

U.S. backs satanist who leads riots in Panama

by Gretchen Small

With two exceptions, U.S. news media and government officials continue to black out the truth behind the riots and disturbances which exploded in Panama in June: that they were run in support of a man who is a long-standing close friend of Fidel Castro, a gnostic Satan-worshipper, and the leading "Panamanian connection" of a major South America cocaine pipeline into the United States, whose capos in Peru now sit in jail awaiting trial!

The man behind the riots is Panama's former Defense Force Chief of Staff, Col. Díaz Herrera. Forced out of the Defense Forces on June 1, Díaz Herrera issued a string of accusations of corruption and fraud against his superior, Defense Force Commander Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega, which implicated the entire Defense Force command. Panama's opposition movement, led by a spectrum of competing satanists and members of the South American narcotics mafia, immediately called a general strike, and sent their people out rioting, demanding Panama's military and government be overthrown because of Díaz Herrera's charges.

Díaz Herrera insisted that President Reagan and the Panamanian people must listen to him, because he is acting at the behest of a gnostic Indian guru, Satya Sai Baba, his "secret weapon" against Noriega. He added also that he, Díaz Herrera, is coordinating his activities with a network of practicing cultists in the Caribbean holding powerful positions, a network which includes leaders of the Socialist International and Cuba's Fidel Castro.

Except for *EIR* (June 19) and the *Wall Street Journal* (June 11), Díaz Herrera's gnostic connections have been blacked out in the United States. Yet, those connections are

the key to tracking out the control of the Soviet-run international narcotics traffic of would-be Panamanian ruler Díaz Herrera. The "Gnostic International" today still runs the Bulgarian state, which also serves as a central headquarters for much of the world's narcotics trade, including its Colombian and Cuban branches. The Gnostic Church established, and still directs, the Colombian narco-terrorist group, the M-19, which operated in Panama for many years under the protection of Díaz Herrera's ally, former National Guard Commander Ruben Paredes. U.S. investigation into the gnostic network in the Caribbean which Díaz Herrera has identified is urgent, not U.S. support for placing that network in power.

The Villa Coca connection

Díaz Herrera has long been known as the man who runs Panama's prostitution and contraband networks. Questioned by Panamanian reporters in June about accusations that the Panamanian military is involved in drug-trafficking, Díaz Herrera could only respond that "drug-traffic is everywhere," and refuse to further answer the question.

No wonder. Díaz Herrera was the contact man in Panama for Peruvian cocaine chieftain Reynaldo Rodríguez López's operations, until that operation exploded, literally, on July 24, 1985, when a gigantic cocaine laboratory blew up in a mansion located in one of Lima's richest districts. While Rodríguez was not caught until a year later, his network began to unravel, becoming famous as "the Villa Coca case."

Since the 1970s, Rodríguez had run one of the largest cocaine pipelines in the Western hemisphere, channeling coca paste and cocaine from Peru, through Panama and Mex-

Fidel, Díaz Herrera: a 'mystical' relation

Díaz Herrera: (From the June 8, 1987 interview suppressed by U.S. media) Man, Fidel is a mystic, didn't you know? I have spoken twice with Comandante Castro, and we spoke in this way, that he is a mystic. Do you know why? I don't know what you think of mysticism; I don't know what the dictionary says "mystic" means, but he is a spiritual man, despite his being a Marxist-Leninist, and he is a profoundly human man, to the core. He is a great friend not only of Panama, but an extraordinary friend to me.

Fidel Castro: (From a 1986 discussion with the Brazilian Dominican priest, Frei Betto) I was

born in 1926, in the month of August, the 13th of August; if you want to know the hour, I believe it was 2:00 in the morning. It appears that the night could have been influential later in my guerrilla spirit, in revolutionary activity. We should look at other things now, no? What was that day like, and if nature also has some influence over the life of men. But I think I was born at dawn . . . thus, I was born a warrior because I was born already at night, around 2:00 in the morning. . . .

