PROJECT MUSE®

Empire's Senescence: U.S. Policy in Latin America

Greg Grandin

New Labor Forum, Volume 19, Number 1, Winter 2010, pp. 14-23 (Article)

Published by The Murphy Institute/City University of New York

For additional information about this article
https://muse.jhu.edu/article/393696

[13.58.112.1] Project MUSE (2024-04-23 09:58 GMT)

Photo by EPA/BGNES

A demonstration against the G-20 summit that took place in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in September 2009.

[13.58.112.1] Project MUSE (2024-04-23 09:58 GMT)

By Greg Grandin

EMPIRE'S SENESCENCE
U.S. Policy in Latin America

Washington's relations with Latin America—particularly in terms of the gap between what its policy toward the region is and what it could be—precisely measure the degree to which domestic ideologies, narrow corporate and sectional interests, and a sclerotic political system are hastening the decline of the United States as a global power. As a result, the U.S. is deepening its dependence on unstable policies in order to leverage its dwindling influence in the hemisphere.

It is easy to imagine an improved U.S. diplomacy toward Latin America, designed not to advance a set of altruistic ideals but merely to defend its interests—broadly defined to mean stable politics and economies that are open to U.S. capital and commodities—and to achieve what those in the liberal wing of the foreign policy establishment have long advocated: a maximization of U.S. "soft power." Harvard's Joseph S. Nye defines soft power as "the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion," through an enhanced understanding and utilization of multilateral institutions, mutually beneficial policies, cultural exchanges, and commercial relations.[1]

There are no immediate threats to the U.S. in Latin America. A majority of the region's political elite—even most of its current governing leftists—share many of the same values the United States claims to embody, even more so following the election of the first African-American president, who is wildly popular in Latin America. As a result, there is no other place in the world that offers U.S. president Barack Obama the opportunity to put into place the kind of intelligent foreign policy that he and his closest advisors, such as United Nations (U.N.) ambassador Susan Rice, believe is necessary to stop the hemorrhaging of U.S. prestige—one that would both improve Washington's ability to deploy its many competitive advantages, while removing key points of friction.

Here's what such a policy could look like: Washington would concede to longstanding Brazilian demands by reducing tariffs and subsidies that protect the U.S. agricultural industry, opening its market to Brazilian commodities, especially soy and sugar, as well as value-added ethanol. It would yield on other issues that have stalled the proposed Free Trade

New Labor Forum 19(1): 15-23, Winter 2010
Copyright © Joseph S. Murphy Institute, CUNY
ISSN: 1095-7960/10 print, DOI: 10.4179/NLF.191.0000004

Agreement of the Americas (FTAA), such as a demand for strident intellectual property rights enforcement, which Brazil objects to because it would disadvantage its own pharmaceutical industry and hinder its ability to provide low-cost medicine to those infected with the HIV virus. Such concessions would provide an incentive for Brasilia to take the lead in jumpstarting the FTAA, a treaty that would ultimately benefit U.S. corporations, yet would be meaningless without Brazil, South America's largest and most dynamic economy.

The U.S. is deepening its dependence on unstable policies to leverage its dwindling influence in the [Latin American] hemisphere.

The U.S. would scale back its military operations in Colombia—including recent controversial plans to establish a series of military bases which have raised strong criticisms from the governments of Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Venezuela. Brazil's president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva—who is entering the last year of his second and last term—has become the spokesperson for the collective discontent, an indication of his country's regional authority. In exchange for the U.S. dialing down its military presence, a soon-to-be post-Lula Brazil might find it convenient to tilt away from Venezuela and toward the United States. Washington would also drop the five-decade-old trade embargo on Cuba, thus burying a Cold War relic that continues to tarnish the U.S. image. Normalizing relations with Cuba would create an additional enticement for Brazil to cooperate with the U.S., since its formidable agro-industry is beginning to invest in Cuba and is therefore well-placed to export to the U.S. market.

