

affairs in the Commonwealth. The CDC's primary role in this apparatus is to manage the Commonwealth Private Investment Initiative, which was created at the 1995 Commonwealth summit in Auckland, New Zealand. Organized specifically for investments in privatized companies, the initiative has organized three regional funds, including a Commonwealth Africa Investment Fund valued at over \$60 million, a \$15 million Kula Fund for the Pacific, and a South Asian Fund which was announced at the Edinburgh summit. The latter intends to raise \$200 million from private sources.

The CDC's key role was directly and indirectly referred to in the Commonwealth Economic Declaration, where the question of pushing forward privatization was emphasized. In addition, CDC Chairman Lord Cairns and Cyril Ramaphose will create a Business Council, made up of business leaders from throughout the Commonwealth.

CDC Board of Directors (partial)

Lord Cairns, chairman: The Sixth Earl of Cairns is the former chief executive officer and deputy chairman of S.G. Warburg; chairman of BAT Industries PLC, better known as British American Tobacco, the largest cigarette company outside the United States. Lord Cairns's father, a former senior Naval officer, was Equerry to the Queen.

Sir William Ryrrie, Knight Commander of the Bath, deputy chairman: Former executive vice president and chief executive of the International Finance Corp. (IFC). A sister organization of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, the IFC has been the leading proponent of privatizations internationally.

Pen Kent: Former executive director of the Bank of England, alternate executive director of the IMF and head of the Third World International division of the Bank of England. He is also a director of NatWest Group, one of the leading City of London banks. While a director of the Bank of England, Kent handled many of the most politically sensitive bankruptcies, including the multibillion-dollar Canary Wharf real estate collapse, and the recurrent financial problems with the privately financed Channel tunnel. He also played a rather murky role in the collapse of the British arms and munitions manufacturer Asta Holdings.

Russell Seal: Member of the Board of British Petroleum.

Hari Shankar Singhani: Chairman of JK Industries Ltd. of India and chairman of Arlas Copco (Inida) Ltd. The first and only non-British member of the CDC Board.

David Pearce: Professor of Environmental Economics, University College London; director of the Centre for Social and Economic Research on Global Environment; member, UN secretary general's Advisory Board on Sustainable Development. A leading environmentalist and editor of a series of environmental policy papers, *Blueprint for a Green Economy*.

London's terrorists make a mockery of Colombian elections

by Dennis Small and Javier Almarino

Under a shroud of terror, the beleaguered nation of Colombia was subjected to sham municipal elections on Oct. 26. The country's two narco-terrorist organizations, the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN), had declared an "armed strike" for the weekend of the elections, threatening to kill anyone who dared to vote, or even move about in public, in the areas they control—commonly estimated to be about 40% of the national territory. In the weeks leading up to the vote, the FARC and ELN forced about 1,500 candidates to resign, under threat of death; hundreds of candidates were kidnapped; and dozens were murdered outright.

Given the threats and the violence, about 55% of the population abstained from voting. The turnout was slightly higher in the major cities, thanks to a strong military presence providing security there. But in the rural areas, even the narco-terrorist-loving international media were forced to report that the FARC and ELN threats kept voters to a minimum. Typically absurd was the case of Piedra Ancha in Nariño, a town of 3,000, where six people voted, and the victorious candidate for mayor won by a vote of 4-2.

The most significant feature of the election, however, was a referendum called "Citizens' Mandate for Peace, Life and Liberty," which asked voters to choose, with a simple "Yes" or "No," whether they supported "peace" in Colombia. Since most of those who voted chose "Yes" (a "No" vote would have been like voting against motherhood and apple pie), the drug cartel-run government of Ernesto Samper Pizano proclaimed the vote to be a mandate for its ongoing policy of capitulation and negotiations with the narco-terrorists.

The British government has long backed Samper in this deal-making with the terrorists and the cartels, as part of its global strategy of drug legalization and destruction of the nation-state. In each of the last two years, London has crossed swords with the Clinton administration, when the U.S. President chose to decertify Samper as non-cooperating in the war on drugs. The British argue that Samper's Colombia is a perfect model of "democracy."

This time around, London showed its preferences by financing the phony “peace” referendum. The propaganda line, echoed worldwide by its non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and United Nations apparatus, is that “since” the FARC and ELN can’t be defeated, they must be invited into the government to share power.