(Responding to Frei Betto's observation that "the number 26 has recurred several times in your life") Well, I was born in 1926, that's true; I was also 26 years old when I began the armed struggle, and I was born on a day, 13, which is half of 26. Batista carried out his coup d'état in 1952, which is the double of 26. If I were to study it, there could be some mystery about 26.

ico, into the United States. As part of his operation, he ran a virtual slave trade from Peru, to Mexico, and the United States, trafficking in human beings as "mules" for his cocaine traffic. By the 1980s, his operation had firmly established its Colombian connections, forming an integral part of the cocaine operations of the so-called Medellín Cartel of Carlos Lehder and Pablo Escobar Gaviria.

Uncovered with the explosion of Villa Coca, was the network of Peruvian police which had protected Rodríguez, a network centered in the Peruvian Investigative Police (PIP), particularly during the 1980-85 Belaúnde government. The official car issued to a top adviser to Belaúnde's prime minister, Luis Percovich Roca, who also served as interior minister, was parked in the driveway at the time of the explosion. Rodríguez was listed in PIP telephone directories as a top adviser to the PIP High Command, a position he had reportedly held since 1980. PIP Generals José Jorge Zarate and Eduardo Ipinze Rebatta were soon cited as the top protectors of Rodríguez within the PIP.

The Panamanian connection also immediately surfaced. Rodríguez ran a major portion of his operation through his tourist agency, Seturin, which then established a network within Air Panama. Also discovered, was that Rodríguez and PIP General José Jorge Zarate, worked closely with Col. Díaz Herrera.

Díaz Herrera's ties to Peru's police are long-standing, going back to the days when he studied at the La Campina Academy of the Peruvian Civil Guard, a sister police service to the PIP.

The banking connection

Díaz Herrera was protected for years within Panama's Defense Forces by U.S. banking interests and their allies in the intelligence community, despite his links to the drug trade and to Cuba. In September 1985, Díaz Herrera attempted a coup against General Noriega when he was out of the country—on behalf of then-President of Panama Nicolás Ardito Barletta. Nicky Barletta, as his American friends call him, was the banker who set up the offshore banking center in Panama in 1970 to be, as he put it, "more secret than Switzerland," after studying economics at the University of Chicago under George Shultz.

In his press conference to denounce Noriega, Díaz Herrera took special care to praise Barletta as "my personal friend, even though he may not want it. I admire him greatly." When the June crisis broke, Barletta was one of the first to back Díaz Herrera's charges against Noriega and the rest of the military during the June crisis.

Since General Noriega has collaborated extensively with United States anti-drug agencies in the war on drugs—in-

cluding most recently aiding the passage of legislation allowing bank secrecy to be lifted for drug-runners—it is not surprising to find U.S. and Panamanian banking interests tied to the “offshore” international banking center in Panama, financing and backing the opposition’s riots against Noriega.

What is shocking, is that Reagan administration officials are also backing the efforts of the drug mob to seize power in Panama. The week of June 23, the *Miami Herald*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *Washington Post*, each reported that Reagan administration officials are rapidly reaching “a consensus” that the United States must force Noriega to resign as Defense Forces commander, despite the fact that officials recognize that Noriega has proven a reliable ally to the United States, and that his forced removal may “trigger political chaos” at the Western hemisphere’s strategic chokepoint, the Panama Canal.

According to the *Miami Herald*, “the debate within the administration is still whether to endorse or abandon Noriega, but slowly it’s coming around to ponder the question, ‘How do we abandon Noriega?’” Threats to withhold U.S. economic and military aid until Noriega resigns are now under consideration, these papers report.

It is acknowledged that it was Díaz Herrera’s denunciations that provoked the policy shift. “Whether the United States continues to tolerate Noriega or not, the fact is that the situation in Panama is different now than it was before Díaz Herrera made his accusations,” a U.S. official told the *Miami Herald*: “‘People fear Noriega much less now than they did before Díaz Herrera [made his statements]. As a result, power is likely to slip from his hands, totally leading to instability.’”