Politically, Washington would formally recommit to a multilateral foreign policy, even as it set up a de facto arrangement with Brazil to administer the region. This would mean demonstrating its willingness to work through the Organization of American States (OAS). More importantly, it would mean leashing the quasi-privatized "democracy promotion" organizations—largely funded by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) and the Agency for International Development, and run by the International Republican Institute—that have become vectors of transnational, conservative coalition building throughout the hemisphere. These groups today do overtly what the CIA used to do covertly, as NED's first president, Allen Weinstein, admitted—they fund oppositional "civil society" groups that use the rhetoric of democracy and human rights to menace Left governments throughout the region, including the promotion of an aborted coup in Venezuela in 2002 and successful ones in Haiti in 2004 and Honduras in 2009.[2] Similar destabilization efforts tried to topple Bolivia's Evo Morales in 2008 but failed, at least partly because Brazil and Chile let it be known that they would not accept those kinds of machinations in their backyards. It would be easy for the Obama administration to rein these groups in, and to agree to Latin American demands to make their funding more transparent and their actions more accountable.

Washington would also take a number of other initiatives to modernize hemispheric diplomacy, including deescalating its failed "War on Drugs," as Latin America's leading intellectuals and policymakers—including many former presidents—are demanding;

[13.58.112.1] Project MUSE (2024-04-23 09:58 GMT)

in the last few months, both Mexico and Argentina have legalized some drug use and possession, including small quantities of cocaine and heroin.[3] The U.S. would renew its assault weapons ban, as Mexico—battered by over five thousand narcotics-related murders a year, many of them committed with smuggled U.S. guns—is begging. It could also pass meaningful immigration reform, providing a path to U.S. citizenship for the millions of undocumented Latin Americans, mostly from Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean, and the Andes, but also Brazil. Such a move would go a long way toward improving relations with southern neighbors. It would also be good domestic politics for the Democrats, guaranteeing the loyalty of the Latino vote in 2012 and moving Texas, by creating millions of new voters, closer to swing-state status. It could also provide progressives and the Democratic Party with a real wedge issue: Catholics, increasingly pulled into the conservative camp by issues such as abortion and gay rights, overwhelmingly favor immigration reform.

Any one of the above steps would go far in reestablishing U.S. legitimacy in Latin America. Taken together they could serve as a diplomatic revolution, one which would not weaken U.S. power but consolidate it much the way the Good Neighbor Policy did, allowing Washington to project its power in the region through stable multilateral mechanisms freed from the burdens of confrontation and militarism. A retooled FTAA, updated for the post-Great Recession world and stripped of the ideological baggage of failed neoliberal globalization, might provide a blueprint for a sustainable regional economy, one that balances national development and corporate profit.[4] And like the Good Neighbor Policy, a reinvigorated hemispheric diplomacy could serve as a model for the rest of the world, a design for a practical twenty-first century multilateralism, capable of responding to transnational problems—both those that concern liberals, such as climate change, poverty, and migration, and those that concern conservatives, such as crime and terrorism—while respecting, at least rhetorically, the sovereignty of individual nations. In short, the Western Hemisphere offers an unparalleled opportunity to realize the vision of Barack Obama's September 2009 address to the United Nations—hailed by many as a clarion call for a new internationalism—to, in his words, "embrace a new era of engagement based on mutual interest and mutual respect."

A reinvigorated [Latin American-focused] hemispheric diplomacy could serve as a model for the rest of the world.

It's not going to happen. Efforts to implement any one of the above policy changes would be blocked by powerful domestic interests. Take biofuels. The idea to liberalize the U.S. agricultural market—and have the rhetoric of free trade somewhat match the reality—is recommended by all mainstream think tanks, including the Council on Foreign Relations and the Brookings Institution, as an important step to win back Brazil. Obama recognizes the importance of Brazil, having nominated George W. Bush's outgoing assistant secretary of state for Latin America, Thomas Shannon—respected in establishment circles as, according to the journal *Foreign Policy,* "the most talented and successful individual" to serve as Washington's envoy to Latin America

"in at least two decades"—as its ambassador. Yet Shannon's confirmation had been threatened by Senator Chuck Grassley, representing the agro-industry state of Iowa, who objected to the then-nominee's comment during his confirmation hearings that removing a fifty-four-cent per gallon tariff on imported ethanol would be good for U.S. foreign policy. The White House immediately declared that it had no plans to change tariff policy, and Grassley allowed the confirmation to proceed.[5] The White House's quick buckling probably has to do with its fruitless attempt to win over Grassley for health care reform, a further indicator of how foreign policy is held hostage by domestic politics.

U.S. expansion has given way to involution, paralyzing the ability of foreign policymakers to adjust to a rapidly changing world.

