

Andean Report by Valerie Rush

Kissinger's 'little wars': a replay

Tensions along the Venezuelan-Colombian border are but one aspect of CSIS's scenario for chaos in Ibero-America.

In 1984, Kissinger's Georgetown Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) released a seven-volume study commissioned by the U.S. Department of the Army, entitled "Strategic Requirements for the Army to the Year 2000." That study, purporting to make recommendations on restructuring of the armed service, in fact describes a scenario for a series of "conflicts" that spell chaos, economic collapse, terrorism, and forced population reduction for entire portions of Ibero-America, and especially for the strategically crucial Andean spine—from the Panama Canal down to Peru.

Says the report, "The internal situation in a number of Andean states will resemble the current turmoil in Central American countries. . . . [In Colombia] the volatile situation will erupt into a medium-intensity civil war toward the end of this decade." That civil war, says the report, will threaten the Venezuelan oil fields, and possibly also the Panama Canal.

In fact, the upsurge in narco-terrorist violence—on both sides of the Colombian-Venezuelan border—has not only created widespread economic, social, and political upheaval domestically, but has raised tensions between the two nations to fever pitch.

Nearly simultaneous narco-terrorist massacres perpetrated against both the Colombian Army and Venezuelan National Guard the week of June 12—the culmination of weeks and months of strikes, rioting, narco-terrorist assassinations, kidnappings, and am-

bushes—had the effect of overturning a carefully crafted ceasefire and truce between the Colombian government and significant portions of that country's guerrilla movements, setting the stage for virtual civil war; at the same time, they triggered a series of accusations from the Venezuelan side, against the Colombian government and armed forces.

When a narco-terrorist commando June 12 crossed over from the Colombian border into the Venezuelan "no-man's-land" of Sierra de Perija, slaughtering a sleeping contingent of National Guardsmen deployed against coca and marijuana fields in the area, Venezuelan Defense Minister Grimaldi went before the national Congress to charge, "There is no political will in Colombia to fight the drug trade. A marked negligence on the part of the Colombian Army along the border is notable."

Grimaldi went even further, declaring that Colombian troops had "harassed" the Venezuelan Army, and strongly implying that Colombian failure to transmit adequate intelligence on the border situation was responsible for the June 12 massacre.

Worst of all was Grimaldi's charge that neighboring Colombia was arming itself to the teeth for "conventional warfare" along the border, rather than for the fight against narco-terrorism. He claimed that the Colombian armed forces were acquiring tanks, sophisticated submarines, upgrading aviation, etc. Not accidentally, the Sierra

de Perija is located in the fiercely contested oil-rich territory known as the "Diferendo."

The Colombians, preoccupied with the spiral of violence, growing economic woes, and sudden whispers of a military coup threat in their own country, responded to Grimaldi's charges with a furious denial.

The narco-terrorist violence threatening to engulf the two nations, from from being a "sociological phenomenon" has the joint sponsorship of rogue elements in the CIA and State Department, as well as of the Soviets themselves, leading one to conclude that Kissinger's CSIS institute possesses more than a healthy share of political prescience.

The Colombian Church has done its best to try to combat the rapidly degenerating situation by clearly identifying the common enemy as "narco-terrorism," and demanding solidarity against that evil. A July 5 document issued by the Episcopal Assembly in Bogota described Colombia as nearing "total war" due to the accelerating violence, and warned that "since forces of evil seek to complement each other, those up in arms have allied with the drug traffickers to mutually help themselves. The former contribute dirty drug money to provide arms to the criminals, and the latter lend their strategic support to protect the drug traffickers."

Such a definition of the enemy immediately poses the question of continental unity to combat it. Venezuelan-Colombian tensions, if not soon resolved, will stand in the way of such a war-winning strategy. Another obstacle is the blindness of the Reagan administration itself, whose newly appointed director of the Central Intelligence Agency—former FBI director William Webster—only last year publicly insisted that no such thing as "narco-terrorism" existed.