Thus, the argument goes, the United States has no choice but to adapt to the new situation, and bring down Noriega.

To reverse the stampede toward that suicidal “consensus,” *EIR* here provides excerpts of those revelations by Díaz Herrera which have been suppressed by the U.S. media. Díaz Herrera gave the interview, published by *La Crítica* on June 8, to a group of Panamanian and Cuban journalists.

Documentation

Díaz Herrera’s ravings

There it is. Take the photograph. This is the man. This is the man whom they are afraid of, not me . . . because they know who he is. I am not the only one who has read of him. . . . Do you know why they did not want to publish my things, why they edited me, and cut everything? It was obvious, they cut everything because I spoke of mysticism. . . . They are

afraid of the mystic.

Man, Fidel is a mystic, didn’t you know? I have spoken twice with Comandante Castro, and we spoke in this way, that he is a mystic. Do you know why? I don’t know what you think of mysticism; I don’t know what the dictionary says ‘mystic’ means, but he is a spiritual man, despite his being a Marxist-Leninist, and he is a profoundly human man, to the core. He is a great friend not only of Panama, but an extraordinary friend to me.

They are investigating who Shri Satya Sai Baba is. This is a secret weapon, powerful, which they are afraid of. He is a black with an afro, whom I saw for the first time in Buenos Aires. . . . They are afraid of this man, simply because this man has demonstrated that he is nothing more nor less than a new divine incarnation, equal to Christ.

There are four priests—take this down—who have this book. Father Ernesto Jaén . . . you know the line he is with, more popular church, a left-wing type. . . . I gave it to Father Rosendo Torres of Radio Hogar, a Jesuit theologian. I gave him the same book of “Satya Sai Baba”—I call him “swami” because we are now intimate friends—to Father Carlos Villalobos . . . and Father Carlos Pérez Herrera, who despite his not being in a priest’s position, knows about theology. Do you know why he knows of theology? You are very young. Do you know who Pérez Herrera is? He ran as vice president of the ultra-left in the last electoral campaign. There are other people to whom I have given books . . . only people of the left.

They have always called me communist, leftist, atheist; they have often thrown this name against me, but now it turns out, when I want to enter a little into mysticism—and now retiring me, retired, or retirable, or half-retired, as they have said—I want to get closer to the paths of the Lord, and they become afraid. Why? Why? Fidel understands this. Do you know Fidel? Personally? . . . I have spoken twice with him, not on semantics, profoundly. . . .

Any good president, not only Fidel, I think that—man, I think that Qaddafi, for all that he is called a terrorist, wouldn’t assassinate children. I think that Reagan made a mistake, because if he wanted to kill Qaddafi, fine, but I think that the target should be Qaddafi because they accuse him of being a guerrilla—maybe, I don’t know; this is a question of judgment of values—but killing a child over there in Tripoli, I’m not in agreement with that. . . .

Look, this story began in Buenos Aires, it has mystical implications. . . . In politics, this is of profound importance for Panama. Dr. José Francisco Peña Gómez knows about this, you can cite him. I refer to ‘Sai Baba,’ this black man with an afro . . . in the same way that Dr. José Francisco Peña Gómez—nothing more nor less than a politician of this level—he has recounted in front of some people that I respect a lot—I don’t want to betray confidences—but, for example, he spoke of mysticism to me, before I did to him. He told me that he has spoken at least twice with the spirit of General

Torrijos, in the Dominican Republic—I don't know by what means—but that the spirit of Torrijos was restless because he had been assassinated. . . .