Similar obstacles stand in the way of other foreign policy reforms. The Cuban lobby, along with the broader conservative Right, prevents a normalization of relations with Havana. Fear of the National Rifle Association halts a renewal of the assault weapons ban. As to the "War on Drugs," the Democratic Party is deeply committed to "Plan Colombia," the centerpiece of that war. It is, after all, a legacy of Bill Clinton's foreign policy, and much of the $6 billion spent to fight it thus far goes directly into the coffers of corporate sponsors of the Democratic Party like Connecticut's United Technologies and other northeastern defense contractors (it was Bill Clinton who in 1997, acting on behalf of Lockheed Martin, lifted a twenty-year ban on high-tech weapons sales to Latin America, kicking off an arms build-up, in which Colombia, Chile, and Brazil have taken the lead).[6]

As to immigration reform—also recommended by influential establishment groups to improve U.S. standing in Latin America—Obama, in Mexico, said it would have to wait until next year. He has a near-filibuster-proof majority in the Senate and a large majority in the House, yet he says there aren't enough votes and "there is not, by any means, consensus across the table."[7] Obama could easily assemble a majority coalition on this issue—comprised of business interests who want cheap labor, Hispanics, progressives, social justice Catholics, and members of the labor movement (who long ago signaled their support for immigration reform)—yet fear of a backlash fueled by a contracting economy has led him to backburner the issue.

The same conditions that make Latin America the best venue in which to modernize U.S. diplomacy—namely that there is no immediate threat emerging from the region, no equivalent of North Korea or Iran on the verge of acquiring a nuclear bomb, no insurgency bogging down U.S. troops as in Afghanistan, and no conflict threatening access to vital resources (Washington's main antagonist in the region, Venezuela, continues to sell most of its oil to the U.S.)—also mean that there are no real incentives for Obama's fledgling foreign policy coalition to expend political capital on trying to improve policy there. Analysts of the American empire—from Charles A. Beard in the 1930s to William Appleman Williams in the 1960s and 1970s—have emphasized the U.S.'s unique ability to subsume competing economic, ideological, and sectional interests into a flexible and vital diplomacy in defense of a general "national interest," which has led America to unprecedented global power.[8] Yet now—confronted

[13.58.112.1] Project MUSE (2024-04-23 09:58 GMT)

with a sustained economic contraction, the fallout from a disastrous overleveraging of military power in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the emergence of a post-Cold War, post-neoliberal world with multiple power centers—expansion has given way to involution. The U.S. political system seems to be literally devouring itself from within, paralyzing the ability of foreign policymakers to adjust to a rapidly changing world. Unable to leverage its soft, smart power even in its own hemisphere, Washington is ever more dependent on the military and corporate mercenary forces that have transformed Colombia into a citadel of U.S. hard power in the Andes.

As a candidate, Obama—referring to Bush's decision to invade Iraq—said he wasn't opposed to all wars, just stupid ones. Washington's "War on Drugs" in Latin America is the stupidest war one can imagine. As the centerpiece of that war, "Plan Colombia"—a program, established by Bill Clinton and extended by George W. Bush and Barack Obama, that has provided Colombia with billions of dollars of aid, mostly for the military's counternarcotic and counterinsurgent operations—has served to entrench paramilitary power, enrich private contractors (such as the Virginia-based DynCorp), and turn more than four million Colombians into refugees.[9] It has also foreclosed the possibility of a negotiated, regionally brokered solution to the crisis and inflamed a conflict that has already once spilled beyond national borders—in March 2008, Colombian troops launched a military raid into Ecuador to assassinate members of the insurgent Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia. And, while it has not lessened narcotics exports to the United States, the drug war has spread the violence associated with the illegal narcotics trade up through Central America and into Mexico, accounting for the staggeringly high number of homicides in the region.

Much like the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, Washington's militarization of the drug problem in Latin America has worsened what it sought to solve, thus providing an excuse for even more militarism. Thus Southcom—which runs the Department of Defense's South American operations—is expanding its presence in Colombia, recently brokering a deal that will give the U.S. military access to at least seven bases, running from the Caribbean to the Andes. Colombia and the U.S. insist that this expansion is directed to ensure Colombia's internal security; but Brazil's military is concerned that the bases give the U.S. the ability to project its power deep into South America.

