

General Bedoya readies 'new war of independence' for Colombia

by Javier Almario

In launching three senatorial slates and several more for the Colombian House of Representatives, the Presidential candidate of the Colombia Force movement, retired Gen. Harold Bedoya, opened another round in what he is now calling "a new war of independence" for Colombia's future. During an open-air speech on Feb. 7 in the Bogotá neighborhood of Timiza, Bedoya stated that "we are living under an empire worse than the Spanish: an empire of drug trafficking, of narco-terrorism, of corruption."

Referring to the final battle waged between the forces of "The Liberator," Simón Bolívar, and the colonial Spanish troops, Bedoya added, "We are the forces of Bolívar, who stand at the Bridge of Boyacá, and on the other side stand the corrupt ones. I am heading up this new war for Colombia's independence, for honesty, for change."

Bedoya's words are not intended as symbolism. The movement his candidacy has generated, seriously threatens to shatter the control of the traditional political machines, which have either tolerated or been openly complicit with the drug trade, and with narco-terrorism. This same machinery, run from London, is trying to carry out a plan to dismember the national territory of Colombia, handing over sections to the narco-terrorist FARC and ELN, on the pretext of sealing a "peace agreement," which can only end up with the final dissolution of the nation itself. Bedoya is the only Presidential candidate who has opposed this so-called "indigenous" peace plan.

At the same time, a new expanded edition of *EIR's* book *The Plot to Annihilate the Armed Forces and Nations of Ibero-America*, has begun to circulate in the capital city of Bogotá. *The Plot* explains how this "peace plan" is part of the British Empire's world strategy to eliminate nation-states through the deployment of terrorists, separatists, indigenists, ecologists, and so forth, while turning the United Nations into a global government, a new version of the Roman Empire.

Bedoya's popularity continues to rise, despite the fact that the media refuse to cover most of his tours and electoral activities. Several polls have indicated that Bedoya would win 17% of the national vote were the Presidential elections

held today, coming in third place behind Horacio Serpa Uribe, candidate of narco-President Ernesto Samper Pizano's government, and behind Andrés Pastrana, candidate of the opposition Conservative Party. However, there is a lot of nervousness in the Serpa Uribe and Pastrana camps, since another series of private polls, conducted for the purpose of finding out what the average Colombian's true preferences are, revealed that Bedoya is actually running in first place—something unheard of in a country whose political machines have traditionally managed to keep the Presidency passing back and forth between the Conservative and Liberal parties, like a ping-pong ball.

Death threats

The analysts of the Serpa and Pastrana camps are especially concerned that Colombian youth might opt to vote for Bedoya, over their own discredited candidates. Colombia's oligarchy has responded in two ways: 1) by threatening to kill Bedoya (who has risked his life repeatedly in 40 years of combat in defense of his country), and 2) by pulling together a political alliance of all those who fear Bedoya, to prevent the general from taking first or second place in the Presidential election in May, which would force a run-off. Bedoya, meanwhile, seeks a majority vote of more than 50%, in hope of taking the Presidency on the first round.

The magazine *Cambio 16* published in its early February edition, a less-than-subtle death threat against Bedoya, in apparent response to the general's insistence on using speech which the Colombian oligarchy considers "politically incorrect." Magazine director Patricia Lara Salive wrote: "Bedoya instigates violence, to the point that at least two Presidential candidates (Bedoya included) could end up assassinated. . . . The path you appear to have chosen, General, is not one of votes, but of deaths," Lara concluded ominously.

To put Lara's threat in the proper context, it should be remembered that when Conservative opposition leader Alvaro Gómez Hurtado was assassinated in 1995, the same magazine published a lengthy report, by columnist Antonio Caballero, which practically justified the murder because Gómez

“instigated violence.”

Years ago, Patricia Lara was identified by the U.S. State Department as an agent of the Cuban intelligence service DGI, and for this reason was prevented from entering the United States. Although today, for political reasons, Lara has been granted a U.S. entry visa, the suspicions about where her loyalties lie have not faded.

Lara's threat occurs in the midst of intense diplomatic efforts on the part of *El Tiempo* director Hernando Santos, to oust Bedoya from the three top positions in the Presidential polls. Santos, who has already set as a goal that Bedoya be permitted to obtain no more than 1 million votes in the May elections, is trying to forge a pact among the so-called “minor candidates”—former Prosecutor General Alfonso Valdivieso, former Foreign Minister Noemí Sanín, the son of former President Carlos Lleras Restrepo, Carlos Lleras de la Fuente, and former Bogotá Mayor Antanas Mockus—according to which a single candidate would be put forward to garner the collective vote of these four Lilliputians.

