

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,

to rebuild zones ravaged by violence and the drug trade. The goal was to create poles of agricultural, agroindustrial, and cattle-raising development, through a total reconstruction of infrastructure, the acquisition and development of technology and the making available of appropriate channels for marketing. The idea was that areas like Caquetá, which are now famous [as the FARC's demilitarized zone], would become poles of development.

The plan has two prongs: one is an association for development, and the other is an alliance to fight against drug trafficking and terrorism, for which we need the collaboration of the United States and of the European countries.

Well, all this ended up with Colombia, instead of implementing the Marshall Plan, an idea which President Andrés Pastrana once picked up during his campaign, applying instead the so-called "Colombia Plan," which boils down to there being no money for anything. You have all seen that not one country in the world, not one developed country, has given a single peso to Colombia for reconstruction. The only thing I have heard is from one gentleman, a delegate from the United Nations, who came to offer \$5 million to "Tirofijo" [FARC chieftain Manuel Marulanda] to change the coca crops to some other crops; he was here a month and a half ago, and he took his trip to Caquetá.

Pastrana's plan is based on using Colombia's own resources, that would be obtained through some bonds which he calls "peace bonds," and also through new taxes as stipulated in the Development Plan. The worst, is that those who supposedly are going to rebuild the country, are those who have destroyed it, the FARC narco-terrorists. As Dr. Carrillo said, we are speaking of absurdities. It would be like asking the devil to reform the Hell he himself has created! So, we are in a country which has been unable to establish its course, nor has it understood what reality is.

The lessons of Yugoslavia

Now, I want to look over at Europe a little, because I try to see what is going on in Colombia from a strategic perspective, from the standpoint of what is happening right now in Europe with this situation created by the war that NATO has declared against Yugoslavia. And it seems that Colombia is a laboratory.

All the U.S. generals who are running NATO right now, which are running the Pentagon, have come through here. Gen. Wesley Clark, who is currently NATO's commander, came many times to Colombia when he was the head of the U.S. Southern Command, at that time headquartered in Panama. He travelled around; he realized the gravity of the situation, that the country was in the hands of the mafia, and that it was descending into an unsolvable situation.

He told me: "Look General, I am going to the United States next week, and I am going to ask there for a debate in the U.S. Congress to study the problem of Colombia, which is very serious, so that you will be able to buy helicopters

without any restrictions." At that time, the doors were closed to us because we were supposedly violating human rights. This is another highly dangerous weapon with which supranational intervention in our country is justified. This general managed to open the doors for us. The Colombian government allocated \$100 million to buy some helicopters.

When I spoke at the U.S. Congress, and proposed this Marshall Plan to them, and I recounted the history of the country destroyed by the mafias, mafias which had reached up to the very Presidency of the republic, the U.S. government asked me: Okay, how much is that plan going to cost? When I told them \$6 billion, they told me it wouldn't be a problem, that that money could be easily gotten. Nothing came of it.

Those generals are now in Europe; they are now the commanders of NATO, and Gen. Clark is there. They are at war, at war against a country that one could compare with Colombia. These cybernetic wars of the post-Cold War period are insane, and whoever wages them, fails. The United States should not repeat the experience of Vietnam.

These wars without a valid moral purpose are a total failure. The war in Yugoslavia is just like the two wars that have been launched against Saddam Hussein in the Persian Gulf. They were two incomplete wars that never ended in anything, except in a real defeat for NATO. This Gulf war to which NATO and the U.S. are committed, ended up strengthening Mr. Hussein. The more they bombed him—and they sent all the bombs they had and then some—the more they bombed the palaces, the command posts, the anti-air defense units, the pipelines, all the infrastructure, the stronger, the more powerful Saddam is every day.

The United Nations, NATO, and the United States, lost the war. The devastation of Iraq has been vast, but it has not meant a victory for NATO. They didn't learn the lesson and they are committing precisely the same errors in Yugoslavia. Instead of making a great show of the technical means at their disposal, the fundamental thing is to determine if there exists a higher-order moral purpose that justifies the war, and also if there is the will to win and to impose a just, and therefore lasting peace.

This idea of a war of smart bombs, a war of spy planes, a war in which, according to the press, they have just transported into the area 300 Apache or Cobra combat helicopters, is absurd. The war, which has already lasted a month and half, is a war which has no end, which is going to continue, which is uniting the Yugoslav people. This war teaches us a series of lessons. This is where I would like to open the eyes of Colombians, and of friends from other latitudes who listen to my message.