Colombia serves as the anchor of a broader strategic shift on the part of the U.S., one that reflects its position as a declining hegemon. Throughout much of the twentieth century, the U.S.— confident of its ascension as a world power—treated Latin America largely as a unified region, working through inter-American organizations set up via the Good Neighbor Policy and during World War II, such as the OAS and the Rio Pact (a mutual defense treaty that became the model for NATO). When one or another country tried to break out of its dependent relationship with the U.S.—i.e., Cuba in the 1960s, Chile in the early 1970s, or Nicaragua in the 1980s—the U.S. took independent, often covert steps either to isolate it or bring it back into the fold. Yet throughout the Cold War (and for about a decade following the Cold War), Washington continued to view the region as a single administrative zone.

But today, the U.S. is increasingly relying on a strategy of divide and rule. Washington's relationship with Colombia is the centerpiece of this new approach, and the Andean country functions as something like Latin America's Israel: a heavily militarized U.S. ally that allows Washington to project its power into a hostile region. Like Israel, its preemptive, unilateral actions are encouraged by Washington in the name of national security. Colombia's reckless raid into Ecuador in 2008—denounced by

every South American country—was endorsed not just by George W. Bush but by then-U.S. presidential candidates Hillary Clinton, John McCain, and Barack Obama. Like Israel, Colombia's security forces serve as a model and a resource for wars elsewhere. Admiral Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has commented that "many of us from all over the world can learn from what has happened with respect to the very successful developments of 'Plan Colombia,'" and suggested that it be franchised "specifically to Afghanistan."[10]

Colombia functions as Latin America's Israel: a heavily militarized U.S. ally that allows Washington to project its power into a hostile region.

Some of private military contractor Xe's—née Blackwater—best recruits are retired Colombian soldiers, trained for Middle East operations on Colombian military bases; before taking control of the murderous Iraq Special Operations Forces, U.S. brigadier general Simeon Trombitas served in Colombia.[11] Recently, Colombian paramilitaries have been recruited as mercenaries by Honduran plantation owners, to protect their property in the wake of the crisis unleashed by the coup.[12] Colombia also boasts one of the most sophisticated intelligence apparatuses in its region—bolstered by massive infusions of U.S. dollars—capable of carrying out not just widespread surveillance but covert operations, including attempts to destabilize neighboring Venezuela.[13] On the diplomatic circuit, an embassy posting in Colombia has become a way station toward a more prominent role in the Great Game. Current ambassadors to Afghanistan and Pakistan—William Wood and Anne Paterson, respectively—previously served as Bush's envoys to Colombia.

Like Israel, Colombia inspires many who see it as an exemplar of how to balance democracy—a place that offers relatively free elections, with three independent (at least in principle) branches of government—and security. "Colombia is what Iraq should eventually look like, in our best dreams," writes influential *Atlantic* contributor Robert Kaplan. "Colombian President Alvaro Uribe has fought—and is winning—a counterinsurgency war even as he has liberalized the economy, strengthened institutions, and improved human rights."[14] The Council on Foreign Relations has put aside its earlier strong criticism of "Plan Colombia" and now hails it as a success for having established a state presence in "many regions previously controlled by illegal armed groups, reestablishing elected governments, building and rebuilding public infrastructure, and reaffirming the rule of law." The Council recommends a similar solution for violence-plagued Mexico and Central America.[15] Throughout Latin America, a resurgent Right looks to Colombia for inspiration and Uribe as its standard bearer, a backstop against Hugo Chávez-style populism.

As Forrest Hylton has argued, Uribe's success at consolidating power rests on an alliance between death-squad paramilitaries—who have used "Plan Colombia" as a cover to execute an enormous land grab and to establish their rule in the countryside—and drug traffickers who have decided to stop fighting the state and become part of it. Medellín, the showcase city of Latin America's New Right, has the eighth highest murder rate in the world; Uribe himself

[13.58.112.1] Project MUSE (2024-04-23 09:58 GMT)

has deep ties to both paramilitaries and drug cartels.[16]

Colombia also serves as an anchor to a new geopolitics, an attempt by Washington to build a "security corridor" running from Mexico, through Central America, and into Colombia. Under the auspices of such programs as the Merida Initiative, "Plan Puebla-Panama," and the Security and Prosperity Partnership, the objective is to integrate the region's transportation and communications infrastructure, energy production and distribution network, and, most importantly, its military capacities. Call it top-down, transnational state formation, an attempt to coordinate the region's intelligence agencies, militaries, and police (as well as mercenary corporations like DynCorp), subordinated under the direction of the U.S. military. Thomas Shannon, Bush's envoy to Latin America and now Obama's ambassador to Brazil, described it in a moment of candor as "armoring NAFTA."

