

What's Behind the FARC Cartel's South American Operation?

by Gretchen Small

The capture of three computers belonging to “Comandante” Raúl Reyes, operations and finance chief for South America’s biggest drug cartel, the narcoterrorist Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), has excited much speculation, and nervousness over the insight their contents may provide into the workings of the FARC’s international operations. How quickly, indeed, did *Wall Street Journal* hatchet-woman Mary Anastasia O’Grady point the finger southward, as to what might be revealed!

Lest games be played: *EIR* warns that any revelations which ignore the British and Wall Street masterminds of the FARC project—including direct financial links between the world’s major financial centers and the FARC, as reflected in the notorious Grasso *Abrazo* (see below)—will be a cover-up, and play into the hands of the British imperial interests provoking war and chaos across the globe.

Reyes’s computers were seized by Colombian military forces in the March 1 assault on a FARC encampment inside Ecuador, in which Reyes was killed. The Colombian assault had been precipitated by the drive to grant international recognition to the FARC, kicked off by Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez’s mid-January granting of “belligerent status” to it.

The Colombian move into Ecuador set off the gravest crisis in decades among the nations of Ibero-America, and brought the region to the brink of war. The immediate crisis has been defused by the decision of the Presidents of the region, after tense and often nasty discussions at the March 7 summit of the Rio Group of nations, in the Dominican Republic, that common interests must override individual conflicts.

Yet, the underlying problems which generated the conflict remain to be addressed. Only U.S. statesman Lyndon LaRouche has pointed to the elephant rampaging through the region: Ibero-America is up against Britain’s Dope, Inc., and the Anglo-Dutch Liberal oligarchy’s imperial drive to impose a Final Solution against the nation-state worldwide.

The good news, is that the system upon which the drug trade is pivoted, has collapsed.

From Chinese Opium to Colombian Cocaine

The narcotics trade has been organized centrally out of London, since the British East India Company set up the

opium trade in the mid-1700s. By 1830, opium was the largest commodity in world trade, and British finance—backed by British guns—employed the *legal* world narcotics trade as an instrument of state policy, until 1920.

Ibero-America’s subjection to the drug trade was organized as an integral part of the international coup which established the floating-exchange-rate financial system in 1971. That system, imposed under the direction of the fascist George Shultz, who also gave the world the Nazi Pinochet dictatorship, and eight years of Bush/Cheney hell, brought with it the explosion of offshore financial havens (the vast majority under British Crown control), and the iron law that money is the only criterion of economic activity permitted. Both of these factors are required for the vast expansion of the drug trade under “globalization.” Shultz went public with his support for it in October 1989, when he demanded legalization.

Bankrupted by the floating-exchange-rate system, the nations of the Americas were ordered by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and bankers to *promote* drug cultivation and processing within their borders. Debts have to be paid, you know!

After three decades of assault, the drug trade has come to dominate the finances, economy, and social fabric of the Americas. Cartels rose and fell, and the London financiers and their Wall Street buddies pushed to legalize every one of them. The FARC, which by the mid-1980s had gone from providing security to other cartels, to running the business itself, has been no exception.

The Drive To Legitimize the FARC

The following chronology highlights the antecedent to the current pro-FARC campaign which nearly led to regional war, exposing the financiers’ offensive in 1999-2000 to legalize the cartel and, with it, the international drug trade, in the name of “peace” and “the global economy.” Had it succeeded, today, all of South America would look like Afghanistan: one big, hellish dope plantation. That is the aim today.

June 16, 1999: President Clinton’s anti-drug czar, Barry McCaffrey, launches a public war on speculator George Soros and his drug-legalization project, in testimony before a House Government Reform and Oversight Committee subcommittee hearing. The drug lobby seeks the “legalization of

not only marijuana, but other more dangerous drugs such as heroin and cocaine,” he said. They are throwing up a “haze of misinformation,” but legalization would mean “significantly higher rates of drug abuse, particularly among young people, and exponentially increased human and social costs to our society.”

June 26-29, 1999: New York Stock Exchange president Richard Grasso visits the giant FARC-controlled enclave in southern Colombia on June 26, to personally make a deal with the FARC. Upon his return, he calls FARC leaders such as Raúl Reyes “extraordinary” and “sophisticated,” welcoming them as future partners in the New York Stock Exchange (see “Raúl Reyes and the ‘Grasso Abrazo,’” *EIR*, March 14, 2008). In a June 29 editorial, the *Wall Street Journal* joins the clamor for legalizing the FARC and its “capital”: “Mr. Reyes ... is profitable, he’s global and he’s strategically positioned. Stay tuned, the NYSE chairman is said to have offered the guerrilla a floor tour of the exchange. What’s next, an IPO?”

