

Colombia's Uribe Calls On IMF To Change Its Policies

by Javier Almario

In his first speech as Colombia's President-elect, Alvaro Uribe Vélez invited the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other multilateral financial organizations to "change course" and "reorient their policies," because "Colombian democracy, and the democracies of the world, need social fairness, and to achieve social fairness, many of the currents and doctrines regarding economic management that prevail today, must be revised, immediately." Uribe's words bring to mind those of former Army commander and Presidential candidate Harold Bedoya, who urged the international financial organizations to take into account that Colombia is in a state of war, and to abandon its demands for the rigorous application of globalist dogmas.

Uribe, candidate of the Colombia First Movement, a dissident faction of the Liberal Party, won the May 26 Presidential elections in the first round, with 53% of the vote—unprecedented since the 1991 Constitution imposed a system of multiple rounds in Presidential elections. The elections were held in the midst of terror and social and political chaos, caused by the narco-terrorist FARC and other illegal groups which are trying to split the country and subject it to a terrible tyranny. Before the elections, the FARC had threatened every city, starting with the three largest: the capital, Bogotá; Medellín; and Cali, with total destruction if Uribe proved the winner. In various towns, FARC terrorists collected all the citizen identification cards to prevent people from voting; and on election day, another 45,000 voters in 11 townships were prevented from going to the polls, because the FARC had attacked their voting sites.

Uribe himself barely survived a FARC assassination attempt, when his campaign car was bombed in the city of Barranquilla. He was saved by the armor on his car, but several others died in that attack. Numerous other attempts on

his life were intercepted in time by alert security.

Such threats were perhaps the most important factor in the voter abstention rate of a bit more than 50%, the highest in recent years. However, the FARC were unable to achieve their goal of a 75% abstention rate, which would have been used to argue the illegitimacy of the elections.

International Sabotage

It is important to remember the obscene embrace between New York Stock Exchange President Richard Grasso and the FARC chieftains in 1999, the better to understand that the FARC has, as their main allies in their campaign of terror, the international banks, the United Nations, and their mouthpieces. Non-governmental organizations, *Newsweek*, the Colombian daily *El Tiempo*, and the UN all sharply criticized Uribe throughout his campaign, for his proposals to return security to Colombia's citizens, including a doubling of the armed forces. *Newsweek* urged that Uribe be stopped at all costs, issuing a not very subtle threat that the only way to do so would be by an assassin's bullet.

Officials of the IMF and other financial organizations have publicly rejected Uribe's security proposals as "too costly," and stated that negotiating a pact with the FARC would be "cheaper." A key person pushing this line within the Uribe camp itself, is Rudolf Hommes. Hommes is the former Finance Minister who had destroyed the Colombian economy by opening it up to the globalization policies of then-President César Gaviria (1991-94); he is today a senior partner of the Wall Street investment firm of Violy, Byorum and Partners (along with former Acting Assistant Secretary of State Peter Romero), the very firm which played a central role organizing the shocking public support for the FARC given by Grasso and America Online founder Jim Kimsey.

Immediately following the surprise of his first statement calling for a change in policy, the President-elect promised that he would back Colombia's pact with the IMF, leading IMF and World Bank officials to affirm their "satisfaction" with his "clarification" of his first statement. Uribe insisted, however, that in reaffirming the IMF agreement when it expires in December, "there will be only one condition: We do not cut social spending. On the contrary, due to the situation of poverty in Colombia, we need to increase our social investment."

Uribe is fully aware that, given the current levels of insecurity in Colombia, the worst thing that could happen would be a social explosion like that ripping apart Argentina, thanks to the rigid application of IMF prescriptions there. One of the points the IMF has insisted on for Colombia in recent years, is a cutback in spending on the elderly, and a pension reform.

In his post-election statements, Uribe also criticized the monetarist management of Colombia's central bank, the Banco de la República, and this has the globalists even more worried, out of fear that the new President will try to modify the central bank's "independence." Said Uribe, "I issue an urgent call for everyone, including the Bank of the Republic, to understand that they have to change many aspects of their script, because we have 9 million citizens living in misery, 57% in poverty, 18% unemployment, and six and a half million unemployed."

