security Strategy for the Americas*, reflects this foolish policy outlook most systematically. It argues that the threat of terrorism in the Americas is receding, and that the United States’ central policy objective in Ibero-America is to get the military to line up behind the mantra of “democracy and free trade.”

The origins of this insane policy go back to the early 1980s, and what *EIR* has documented as the “Bush Manual,” or the plot to annihilate the Ibero-American military as part of the global British war against the nation-state. That policy is unfortunately alive and well in the Pentagon and the State Department today. And it now appears that, with their stupidity, elements within the U.S. government have helped a narco-government kill a patriot.

Book Reviews

Proof positive that the FARC Cartel exists

The FARC Cartel

by Maj. Luis Alberto Villamarín Pulido
Ediciones El Faraón, Bogotá, 1996
210 pages, paperbound

The FARC cocaine cartel “survived all the cartel wars: cartel vs. cartel, cartel vs. state, and cartel vs. the world; today they are the most powerful of all the cartels,” states Gen. Harold Bedoya Pizarro, commander-in-chief of the Colombian Army, in his prologue to the newly released book, *The FARC Cartel*.

For most Colombians, this book compiles facts which are already known, that the FARC finances itself by drug trafficking. The various testimonies and documents published in the book are known in Colombia in one form or another,

either through the mass media, or via anecdotal accounts by persons who have lived in or visited the “guerrilla” zones. That General Bedoya officially presented this book at a press conference, and put his signature to the prologue, represents an attempt to put the brakes on any attempt by the narco-government of President Ernesto Samper Pizano to conduct a dialogue or negotiate with the FARC.

Perhaps the most important thing about this book is that it was published in English, as well as Spanish, in order to be distributed around the world—and especially in Washington. Its release in English launches an international battle to end support for the FARC in various countries, in particular in the United States, where the Armed Forces of Colombia have for too long been presented as violators of human rights, and the FARC as supposedly heroic defenders of the Colombian peasantry.

Guerrillas, cocaine, and heroin

During the 1980s, the very terms “narco-guerrilla” and “narco-terrorism” were ruled out of the official lexicon, on orders from former vice-president and later President George Bush. Today, the U.S. State Department has been forced to acknowledge that the FARC is indeed involved in drug trafficking. It will be difficult now for Washington to apply its considerable pressure to force a “peace” agreement on Colombia, like the one imposed on El Salvador under the tutelage of the United Nations. It will be difficult for the United States to back a “peace pact” with the FARC Cartel.

This book presents hard documentation proving that the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) is a cocaine cartel, with coca plantations and laboratories not only in Colombia, but also in Peru and Brazil. The FARC started out cooperating with, and getting paid for services by, the Cali and Medellín cartels; it subsequently launched into its own production, and even trafficking, of coca, cocaine, opium poppy, and heroin. Of the 62 “fronts” which the FARC has around the country, 38 are dedicated to the production and traffic of cocaine and opiates.

Part of the documentation presented was captured from the FARC’s 14th and 15th fronts, in the vicinity of a village called Paujil, in the coca-producing zone of the Caquetá department, during a military operation conducted by the VII Army Brigade. One of the documents presents instructions to the FARC’s communications officers on how to contact the Cali Cartel by radio or by beeper.

The documents reveal, for example, that the 15th front controls 16 cocaine laboratories in the area, with a production volume of 640 kilos of cocaine monthly. If we multiply this sum by the 38 fronts dedicated to drug trafficking, cocaine production by the FARC alone is 24,320 kilos of cocaine per month. Assuming that the FARC sells the bulk of the processed drug to the other cartels (i.e., that they do not have their own distribution networks), the kilos of cocaine would