June 28, 1999: An IMF spokesman confirms to *EIR*, on the record, that it was on IMF instructions that Colombia had begun including “illicit crops” in its official agricultural statistics, thus legalizing the drug economy. Bolivia has been told to do the same, he said. Ideally, heroin should be included, but the value of that product is hard to calculate.

July 8-12, 1999: The FARC launched its biggest and most destructive offensive in 40 years, assaulting 28 towns in 11 departments across the country, leaving homes, municipal buildings, bridges, and infrastructure in rubble. Reyes told foreign journalists that war, kidnapping, and executions would continue, should the FARC’s demands not be met.

September 1999: The LaRouche movement organizes a one-week visit to Washington, D.C. by Colombian Presidential candidate Gen. Harold Bedoya, in which he denounces Wall Street’s “Grasso Abrazo” and demands that the United States instead help Colombia crush the narcoterrorists, and launch a Marshall Plan to rebuild and develop the country.

Jan. 22, 2000: Grasso returns to Colombia, with America On-Line (AOL) founder Jim Kimsey, American Express chief James Robinson, former Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, and others, to constitute the so-called Millennium Group, to advise Colombia’s then-President Andrés Pastrana on the economic and financial side of a “peace” deal with the FARC. The organizer of the meeting is former JP Morgan officer Violy McCausland.

Feb. 1, 2000: Reyes and six other *comandantes* begin a 23-day, six-nation, all-expenses-paid trip to Europe, where they are received like royals to discuss “peace.” When over, Reyes declares that the European nations “put us on the same level as the government,” thus granting “de facto belligerent status.”

February 2000: U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright tells a House of Representatives hearing that the FARC’s European tour is “very encouraging.”

March 4, 2000: AOL’s Kimsey and real estate baron Joseph Robert meet FARC Commander Marulanda (alias “Sureshot”) Reyes and others, in the FARC’s jungle enclave. At the end, Kimsey and Marulanda exchange FARC and AOL caps.

March 20, 2000: Kimsey and Robert publish an op-ed in the *Washington Times*, reporting that they have just returned from discussing “the new global economy” with the FARC. They call for the FARC to come visit the U.S. Congress and speak directly to the American people.

March 28, 2000: John Battle, Britain’s Minister of State with responsibility for Latin America, tells the House of Commons that Tony Blair’s government has informed the Colombian government that London, too, “would welcome” a visit by a joint FARC-Colombian government mission. He also promises various MPs calling for drug legalization, that the Blair government is focussing on “the economics of the drug market internationally,” as part of “that wider analysis of the drug trade.”

March 30, 2000: Accusing the U.S. government of “forgetting their own free-market principles,” the FARC issues a communiqué calling upon the United States to legalize drug consumption, inviting U.S. Congressmen to send a delegation to “their” territory, to get a first-hand tour of coca plantations.

March 2000: The Clinton Administration’s “Plan Colombia” for U.S. military aid for Colombia’s anti-drug fight is approved by Colombia. The plan is fatally flawed, but it establishes the principle that the United States *should* help Colombia in this fight.

August 2000: Mexico arrests a Colombian physician, whose testimony provides extensive proof of the FARC’s ties to Mexico’s Tijuana cartel.

August-October 2000: An international operation is run to oust Peru’s President Alberto Fujimori, whose successful crushing of two narcoterrorist forces in that country, with little bloodshed, was being closely studied in Colombia and by the U.S. Southern Command, for lessons in how to bring peace to Colombia.

November 2000: Kimsey and Robert hold a seven-hour dinner with Cuba’s Fidel Castro, to “explore” Castro’s support for their FARC plans.

February-April 2001: Colombia’s military, with U.S. intelligence support, initiates Operation Black Cat, a three-month military campaign in the FARC-controlled southern Guaviare region. Ten thousand hectares of coca and 12 cocaine laboratories under FARC control, capable of producing two tons of cocaine weekly, are found in first month. On April 21, Brazil’s top drug kingpin, Fernandinho Beira Mar, is captured in a FARC camp in the Guaviare region, where he has been living for the past year. Beira Mar controlled 60% of Brazil’s cocaine trade, and some 200 tons of cocaine a year were said to go out through the FARC-Beira Mar cartel.