The right-wing sees [the June 2009 Honduran coup] as the first successful rollback of populism since the 2004 overthrow of Aristide.

In other words, the U.S. is retrenching, pulling back from efforts to preside over the entirety of Latin America, instead consolidating its authority over a circumscribed territory, with a deepening reliance on applied military power. This shift is significant, and could unleash a period of heightened instability. One consequence of Washington's past strategy of treating Latin America as a single unit was that inter-state conflicts were contained; since the 1930s, most bloodletting was internally directed, aimed at trade unionists, peasant activists, intellectuals, reformist politicians, and progressive religious leaders demanding a more equitable share of economic and political power. But now, with a waning superpower banking its authority on "armoring" one region in order to contain another, that might be changing—as evinced by Colombia's 2008 raid into Ecuador and recent tensions caused by U.S. plans to expand its military footprint in the Andean country. As Adam Isacson, of the Center for International Policy, says of Washington's new Colombian bases, the U.S. is "creating a new capability in South America, and capabilities often get used."[17]

Adding to the potential for instability is the regrouping of the Right. Political scientist Miguel Tinker-Salas notes that "for some time, the Right has been rebuilding in Latin America; hosting conferences, sharing experiences, refining their message, working with the media, and building ties with allies in the United States. This is not the lunatic right-wing fringe, but rather the mainstream Right with powerful allies in the middle-class that used to consider themselves center, but have been frightened by recent Left electoral victories and the rise of social movements."[18] This nascent reaction has been buoyed by the June 2009 Honduran coup, which the right-wing sees as the first successful rollback of populism since the 2004 overthrow of Aristide, as well as by recent victories at the ballot box: in May, a conservative millionaire won the presidency in Panama. In Argentina, Cristina Fernández's center-left Peronist party has recently suffered a midterm electoral defeat and lost control of Congress. And polls show that presidential elections coming up in Chile and Brazil will be close, possibly dealing further losses to progressives, containing the South American Left to Venezuela, Bolivia, and

Ecuador, and the Central American Left to El Salvador and Nicaragua.

Two broad arcs of crises have defined U.S.-Latin American relations. The first began in the early nineteenth century and paralleled the first, youthful phase of U.S. territorial and economic expansion. Latin American intellectuals, politicians, and nationalists reacted with increasing hostility toward not only the growing influence of U.S. capital—which both displaced European economic interests and subordinated aspiring domestic elites—but toward ever more frequent and threatening military interventions: the Mexican-American War; the Spanish-American War; the creation of Panama; and invasions and occupations throughout the Caribbean basin. The second round coincided with the advent of the Cold War and marked the U.S.'s maturity as a global power. It intensified with Eisenhower's overthrow of Guatemala's democratically elected government in 1954, and continued with the 1959 Cuban Revolution and the series of right-wing coups in the 1960s and 1970s, culminating with the violent repression of Central American insurgencies in the 1980s, which paved the way for the neoliberal restructuring of the 1990s.

It seems we are entering a third period of conflict—this time driven less by the tendency toward expansion that marked the U.S.'s global ascension than by a frantic attempt to hold on to what it has left as it enters its senescence—as domestic ideologues, unchecked corporate power, and political paralysis quicken the U.S.'s fall.

Notes

1. Joseph S. Nye, "The U.S. Can Reclaim 'Smart Power,'" *Los Angeles Times*, January 21, 2009, http://www.latimes.com/news/opinion/commentary/la-oe-nye21-2009jan21,0,3381521.story.

2. William Robinson and Jonah Gindin, "The United States, Venezuela, and 'Democracy Promotion': William I. Robinson interviewed," April 8, 2005, http://www.opendemocracy.net/democracy-protest/venezuela_2730.jsp; David Ignatius, "The New World of Spyless Coups," *Washington Post*, September 22, 1991.

3. See, for instance, the recent final report of the Blue Ribbon Latin American Commission on Drugs and Democracy, headed by the former presidents of Brazil, Mexico, and Colombia (Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Ernesto Zedillo, and César Gaviria), titled "Drugs and Democracy: Toward a Paradigm Change," available at http://www.drogasedemocracia.org/Espanol/.