First, wars are not won by powers, wars are won by the people; the only ones capable of resolving an internal problem are the people themselves. With all the technology, all the rules, all the capacity, all the alliances there are, have been, and will be, these wars cannot be won. NATO is in such a dilemma, that it is casting its eyes on the United Nations to

Public protests needed to preserve the nation

The following are excerpts from an article written by former Colombian Armed Forces Commander and former Presidential candidate Gen. Harold Bedoya Pizarro (ret.):

[President Andrés Pastrana] should have honestly told Colombians that the space for free and democratic political openings is on the verge of perishing, or has already perished with the birth of the narco-terrorist Republic of Caquetania, and that the state of law throughout the national territory passed away last Nov. 9.

And if this weren't enough, "Andrés the Bold" kidnaps himself every chance he can, as he did on May 22, when he placed himself at the mercy of the most dangerous genocidalist in the world [FARC chieftain Tirofijo], fleeing from the Nariño Palace and eluding the military forces, those who are constitutionally responsible for his personal security.

With this episode, as unworthy as it was cowardly, once more every vestige of authority is called into question, and crime and violence is fostered within and outside the national borders. During the period of this government so far, nearly 70 townships have been destroyed, on an

average of one every four days; at this rate, by the end of Pastrana's mandate, half of the nation's townships will have perished, and the large and medium-sized cities will be crammed to overflowing, without a future and sunk in misery.

To fix the injustices of a peace process which disguises the belligerent status which the FARC wants, which rolls willy-nilly toward the abyss, carrying all of us with it, the Tirofijo-Pastrana duo eagerly seek a general to lend himself to negotiating the unnegotiable, and to play the part of General Huertas, who in 1903 joined with President Marroquin in betraying the Fatherland and permitting the separation of the department of Panama and its inter-oceanic canal, from the Republic of Colombia. . . .

Those of us who believe that this country does not belong to special interests but to all of us, that the national territory is non-negotiable, that justice and the Constitution exist to be applied, and that the military forces only belong to the nation to guarantee its independence, its sovereignty, its territorial integrity, and its constitutional order, cannot allow the nation to come to an end, to be handed over on a silver platter to the narco-terrorists, the products of impunity and bad governments, because of the irresponsibility of the political elites now in power.

Under the current circumstances, national unity and public protests should break out in every corner of the country, as the best weapons to guarantee that Colombia continues to subsist as a free and sovereign nation.

come and solve a problem that they have been unable to solve. NATO wanted to resolve a problem in its own way, without consulting anyone, not even the governments and congresses of each one of the member countries of NATO.

It is clearly proven that Russia, for example, was the other great power that existed until the Cold War, or the so-called Iron Curtain ended. That power had an alliance very similar to NATO, which was called the Warsaw Pact, which was in some way an equalizing force, a wall of containment to prevent war in that part of the world.

The Balkanization of Colombia

And now, Colombia is on the road to becoming a new Yugoslavia. General Clark already warned of this: "It is a very serious problem you have here," he said. In Colombia, we don't have ethnic problems, nor cultural nor religious problems, nor are we a country which is a patchwork quilt, as Yugoslavia perhaps is. No. Colombia is a country with the same culture, the same religion, the same customs. But other associations have been born which are taking Colombia to its own disintegration.

In Colombia, we have the mafias of terrorism and of

drug trafficking which have seized the country; they are the ones which are handling the whole problem of the drugs that are moving in America, and which also export their narcotics to Europe and to Asia. This involves millions and billions of dollars, and these billions of dollars are in Europe and in the United States, not here in Colombia. In Colombia, the only thing left to us is violence, poverty, and unemployment. But here the mafias are co-existing with a ruling class, a political class which also forms a part of those mafias. These groups operate outside of the law, and they have infiltrated the three branches of the state; they are in the Judiciary, they are in the Congress, and they are in the Executive. That amalgam today is allied with terrorism and the international mafias. But we in Colombia have not wanted to see this, and the country is going through a daily-accelerating process of poverty, of degradation, and of misery.

How is that problem going to be resolved if the government has allied itself with those who are causing the problem of terrorism and of the mafia? We have here three powers: that of terrorism, the government, and the mafia, united supposedly to solve a problem that is not resolvable in alli-

ance with criminals.

An enclave was born in Colombia, an enclave in Meta and in Caquetá, and another enclave is shortly going to be born in the south of Bolívar. This FARC enclave is an enclave of drugs, and of terrorism, and does not only affect Colombia. It is threatening to destroy the entire region, and to become a worse problem than what Yugoslavia is going through right now.