Santos's efforts have already led to Lleras's resignation, and to Valdivieso's decision to commit political *hara kiri*, by attacking Bedoya in public. Valdivieso had won significant political prestige by having backed legal investigations against current President Samper Pizano and against a group of politicians who had taken drug money in their 1994 electoral campaigns. However, Valdivieso flinched when the time came to put Serpa Uribe in the dock. Serpa was Samper's campaign manager in 1994, and then his powerful Interior Minister. Today, he is the ruling Liberal Party's official candidate, and Samper's intended successor to his Presidency. Valdivieso is the dissident candidate of the Liberal Party.

In a Feb. 18 column in *El Tiempo*, Valdivieso virtually climbed into bed with narco-candidate Serpa, by joining the narco-government's attack against Bedoya. Colombians should be alert, wrote the former Prosecutor General, to “prevent that, because of confusion and discontent with the Samper government, they choose a false alternative. . . . There is no question that Colombia needs a change . . . but this zeal and this discontent must not lead us into a worse fix.” Valdivieso went even further, attacking Bedoya for opposing Colombia's 1991 Constitution, which Valdivieso knows perfectly well was written to favor the very drug traffickers he himself has battled for years. It is an open secret that many of the delegates to the Constitutional Assembly which drafted the 1991 Constitution were threatened and/or bribed to approve a ban on extraditing Colombians wanted for crimes committed abroad.

Why all the hysteria?

The hysteria of Colombia's political elites against Bedoya is in direct response to his political message to the country. In his speeches, he emphasizes that Colombia has lost its freedom, that it has become “a jail with 36 million prisoners.”

Colombians are unable to walk the streets, for fear of being murdered by the drug traffickers. Some call this a “democracy,” says Bedoya, but I call it a “narco-ocracy,” a government of and by the corrupt. The drug trade has broken this country, and I refuse to go to my grave with the knowledge that I did nothing to stop it on my conscience.

Thus, the general asks in all his meetings, I have assumed my responsibility; the question is, who will govern with me? Bedoya calls on each person he addresses to be “an apostle who can multiply the vote, who can send out this message of hope, of confidence, that the nation will be saved, of faith that we are going to win.”

Bedoya also reminds his audiences that there are fewer than 100 days left before the Presidential elections, and that these 100 days will determine whether Colombia will continue to exist as a nation, or will crumble into pieces in the hands of the narco-subversives and the narco-rulers.

Says Bedoya, in the past six months, we have made a miracle: We are building a movement of builders. As in the struggle for Colombia's independence, we have no other choice but to win, and we have less than four months to do so. Evil cannot defeat the good, he warns. If we recover our government, we will restore security, rebuild infrastructure so that we can have highways, railroads, and ports; we will give education and medical attention to all Colombians, not just to the rich; and we will protect our agriculture so that Colombia can return to producing its own food.

On Jan. 29, in the city of Barranquilla, Bedoya explained to reporters the reason why he travels with bodyguards. He stated that, in a “narco-ocracy,” if he did not have protection, he “would pass into history as one more martyr of the violence the corrupt people in power have generated. Ask yourselves, who murdered Alvaro Gómez, while Horacio Serpa was Interior Minister? Who murdered [witness] Elizabeth Montoya de Serria, or Serpa's chauffeur, at the moment he was going to expose crimes?”

Serpa was exonerated by the Attorney General of charges of illicit enrichment in favor of the Samper Presidential campaign, thanks to the fact that a key witness was threatened with death, and refused to testify; also thanks to the fact that Serpa's chauffeur, who was present when Samper received the drug traffickers' donations to his campaign, was killed; also thanks to the fact that Montoya de Serria was assassinated, and couldn't testify—as she had planned—to the donations that she, her husband, and other drug-trafficking friends had made to the Samper campaign.

Alvaro Gómez was assassinated while organizing a civil-military alliance to overthrow the illegitimate Samper regime. The hysteria against Bedoya is thus not because of one or another statement he has made. Rather, it is because, this time, the “coup” could take place within the electoral process itself—that is, if the Colombian oligarchy, always under instruction from London, decides to allow the elections to proceed.