4. Under what Latin Americans call "neoliberalism"—a series of economic policies that used the debt crisis of the 1980s to force countries to privatize national industries, cut social spending, weaken labor laws, reduce subsidies and tariffs protecting domestic manufacturing, and balance their budgets—the monetary policy of any given country was, in effect, privatized and granted extreme autonomy by central banks, removing the ability of either the electorate or the executive branch to influence it. In the name of promoting "fiscal responsibility," governments lost the ability to manipulate their currency in order to promote industrialization or respond in a countercyclical manner to looming recessions. Instead, monetary policy served one purpose: to ensure the profits of international bondholders—mostly located in New York and London—by ruthlessly keeping inflation in check and interest rates high. Since cheap money, and the ability to devalue currency through controlled inflation, is necessary to promote local manufacturing and exports, this further hamstrung the ability of Latin American governments to promote industrialization. For what a post-neoliberal, sustainable hemispheric economic regime could look like, see the essays in *Rethinking Foreign Investment for Sustainable Development: Lessons from Latin America*, edited by Kevin P. Gallagher and Daniel Chudnovsky (New York: Anthem Press, 2009). See also the policy papers produced by Tufts University's Global Development and Environment Institute.

5. See http://www.newsday.com/lawmaker-ends-objection-to-us-brazil-appointment-1.1338773; and http://rothkopf.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/07/28/

youve_heard_of_blue_dogs_now_introducing_the_corn_dogs.

6. See http://www.armscontrol.org/print/235; and "En América del Sur, el Gasto Militar Creció un 50% desde 1999," *La Nación* (Argentina), August 9, 2009.

7. See http://www.cbsnews.com/blogs/2009/06/25/politics/politicalhotsheet/entry5114208.shtml?tag=contentMain;contentBody.

8. Charles A. Beard, *The Idea of the National Interest: An Analytical Study in American Foreign Policy* (New York: Macmillan, 1934); William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (New York, 1959).

9. Teo Ballvé, "The Dark Side of Plan Colombia," *Nation,* May 27, 2009.

10. Garry Leech, "Plan Colombia: The New Military Strategy for Colombia?," *Colombia Journal*, March 30, 2009, http://colombiajournal.org/colombia307.htm.

11. Shane Bauer, "Iraq's New Death Squad," *New America Media*, June 6, 2009, http://news.newamericamedia.org/news/view_article.html?article_id=c7e6a18b9a837155c374cb289268801d.

12. "Estarían reclutando ex paramilitares para que viajen como mercenarios a Honduras," *El Tiempo*, September 14, 2009, http://www.eltiempo.com/colombia/justicia/estarian-reclutando-ex-paramilitares-para-que-viajen-como-mercenarios-a-honduras_6086547-1).

13. "Ex funcionario del DAS confirma plan conspirativo de Uribe contra Venezuela," http://www.univision.com/uv/video/Ex-funcionario-del-DAS-confirma-plan-con/id/4176628967; Adam Isacson, "The DAS Scandals," http://www.ciponline.org/colombia/blog/archives/000242.htm.

14. "A Colombian Vision for Iraq," *Atlantic*, April 30, 2008, http://thecurrent.theatlantic.com/archives/2008/04/alvaro-uribe.php. For Colombia's actual human rights record, see Amnesty International's Colombia page, available at http://www.amnestyusa.org/all-countries/colombia/page.do?id=1011135.

15. "U.S.–Latin America Relations: A New Direction for a New Reality," Independent Task Force Report, no. 60 (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, May 2008): 27, available at www.cfr.org.

16. A recently declassified Pentagon document describes Uribe as a collaborator "with the Medellín cartel at high government levels" and a "close personal friend of Pablo Escobar." See "A Harsh Light on Associate 82," *Newsweek*, August 9, 2004; "Ciudad más violenta del mundo por homicidios es Ciudad Juárez, en Mexico; Medellín es octava," *El Tiempo*, September 2, 2009, available at http://www.eltiempo.com/mundo/latinoamerica/ciudad-mas-violenta-del-mundo-por-homicidios-es-ciudad-juarez-en-mexico-medellin-es-octava_5946907-1; Forrest Hylton, "Medellín's Makeover," *New Left Review* 44 (March-April 2007).

17. "Outcry in South America," *Guardian*, August 27, 2009, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/aug/27/anger-america-colombia-bases-deal.

18. See http://www.commondreams.org/view/2009/08/08-1.