

Mexican exposes AIFLD labor links to drug traffickers

Mexico's most influential news commentator, José Luis Mejías, found a Washington, D.C. press conference, which was blacked out when it occurred in September, so strategically important that he made it the subject of his front page Los Intocables (The Untouchables) column in the daily Excelsior, Nov. 11. A translation of the complete text follows.

The Schiller Institute, like the Ebert and Adenauer ones, operates in several Latin American countries with its sights set on the integral development of those countries, although each of the three does this based on their own ideology and their own mode of seeing things. This noted, we will say that a few months ago, in Washington, during a well-attended press conference, Dennis Small, Ibero-American executive of the Schiller Institute, asked the U.S. government to immediately suspend all financing of the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD)—the AFL-CIO's foreign policy apparatus—and that it thoroughly investigate its activities. The request, made in the name of the Schiller Institute, was supported by information it obtained that prominent AIFLD representatives in Latin America have close connections with Colombian narcotics trafficker Gilberto Rodríguez Orejuela and the Peruvian Carlos Langberg. Small said, "It is urgent that President Reagan take this action to make credible his own war on drugs program. Given the proof of intimate collaboration between AIFLD officials and known drug traffickers, to permit this to continue with financing from the U.S. taxpayers, would discredit the President's war on drugs."

Of the official AIFLD 1985 budget of \$19.2 million, \$13.5 million—70%—was provided by the State Department's Agency for International Development (AID). In fact, all over Ibero-America, AIFLD is thought of as the State Department's arm for manipulating the union movement. Small also revealed that on the basis of the Freedom of Information Act, he asked for reports from four government agencies: CIA, AID, DEA, and State Department, and that the Arlington, Virginia, law firm of Fensterwald, Alcorn and Bowman was contracted to file suit in case these entities responded [sic]. This law firm would also study for the Schiller Institute the legal steps which could be taken to force the U.S. government to suspend financing the AIFLD and begin

a full-fledged investigation.

Small documented accusations of AIFLD complicity with the Colombian banker Rodríguez Orejuela to set up the Banco de los Trabajadores de Colombia [Colombian Workers Bank]. The bank was founded in 1974 by Colombian union leader Tulio Cuevas of the UTC [Colombian Workers Union], at that time a member of the AIFLD Board of Directors, with a half-million-dollar donation member of the AIFLD Board of Directors, with a half-million-dollar donation from the Inter-American Foundation, on whose board sits the current AIFLD executive director, William Doherty. In 1978, Cuevas arranged for the UTC's shares to be sold to drug kinglet Rodríguez Orejuela. Small stated that Cuevas's behavior was so offensive that even AIFLD investigated the links between Cuevas and Rodríguez Orejuela, but never made the results public. The requests made by Small under the Freedom of Information Act asked that the results of that investigation be made known.

The Schiller Institute spokesman asked, "Why did UTC general secretary Alfonso Vargas go to Spain in 1984 to plead against Rodríguez Orejuela's extradition from that country?" Vargas, Small revealed, issued a circular dated Jan. 28, 1986, on UTC letterhead, asking for all relations between the UTC and the Schiller Institute to be suspended.

"The AIFLD problem, unfortunately, is not limited to Colombia," Small affirmed. "In the Peruvian case, the Schiller Institute has information that the AIFLD representative in that country from 1977 to 1982, one Bernard James Packer, went around trying to set up a Banco de los Trabajadores del Peru, just like the Colombian Workers Bank." One of Packer's cronies in this scheme was Peruvian banker Carlos Langberg. This gentleman is today in a Peruvian jail, accused of [and sentenced to 14 years for] cocaine trafficking, while Packer is the AIFLD representative in Colombia. "What we have, in both the Peruvian and Colombian cases," Small concluded, "is a direct association of AIFLD with known, confessed and convicted narcotics traffickers."

What we just read are formal accusations supported by a lot of documentary, circumstantial and testimonial evidence, which the Reagan administration ignored, since its so [highly] publicized war on drugs, it seems, is nothing more than a

pretext for intervening in the politics of the Latin American countries. At least that has been so in the Mexican case. U.S. officials, politicians and publications frequently accuse Mexican politicians and officials of being involved in drug traffic—governors, soldiers, police chiefs, and even a cousin of President Miguel de la Madrid Hernandez.