I think that Reagan has been an extraordinary President. . . . Fidel has an extraordinary team, I imagine that Reagan also has one; Gorbachov must have one, and speaking of Gorbachov, look, Russia is spending millions on studies on paranormal phenomena. Did you know that? They make people speak from Moscow to Leningrad with telepathy and other things. This goes back years, man—then when someone brings up a man like Shri Satya Sai Baba, people get nervous. . . .

Now they say that I am crazy, and they take me to the psychiatrist. . . . I have called two already, they can vouch for it, this has nothing to do with disorders, but rather neurovegetative *distonias*. Take this down. . . .

I am not at all brave, but if you touch me now, I'm trembling—I'm crazy—I'm trembling. . . .

No, there is no good government here. . . . There are no economic plans here. . . . There is not one single economic plan to present to the International Monetary Fund. . . .

I want to reach an understanding with the Americans. . . . I am not an enemy of the Americans, but they have been using me savagely. . . .

Sai Baba is an "avatar," which in Hindu means a prophet. He has demonstrated that he is divine. . . . He sent a message through an emissary . . . that he was going to do a couple things here so that we would believe. One of them that he told me in advance, which was what happened in Red Square in Moscow, and sent a small plane from West Germany violating all the air space of Russia—the second power in the world. So that you would know, and tell it to Gorbachov: It was this Sai Baba. Then, he says afterwards—I am very afraid to believe him—that if you want proof, that is in front of your noses, I am going to put in Howard—the air base which feeds everything in Central America, full of radars and things—a small Costa Rican airplane. . . . If he wants, he can put one in front of the White House. . . .

I still fear death, I have not been able to correct this. This man says that one should not fear death, because he says that death is like a change of old clothes for new clothes, that the spirit leaves, and rises. He believes in incarnation, that there are several lives, a cycle of equal lives. . . .

Arnulfo [Arias, ex-president of Panama, Hitler supporter, and also a declared satanist] is not as crazy as they have tried to say in this country . . . when he says "history repeats itself in a spiral," because history is cyclical. . . . There will be another leader in Cuba when Fidel dies physically. I don't know who it is; that [death] of Fidel will be an irreparable loss; because at the personal level, I don't know if Raúl [Fidel's brother] has this capacity which I know in Fidel personally, profoundly human. They say he killed people, that he shot people. Well, it is that these were the circumstances for Fidel. . . .

Alert on Poland

Kremlin orders war on John Paul II

The global mobilization by the "Zionist lobby" against Pope John Paul II over the pretext of the Pope's meeting with Austrian President Kurt Waldheim, who has been targeted by as-yet-unproven charges of World War II "war crimes," was ordered directly from Moscow. The orders were delivered to Canadian liquor magnate Edgar Bronfman's organization, the World Jewish Congress, which has been negotiating secret deals with the Kremlin.

After the Pope's recent visit to Poland, Mikhail Gorbachov personally became deeply alarmed. The Soviet dictator fears the national resistance movement which the Pope launched there. He is committed to moving more Soviet troops in to crush Poland as soon as the "zero option" accord, to withdraw the protection of U.S. intermediate-range nuclear missiles from Western Europe, is signed with the United States.

Meanwhile, Pope John Paul II has committed himself, despite pressure from the appeasement faction in the Catholic Church, to two spectacular anti-Soviet moves:

1) Banned by Moscow from visiting Lithuania, the Pontiff sent an 18-page "pastoral letter" to Lithuanian Catholics urging them to respect their "freedom of belief," stating that Church membership should not be viewed as "unpatriotic." In Rome at the end of June, he will celebrate the 600th anniversary of the Christianization of Lithuania with exiled Church members.

2) Denied by Moscow the right to visit the Ukrainian capital of Kiev in 1988, the Pope has announced that he will hold a celebration in Rome July 9-10, 1988, with Ukrainian Catholics (Uniate) and "Autocephalous" Ukrainian Orthodox to commemorate the 1,000th anniversary of the "Christianization of Kievan Rus." Both the Ukrainian Uniate and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church have been outlawed by the Soviets.