

Iraq Treatment Set for Ibero-America by Rumsfeld

by Gretchen Small

U.S. Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld's crowd, through the mouth of U.S. Southern Command chief Gen. James Hill, is pumping the line that al-Qaeda-linked Islamic terrorists are running around in the so-called "ungoverned areas" of Ibero-America, and that this constitutes the greatest threat to hemispheric security. Several hundred diplomats, military officers, and policymakers from around the hemisphere, attending a conference March 2-4 in Miami on "Building Regional Security Cooperation in the Western Hemisphere," were told that Ibero-American nations must change their military force structures and missions, so as to function as a subordinated part of a multinational strike force which the U.S. intends to lead against these terrorists.

The menacing statement was added, that no government in the area is *yet* considered an "accomplice state" of these terrorists. With the bombs now falling on Iraq, the implication of that threat is clear. With this policy, Rumsfeld's boys have created a greater security threat to the United States in the Americas, than existed before. Anger and hostility against the United States is rising rapidly across Ibero-America, giving Wall Street's narco-terrorist recruiters a field-day. Those who would be U.S. friends find no possibility of being so. With their war, their imperious demands, and their lying intelligence reports, Rumsfeld's chicken-hawks have buried any possibility of establishing the U.S./Ibero-American cooperation which *is* urgently needed to crush the narco-terrorists rampaging across the Americas. Not until U.S. policy is radically reversed, can the damage be repaired.

'Preventive War' in Ibero-America?

In his speech to the Miami conference, General Hill elaborated the imperial agenda which Rumsfeld first unveiled in November 2002, at the Fifth Defense Ministerial of the Americas, in Santiago, Chile. Rumsfeld's line was that "effective sovereignty" over the "ungoverned areas" of the Americas could only be re-established through the creation of regional military forces. He outlined two U.S. initiatives to create those forces, one maritime, the other a broader "peacekeeping and stability" force.

That the Rumsfeld initiatives flow out of the assertion of a U.S. right to carry out the kind of "preventive war" of those convicted at Nuremberg, was made even clearer in a speech delivered at Georgetown University in Washington on Jan. 14, 2003, by Richard Haass, director of the State Depart-

ment's Policy Planning Staff.

Haass—who was on record advocating a return to an imperial world order long before Sept. 11—argued that “the global struggle against terrorism” has changed the nature of sovereignty. He spoke, as does Rumsfeld, of sovereignty being challenged in “ungoverned regions. . . . The attacks of Sept. 11, 2001 reminded us that weak states can threaten our security as much as strong ones, by providing breeding grounds for extremism and havens for criminals, drug traffickers, and terrorists.”

Governments which allow such things to occur, even if out of weakness, Haass asserted, must be held to account. “Countries have the right to take action to protect their citizens against those states that abet, support, or harbor international terrorists, or are incapable of controlling terrorists operating from their territory,” he proclaimed. “When states are reluctant or unwilling to meet this baseline obligation, we will act, ideally with partners, but alone if necessary, to hold them accountable.” Haass specified that such states “jeopardize their sovereign immunity from intervention,” and may face “anticipatory action,” as “preventive” war.

This is the policy laid out by Hill, albeit more circumspectly. He argued that: 1) narco-terrorism is growing in the “ungoverned spaces” of Ibero-America; 2) drugs are “weapons of mass destruction”; and, 3) “radical Islamic groups associated [sic] with Hamas, Hezbollah, al-Gamaat, and others” have hooked up with these narco-terrorists, to generate hundreds of millions dollars a year from Ibero-America.

That combined threat requires changes in military operations in Ibero-America, Hill argued. Claiming he “would never say that the day of the traditional military capability has passed,” he did just that: demanding changes in the configuration, training, equipment, missions, and operations of Ibero-America's armed forces. He insisted that “we need to re-evaluate our armed forces and security forces and collective agreements,” in order to deal with so-called “21st-Century threats” which are “transnational,” and therefore require the expansion of the “structure of multilateral security cooperation in the Americas.”

The list of “ungoverned spaces” targetted for supranational action had grown since November. Hill named Colombia, southern Panama, northern Ecuador, northern Peru, Bolivia, portions of Venezuela (including the island of Margarita), the tri-border area where Paraguay, Argentina, and Brazil meet, and the entirety of Surinam, as “problem” areas.

Never Touch Wall Street

This campaign is no more driven by real intelligence, than is the war on Iraq. Neither Rumsfeld nor Hill mention the crushing economic conditions created by decades of looting under the dictates of International Monetary Fund and free trade, as the single greatest force creating “ungoverned spaces” in the region.

Neither do you hear any Bush Administration officials mention the role of Wall Street in aiding, abetting, and profiting from the drug trade, which they profess to be so concerned about. The latest glaring example of this hypocrisy, is the fact that not a peep has been said about the fact that the drug trade held a public, hemisphere-wide organizing meeting in Mérida, Mexico only two weeks before the Miami conference—financed, as usual, by the drug-legalization machine of speculator George Soros, and featuring Soros's top drug man, Drug Policy Alliance (DPA) director Ethan Nadelmann.

Several hundred legalization activists, narco-terrorists, coca-growers, and government officials from America, Europe, and Ibero-America met Feb. 12-15 at the Mérida conference, “Out from the Shadows: Ending Prohibition in the 21st Century.” Billed as “the first hemispheric conference organized to call for an end to prohibition and the drug war,” its organizers were the U.S.-based Drug Reform Coordination Network (DRCNet), the Italian Radical Party's International Anti-Prohibitionist League, and the internet news outlet, “Narco News.”

Present were the drug trade's key “fifth column”: the “grand old man of Latin American legalizers,” former Colombian Attorney General Gustavo de Grief; Colombian Congressman and former Supreme Court Chief Justice Carlos Gaviria (infamous as the author of the 1994 decision legalizing the use and possession of drugs in Colombia); and Bolivian narco-terrorist turned Congressman Felipe Quispe. (Soros's people had been promoting the fact that the head of Bolivia's coca-growers, now-Congressman Evo Morales, was scheduled, but he stayed at home at the last minute to attempt a coup.) Peru's coca-growers, a myriad of user-activist associations campaigning for drug use, and Congressmen from Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, and Uruguay were all there for the confab.

Soros and his drug machine never came up at the Miami Western Hemisphere conference. Instead, in an interview with the *Miami Herald* following the conference, Hill echoed the disgusting “Muslims are the enemy” line of the Clash of Civilizations crowd, as the supposed terrorist danger. To justify his assertion that Ibero-America has become a major fundraising base for radical Islamic groups, Hill cited the fact that “the fastest-growing religion in Latin America today is Islam,” and “we think that there are between 3 and 6 million people of Middle Eastern descent in Latin America”—both apparently crimes in Hill's view.

Not surprisingly, one of the Miami conference organizers admitted to *EIR* that he found generalized opposition from the Ibero-Americans at the conference. Conferees “made it loud and clear” that they don't want the United States telling them who is a terrorist and who is not, he reported; they would fight terrorism differently from the United States, and *certainly*, not do what the United States is doing in Iraq. “All bets are off” that even Chile, which originally supported the Rumsfeld initiatives, is still on board.