British Foreign Office Minister Tony Lloyd announced his government’s financial support for the referendum when he visited Colombia in mid-September. “The greatest challenge that this country faces is the need to develop a peace process,” he pontificated, offering whatever aid was needed, from Britain and other European nations, to “put an end to one of the longest-running internal conflicts on this planet.”

The reader should take note of Lloyd’s characterization of the FARC and ELN spree of violence as merely an “internal conflict”—no references to narco-terrorism here.

Yes, Virginia, there is ‘narco-terrorism’

The Clinton administration, however, is taking an increasingly sharp position against the FARC and the ELN, and has begun to officially characterize them as *narco-guerrillas*—i.e., not wide-eyed political idealists, as London would have it, but rather as drug-runners parading around as a so-called political movement.

This is not a semantic issue. It is a long-standing, and crucial, policy debate in Washington. Partisans of London’s strategy of appeasement, including the bankers’ lobby, the Inter-American Dialogue, and Anglophile elements in the U.S. State Department, insist that there is no proof that the FARC and ELN are involved in drug-running in more than an anecdotal way. “Narco-terrorism,” they argue, doesn’t exist: There are narcos, and there are terrorists, but never the twain shall meet.

On the other side of the divide are those in Washington who say that the FARC and ELN terrorists are fully involved in the drug trade, that they are actually a full-fledged Third Cartel. That view is leading some in the Clinton administration toward two policy conclusions which London finds abhorrent: that U.S. military and other aid being given to Colombia to fight drugs, can also be legitimately used for fighting the FARC and ELN *narco-terrorists*; and, that no power-sharing deals with the FARC and ELN are acceptable, including Samper’s London-sponsored plan under the just-approved “Peace Mandate” plebiscite.

During a recent trip to Bogotá, U.S. National Drug Policy Adviser Gen. Barry McCaffrey (ret.) repeatedly referred to the FARC and ELN as “narco-guerrillas,” and underscored their links to the cartels. In a major policy speech to Colombia’s Army War College on Oct. 22, McCaffrey stated unequivocally:

“With the unholy alliance between the cocaine industry and the revolutionary guerrilla movement, the drug-trafficker threat to Colombian civil democratic society has again ratch-

eted upwards. We are now convinced that the majority of the FARC and a significant faction of the ELN participate in and benefit from drug trafficking. The cocaine trade appears to be pumping about \$60 million per year into the coffers of these revolutionary/criminal enterprises. Revolutionary groups control the territory where drugs are grown and manufactured; tax and protect the growing, production, and drug-trafficking infrastructures; and benefit greatly from the export of these deadly chemicals. It is no accident that the 32% increase in coca cultivation that took place in Colombia last year was concentrated almost entirely in guerrilla-controlled territory.

“The melding of revolution and international criminal organizations has created an unprecedented threat to democracy, the rule of law, and the very fabric of society.”

Nowhere was this seen more clearly than in the run-up to the elections.

London-style ‘democracy’

In the weeks leading up to the Oct. 26 vote, the FARC and ELN had increasingly dominated political life in the country. According to official estimates of the National Electoral Commission, 130 municipalities were forced to suspend elections due to a lack of candidates, who had been forced to resign under the threats of the FARC and ELN. At least 1,500 mayoral, town council, and departmental assembly candidates had abandoned their bids for office, the commission added, out of fear the FARC could carry out their death threats. The actual figure could be much higher. Dozens of sitting mayors were also forced to resign, under threat of death.

Those 130 represent about 13% of the nation’s thousand-plus municipalities, and the majority of them are in the departments of Huila, Putumayo, Caquetá, Bolívar, and Antioquia, regions which the narc-FARC defined one year ago as its targets for sabotaging the elections. One of the candidates who resigned told *EIR*, “Since the other candidates resigned, I wasn’t going to remain as a candidate only to be turned into cannon fodder,” a sentiment that was expressed by several candidates. This scenario even affected rural areas surrounding Bogotá, the capital of the country. All the town council candidates in Sumapaz, for example, resigned because of FARC threats.

