

Colombia revolt marks spread of 'Kosovo effect' in Americas

by Dennis Small and Luis Vásquez Medina

Colombian President Andrés Pastrana's civilian Defense Minister, Rodrigo Lloreda Caicedo, resigned his post on May 26, in protest against the government's announcement the week before—without consulting either the Defense Minister or the Armed Forces—that the huge demilitarized zone (DMZ) in the south, which has been under control of the drug-running FARC narco-terrorists since last November, would in effect be delivered permanently into FARC hands.

Sixteen of Colombia's active-duty generals, along with some 30 colonels and up to 150 other officers, also tendered their resignations, creating a profound institutional crisis in the country. A heated, emergency meeting among President Pastrana and the military top command produced a momentary agreement (the terms of which have not been made public), but the underlying life-and-death issues are far from resolved.

In a press conference, Minister Lloreda blasted Pastrana's acquiescence to create "indefinite" DMZs in the hands of the narco-FARC, purportedly to promote peace negotiations. "The message it sends to the country and to the world is almost of a hand-over of territory," he said. Lloreda revealed that he had been refused access to the President to even discuss the decision, and that 70% of the Colombian population opposes the demilitarization. "There are principles that cannot be negotiated," he warned.

As for the military command, they reportedly brought to their emergency meeting with the President a confidential dossier documenting that the narco-terrorists are manipulating the peace process in order to obtain recognition as a "belligerent force" worthy of international diplomatic recognition. Army chief Gen. Jorge Mora told Pastrana, according

to the Colombian daily *El Tiempo*, that "the country cannot tolerate, for any reason, that the guerrilla which is bleeding the nation achieves recognition as another army within the Colombian state."

The Clinton White House gave quick backing to Pastrana in the crisis, in line with the State Department's ongoing policy of total support for the insane peace negotiations with the drug-running FARC. Spokesman Mike Hammer stated that "the White House totally supports President Pastrana . . . [who] is going to continue with his efforts toward peace, which are very important." London-sponsored non-governmental organizations, such as the George Soros-funded Human Rights Watch, also immediately backed Pastrana, and promised him "the full support of the international community" to, once and for all, bring the Colombian military to heel.

The 'Kosovo effect'

Although only the most informed among Colombia's military and political elite are aware of it, a driving force behind the dramatic military revolt is what can be called the "Kosovo effect"—the growing realization, in Colombia and across Ibero-America, that, if London has its way, what awaits the nations of the region is the same fate as Kosovo, the annihilation of national sovereignty at the hands of the "new NATO."

At a seminar sponsored by *EIR* in Bogotá, Colombia in early May, the widely respected Gen. Harold Bedoya (ret.), former head of the Colombian Armed Forces and former Presidential candidate, explained: "Colombia is on the road to becoming a new Yugoslavia. . . . Associations have been born which are taking Colombia to its own disintegration." Referring to the DMZ granted to the FARC, he warned: "This



Colombian President Andrés Pastrana meets with narco-terrorist leader “Tirofijo” (“Sureshot”). Pastrana’s capitulation to the terrorists led to the resignation of his Defense Minister, 16 generals, and up to 180 other officers.

FARC enclave is an enclave of drugs, and of terrorism, and doesn’t only affect Colombia. It is threatening to destroy the entire region, and to become a worse problem than what is going on right now in Yugoslavia.” (See General Bedoya’s speech in this issue.)

Colombia is hardly alone in this fear. The Yugoslavian developments contain a threat to the entire region, which cannot be ignored. In a number of Ibero-American countries, terrorist groups sponsored by London are active—such as the Landless Movement in Brazil, and the Zapatistas in Mexico. These groups often wrap themselves in the protective flags of “human rights,” “indigenism,” and “environmentalism,” which are among London’s favorite pretexts for justifying supranational police and military intervention into sovereign nations.

“Let us suppose that President Slobodan Milosevic is the cruel racist that Bill Clinton and NATO say he is,” wrote Brazilian columnist Walter Ceneviva in the May 14 *Folha de São Paulo*. “Should the Yugoslav people be cruelly and permanently bombarded . . . bearing neither any blame nor any efficient means of defense at hand? Do we all deserve the threat of a world war, thanks to the disastrous bombing of the Chinese Embassy, because NATO didn’t purchase the latest tourist map of Belgrade?”

“We Brazilians have to be alert,” the columnist added. “If we remain silent in the face of the barbaric bombing of Yugoslavia, in order to win a seat on the UN Security Council,

we will lack the morality to protest when the great powers decide that we are not adequately conserving the Amazon jungle (the lungs of the world) and they come to apply the same medicine, until we hand over the zone to their ‘humanitarian’ control.”

In Guatemala, the “Kosovo effect” is also being felt. It is noteworthy that the Guatemalan population has just overwhelmingly rejected a referendum on constitutional reforms included in recent “peace agreements” which were designed, and imposed on Guatemala, by the United Nations and other instruments of London policy. As one Guatemalan housewife interviewed by the *Washington Post* put it: “Rather than trying to unify Guatemala, they are attempting to divide it. . . . The country is going to end up like Kosovo.”