By the time we realize what is happening, the gravity of the situation, Colombia will have lost all its defenses; Colombia will have lost the strength that we had even a few years ago to deal with crime. That is why it is so important that Colombians understand reality: that for Colombians, it is we ourselves who are called upon to resolve our problems, because no international power—not the United States, not the Blue Helmets, not the Green Helmets, not the United Nations, nor any country in the world—is going to resolve for us the problems we have here.

So, what to do? Return to the Marshall Plan, to the Plan for Reconstruction. The country has to be rebuilt, it must be done. But how? In two ways: the Association for Development, with international help. This international help is justified because we are waging a war that is not of the Colombians, but of the entire world: the fight against the mafias of international drug trafficking. We have been left absolutely alone, without help, without collaboration. The scarce resources the country has, in the face of all the crime and violence, are fleeing the country to swell the wealth of other countries, especially of the United States and Europe.

We also need to form an international alliance to do away with the mafias. As long as the mafias in Colombia are not destroyed, as long as we do not put an end to the drug trafficking, to the terrorism, to the illegal crops, the laboratories, the cocaine complexes, Colombia is never going to be able to escape the tragedy in which it is living.

Unfortunately, the situation is getting worse, and the United States, which was perhaps our best ally in this fight, nowadays is contradicting its policies in the fight against terrorism and drugs. The United States is endorsing relations with those same terrorists and those same drug traffickers, as occurred not long ago with the interviews which delegates of the State Department held in Costa Rica with the FARC, and with the presence of the U.S. Ambassador in the laboratories that Mr. “Tirofijo” has in San Vicente del Caguán. In other words, we are losing friends by this farce, by this lie.

There is not a single government in the region which supports this policy of surrender by the Colombian government. Two months ago, Peruvian President [Alberto] Fujimori spoke, and said unequivocally that Colombia was committing suicide, that Colombia was handing itself over to the mafias, that Colombia was going to destabilize Peru. He ordered the creation of theaters of operation all along the border with Colombia. Brazil did the same, and so did Ecuador, and so did [President Hugo] Mr. Chávez in Venezuela,

and surely the Panamanian government is going to have to do the same. That is, Colombia no longer has allies in the region, no longer has allies in the United States.

However, here, all the media, television, radio, and press all say that it is a marvel that we are giving the country to Mr. “Tirofijo.” Is this peace? In Colombia, every four days, terrorist forces destroy a township through terrorism, eliminating the agricultural bank, the savings banks, the mayor’s office, and the police post. During this government so far, 62 townships have been destroyed. Since Aug. 7 last year [when President Pastrana took office] through now, 62 townships have been destroyed, not to mention the massacres. The arithmetic is straightforward. The terrorists are destroying eight townships a month in Colombia. In the 48 months that this government will theoretically last, 384 townships will be destroyed. If we add to these, the townships already destroyed, we will have 500 of the 1,070 townships in the country destroyed! People flee the countryside, and fill up the belts of misery in the big cities. The entire world is so concerned with the situation in Kosovo, where Serbian terrorism and NATO bombs have caused an exodus of 400,000 Kosovars. How many displaced do we have in Colombia? Colombia has 40 million people, and there are not even 20% left in the countryside. And these displaced can be found begging in the streets of the major cities, at the traffic lights in Bogotá.

General Clark is already asking for \$6 billion to continue his war, the same sum I asked for the plan to rebuild Colombia. And they are going to give it for this failed war in Yugoslavia. Here we have a worse war, but we are anaesthetized. President Pastrana goes to Caquetá and rubs bellies with the country’s greatest terrorist. Some journalists tell us that it is a marvel that the country is having “symptoms of peace.” We are dying, they are shooting us, and we are saying that we are just fine in Colombia.

We are anaesthetized, asleep, indifferent. We are all going to die without reacting. If to be a politician means to tell lies, then I am no politician, because I don’t believe that lies and the corrupt machines in Congress, in the Justice Department, in the Executive, are going to save this country. The country must rise from the ashes to save the Republic and to put an end to poverty, misery, and unemployment.

This development plan which has just been issued, the Pastrana government’s Development Plan, is shameful. Once again, a 0.2% tax, imposed, of course, by the International Monetary Fund; the euphemistically dubbed Peace Bond, to give resources to Tirofijo, supposedly to develop the territories that he himself has destroyed. Last night, we saw a spectacle never seen before in Colombia: Men and women, youth, stripped in front of Congress to see if this would get the legislature and government of Pastrana to notice that the country is dying. This is the message that was sent, but it was not understood. It is up to all of us Colombians to change things.