But there have been more than just threats. In the past three months, there have been at least 100 dynamite attacks against the political offices of different candidates, and virtually daily the FARC or its ELN allies have assaulted a military or police patrol. On Oct. 2, the FARC nearly assassinated Armed Forces Commander Gen. Manuel José Bonnet, and First Army Division Commander Gen. Iván Ramírez Quintero. The attack was carried out using anti-personnel mines activated electronically, with very sophisticated logistical and intelligence coordination.

As destructive as the violence and threats themselves,

has been the blatant inaction, or rather, the complicity of the Samper narco-Presidency, with these narco-terrorists. The only “security” proposal coming from President Samper was that the candidates should take refuge in the nearest military barracks—and conduct their campaigns by Internet—until the elections were over!

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Thus, the few military offensives against the narco-terrorists that did occur, were conceived by Samper as a mere pressure tactic, to force the FARC and ELN to negotiate with his government. In the words of Samper, during an interview with *Newsweek* magazine: “We aren’t winning the war. What I am proposing is keeping up the military pressure while simultaneously opening up peace options that can bring the guerrilla to the negotiating table. We are prepared to establish a demilitarized zone, to eliminate the arrest warrants against the main leaders, and to create free-access corridors through which they can enter and leave the areas under their control, without being threatened.”

In the meanwhile, of course, Samper is doing everything in his power to fulfill his deals with the Cali Cartel bosses. His “pocket prosecutor,” Alfonso Gómez Méndez, dissolved the “faceless prosecutors” commission, which was investigating drug-money infiltration of the 1994 electoral campaigns (Samper was elected President in 1994), and which had already gathered evidence of drug traffickers’ contributions to Samper’s Presidential campaign. The general prosecutor’s office has also begun to grant unconditional releases to some of the major drug traffickers and their front-men, including Iván Urdinola Grajales, Eduardo Mestre Sarmiento, and Alberto Giraldo López. At the same time, the Samper govern-

ment has managed to fend off pressures from the United States for the reactivation—with retroactivity—of the Colombia-U.S. extradition treaty, arguing that the narco-dominated Colombian Congress “democratically” decided not to approve the bill.

With every new terrorist act by the FARC and ELN, the government’s response has been to offer dialogue, seats in the Congress without need for election, participation in so-called “Peace Councils,” and surrender of entire chunks of national territory to the narco-terrorists.

With the “Peace Mandate” now voted up, what can be expected to happen? For the UN and its NGOs, it will mean that Colombians will have to accept all the conditions imposed on them by the FARC and ELN, for the fulfillment of this so-called “peace.” Not surprisingly, the United Nations apparatus did not utter a peep about the FARC’s terror campaign against the elections, in which the only candidates who were *not* threatened were those who directly or indirectly represent the FARC, or who have struck deals with them. The United Nations has instead constantly pressured Colombian society to negotiate with the narco-terrorists. Almudena Mazzaraza, the UN representative in Colombia assigned to oversee “human rights” matters, has repeated endlessly, after each new terrorist attack, that the only thing one can do is seek “a negotiated solution.”

Bedoya: Not your usual candidate

Notwithstanding the nauseating propaganda of the UN, the Samper government, and the non-governmental organizations in favor of “peace,” the only Presidential candidate who has refused to support the so-called “plebiscite for peace” is daily increasing his percentage of support in national opinion polls, for the May 1998 elections. He is Gen. Harold Bedoya (ret.). According to some of the polls, in fact, if the Presidential elections were held today, Bedoya would garner 20% and take second place behind Samper’s hand-picked candidate, former Interior Minister Horacio Serpa Uribe. Other polls place Bedoya at between 10% and 15%.

Significantly, these same pollsters a month ago gave him less than 5% of the vote.

Colombia’s political class is wracking its brains trying to explain this phenomenon. According to the country’s political elites, the original enthusiasm for Bedoya, following his recent forced retirement from the post of Armed Forces Commander, should have dissipated by now, leaving the feisty general eventually forgotten by the Colombian public. But this has not occurred.

The explanation is very simple: The nation does not want to unconditionally surrender to the narco-terrorists; nor does it want to end up a nation occupied by UN “peace-keeping troops,” as in the case of El Salvador and elsewhere; nor is it willing to disintegrate because of a lack of a legitimate authority prepared to fight for the unity and integrity of the nation.