Not that we believe that our officials are spotless or unbribeable, but we think that every accusation made should be accompanied by evidence, which has not occurred in the case of the Mexican officials branded as accomplices or participants in narcotics traffic. Why do we take these accusations to heart, when, in the United States, proven accusations—in the case of the Schiller Institute's—are thrown in the wastebasket? If the United States has evidence of collusion between Mexican officials and narcotics traffic, why doesn't it make it known? And, why, if it doesn't, does it accuse without evidence? Everything seems to indicate that it is a matter of pressures and not of accusations having any basis, and that the Reagan administration's propagandized war on drugs, we insist, is no more than a pretext for intervening in the politics of the Ibero-American countries.

Also, it seems that U.S. semi-state agencies promote narcotics traffic, or work in collusion with the traffickers. The Schiller Institute's investigations exposed Packer, the current AIFLD operations director in Colombia and previously director of the same institute in Peru (1977-83), El Salvador (1983-1985) and Guatemala (1985). While he was in Peru, Packer collaborated intimately with Julio Cruzado, AIFLD board of directors member and president of the CTP [Confederation of Peruvian Workers]. At the same time, Packer was an intimate friend of Carlos Langberg, whose house he often visited with Cruzado. Langberg, as we now see, is currently in a Peruvian jail, accused of being a narcotics trafficker. Packer and Cruzado tried to found a workers' bank in Peru with AIFLD money by following the scheme of the Colombian workers' bank, one of the banks shown to have served as a "laundry" for the illegal transactions of convicted narcotics trafficker, Hernan Botero.

Packer, when AIFLD director in Peru, worked through Cruzado's Association for the Promotion of Labor Education and Economic and Social Research (AFELIES), which has extensive data on the psychological traits of every single Peruvian labor leader stored in its computers. The U.S. Embassy in Lima had a direct telephone line to the AFELIES offices. In 1982, a big scandal about Packer arose in the Peruvian press. He was forced to flee the country, accused by independent unionists and other sectors of being a CIA agent and of intervening in Peru's internal affairs. As a sequel to the same scandal, Cruzado was expelled from APRA.

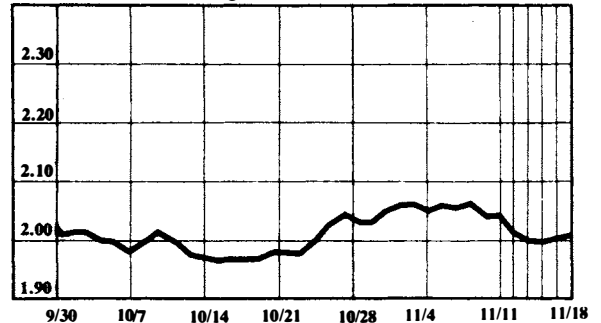
It remains to be determined if this is a personal deviation, or if it is, in fact, the policy of institutions like the AIFLD, which also operates in Mexico.

Somebody someday will write a book about narcotics traffic and intervention.

Currency Rates

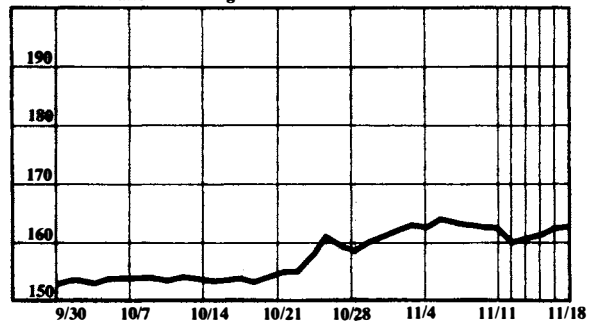
The dollar in deutschemarks

New York late afternoon fixing



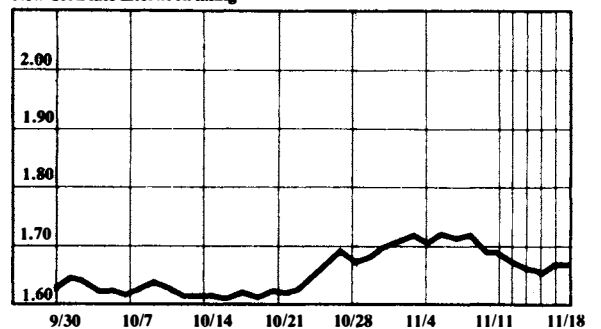
The dollar in yen

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The dollar in Swiss francs

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The British pound in dollars

New York late afternoon fixing