Peru says no

The Ibero-American nation which has most clearly opposed the “new NATO” doctrine, is the one that has most successfully waged a war against London-sponsored terrorist forces. This has not escaped the notice of the British and their State Department side-kicks.

On April 23, at the second anniversary commemoration of the successful freeing of the hostages held by the terrorist MRTA at the Japanese Ambassador’s residence in Lima, U.S. Ambassador to Peru Dennis Jett issued highly provocative remarks. He compared the heroic rescue of the hostages by the Peruvian military, with the genocidal bombing campaign

being carried out by NATO against Yugoslavia.

Jett expounded: “Just as in the case of [Operation] Chavín de Huántar, where the Peruvian government made the decision to intervene,” NATO will continue its policy course “in order to put an end to the abuse of human rights” in Yugoslavia.

The president of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Peruvian Congress, Oswaldo Sandoval, immediately rejected the comparison, and told the press: “We cannot tolerate such a comparison between the heroic actions carried out by our Armed Forces in an internal situation, in which a group of Peruvian terrorists were violating the human rights of Peruvian hostages, and that of Yugoslavia. Because in that country, in the face of human rights violations among members of that federated nation, foreign powers are intervening to resolve the human rights of one group [the Kosovars]. That is destroying the Yugoslav Federation.”

Jett’s remarks were in answer to the firm posture taken by the Peruvian government against the Yugoslav bombing. On March 24, the Peruvian Foreign Ministry issued an official government note on NATO’s actions, which “profoundly laments the decision to take recourse to the use of force as a measure to solve the problem.” The bombing has been “indiscriminate,” and is being carried out “ignoring the proper role of the United Nations Security Council.”

Peru insisted that “the civilian population be protected, and that negotiations be reestablished as soon as possible, in order to find a peaceful and lasting solution, and [Peru] calls on the Yugoslav authorities to persevere in that objective.”

The Peruvian statement, one of the first and most forceful to be issued in the region against London’s “new NATO” lunacy, produced an immediate reaction from the Lima ambassadors of the NATO nations, who issued a communiqué protesting that the bombing has not been “indiscriminate,” while posturing about the supposed “precision” with which NATO planes have struck their targets. Within days, the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade was struck by NATO bombs.

Patricio Ricketts, the dean of Peruvian journalists, wrote in his April 23 column in the daily *Expreso*: “And what is happening in Kosovo? Are we not witnessing the first appearance of a military force and a policy which point toward the disintegration of Russia in a thousand pieces, captive to the empire? Where are the pharisaical wars taking us?”

Ricketts added: “Similarly, before, it was Kuwait, Bahrain, and the Arab Emirates, invented on top of rich oil fields. And tomorrow it could happen in Chiapas [Mexico], or in Ecuador or Peru, not to mention splintered Colombia.” Ricketts asked ironically, “Why not have an Ashaninka Republic in Camisea,” referring to the Peruvian Indian group which lives in an area of the country which is home to the giant Camisea natural gas reserves. “Panama was born overnight, in order to take the canal zone away from Colombia” in the early 20th century, he reminded his readers.

Bedoya on the ‘new NATO’ and a Marshall Plan for Colombia

The following is a slightly edited version of a speech given by Gen. Harold Bedoya Pizarro (ret.), former Presidential candidate and president of the Movimiento Fuerza Colombia, at an EIR conference entitled “In the Face of the Financial Collapse, the New NATO Threatens the World,” on May 6 in Bogotá.

Good evening. My thanks to Maximiliano Londoño, president of the Ibero-American Solidarity Movement, for inviting me to this meeting to deal with matters of great importance for the country. I am similarly grateful to be here with Jorge Carrillo, former labor minister and founder of the Unified Workers Federation, in these meetings which are vital to the future of our nation.

When I was beginning my Presidential campaign [in 1997], we began to put together an economic study of what was happening in Colombia, and we discovered that the war could be seen in the economic indices of the country: In recent years, especially during the previous four years, the country had negative growth, and its foreign debt increased. The country had reached unprecedented levels of poverty, to the point that the agricultural sector has had a 2-3% negative growth rate, and we were no longer producing practically anything. The conclusion was that the country was devastated by poverty, by terrorism, by the drug trade, by violence, by corruption, and that it needed to be rebuilt. Because, we were in the center of a struggle, of an international war: the war of the mafias. Here we have had the mafias of marijuana, of cocaine, of poppy—mafias that have lived and co-existed since the 1970s. We have suffered more than 30 years of this war, which has brought us poverty and misery.

So, in our campaign, we proposed that Colombia needed, and still needs, a Marshall Plan, and that the great world powers should collaborate in the reconstruction of Colombia, in a plan similar to that which allowed the reconstruction of the European countries devastated by the [Second World] War. This proposal received some response, especially in the United States, perhaps also in Japan, in Russia, in Spain, wherever it was thought that investment was needed in Colombia. It was given the name Marshall Plan so that the Europeans and the Americans would understand that what we were dealing with was a reconstruction plan.

We thought that this plan would cost some \$6 billion, provided by the international community and by Colombia,