During his campaign, Uribe pledged to protect agriculture by shutting off food imports, because "we cannot permit our national agricultural producers to take their products to market, only to find them supersaturated with imported products." Uribe's words "have me greatly worried," declared Mauro Leos, an official with the risk-assessment firm Moody's, responsible for evaluating Colombia. Private discussions, and the suspicion that Uribe inclines toward some form of protectionism, have international usurers on at least a yellow alert.

If Uribe truly wants to change the script, he will have to join, in one way or another, with the international movement of Lyndon LaRouche, to call for the creation of a new monetary system as occurred at Bretton Woods, at the end of World War II.

Rejection of Narco-Terrorism

Uribe's election in the first round is due in large part to his promise to bring about security, legitimate authority, and the organized protection of the state against narco-terrorism. His victory represents the citizens' rejection of the so-called "peace dialogues" that preceding governments have advanced with the narco-terrorists—starting in 1980 when the M-19 gang seized the embassy of the Dominican Republic—and which have only served to provide them with a propaganda outlet and to increase their power.

In the department of Caquetá, where the FARC was presumed to have had the most influence and which is contiguous to the now-disbanded "demilitarized zone" that the FARC

had occupied for nearly four years, Uribe took 75% of the vote against candidate Horacio Serpa, who had favored continuing peace talks with the FARC. Clearly, the voters had had it with the "peace dialogue" that treasonous President Andrés Pastrana had conducted with the FARC, starting with the surrender of 43,000 square kilometers of national territory to them. That territory, absurdly dubbed a "demilitarized zone," was not only used by the FARC to stockpile its weaponry, imprison kidnap victims, and train its ranks in everything from assassination to explosives handling, but gave the FARC undisturbed space to plan its war against the nation.

During Pastrana's infamous "peace dialogue," the FARC carried out 1,600 acts of terrorism, dynamited Colombia's oil pipelines 480 times, blew up 100 electricity towers, carried out 403 mass kidnappings, kidnapped at least 10,000 people who were held in concentration camps in the DMZ, assassinated at least 2,600 civilians, and destroyed 250 of the 1,098 townships in Colombia with explosives, heavy weapons, and heavy machinery.

Ever since the FARC lost its DMZ on Feb. 20 of this year, the narco-terrorist group has partially changed its tactic of deploying forces of 1,000 or larger to ambush or engage the police and Army, which required great mobilizations of personnel and logistics. Now, the terrorists are targetting bridges, electricity, and water works. The FARC this year alone has dynamited 34 bridges, meaning a reduction of 15% in vehicular traffic on the nation's highways. This can be added to the 60 other bridges that were destroyed by the FARC in 2000 and 2001. These bridges represent 5% of the 2,100 bridges that join together Colombia's highway grid. The FARC also attacked the Chingaza Dam, which provides water to nearly 10 million inhabitants of Bogotá, poisoned the aqueduct of Pitalito, and dynamited the aqueduct of Pasto.

Under pressure of assassination threats on the one hand, and intense pressure from the international banks and the United Nations on the other, Uribe has announced that he will attempt to initiate peace talks with the FARC, ELN, and AUC paramilitaries, this time under UN supervision. A meeting with UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has been tentatively set for June 20, when Uribe plans a visit to the United States. So far, however, Uribe is insisting on a cease-fire as a precondition to peace negotiations, something the FARC has repeatedly rejected.

The FARC has responded, in an arrogant communiqué, with its own precondition, demanding that the new Uribe government surrender a new DMZ to the FARC, to "facilitate" the talks—this time, encompassing the cocaine-producing departments of Caquetá and Putumayo, in the south of the country.

How Uribe responds—not only to the FARC's bloody provocations, but to the FARC-allied Wall Street crowd which would "reform" Colombia's economy into an Argentine-style disaster—will determine how long the President-elect's popular mandate will last.