

Andean Report by Carlos Méndez

'The Truth About CAP' spreads

While Venezuela's President awaits trial, 90,000 copies of "The Truth About CAP" are circulating in Caracas.

While suspended Venezuelan President Carlos Andrés Pérez (known as "CAP") awaits trial for corruption and misappropriation of funds, the Venezuelan Labor Party (PLV) and the Ibero-American Solidarity Movement (MSIA) in a single day distributed 90,000 copies of the pamphlet entitled "The Truth About CAP," with a new introduction titled "CAP Has Fallen, Now His Inner Circle Must Go."

The first edition of the pamphlet, a translation of which *EIR* is serializing (see *Investigation*), was issued in Caracas just one day before the Supreme Court ruled that there are grounds for the Venezuelan President to be tried.

The reprinting, which circulated widely as a supplement in the July 20 issue of *El Diario de Caracas*, was announced one day earlier on the major news program of Radio Caracas Television.

Feeling the heat, on the same day as the supplement appeared, two prominent bankers who belong to CAP's inner circle suddenly began to discuss the need for legislation to clamp down on drug money-laundering, a topic which "The Truth About CAP" discusses at length.

On July 27, *El Diario de Caracas* published a letter signed by Giacomo León, executive director of the Banco Latino, complaining about the supplement. León didn't deny any of the charges made in "The Truth About CAP," but limited himself to describing them as "conjecture and lies" directed against his prestigious institution.

The pamphlet's publication coincided with a national debate in Ven-

ezuela over whether drug traffickers and money launderers are involved in the presidential campaign for next December's elections. The debate began to heat up when on July 3, the president of the Supreme Electoral Council, former Foreign Minister Isidro Morales Paúl, said that there were indications that drug-related interests could interfere with the campaign, and proposed stronger controls on campaign financing.

Since then there have been a number of statements made, but no one has dared to respond to the challenge issued by Alejandro Peña Esclusa, secretary general of the PLV, according to the July 18 *Diario de Caracas*. Peña stated that if the presidential candidates really wanted to fight the drug trade, they should take a stand on the outrageous fact that the only book in Venezuela which is banned is *Narcotráfico, S.A.*, the Spanish-language edition of *EIR*'s best-selling *Dope, Inc.*

Speaking on Radio Capital on July 20, Peña Esclusa explained that *Narcotráfico, S.A.* was banned in 1985 on the orders of business magnate Gustavo Cisneros, a member of David Rockefeller's Council of the Americas. He added that if Cisneros has nothing to hide, "why not lift the ban on the book?"

On the same day, banker Orlando Castro, a member of CAP's inner circle who has been accused of drug money-laundering, suggested that drug money may have penetrated the banking system, and called upon Congress to pass a law against money laundering.

Another of the members of CAP's

inner financial circle who shed crocodile tears was banker Gustavo Gómez López, president of the Banco Latino. The recently deceased Pedro Tinoco, another longtime member of CAP's inner circle, ran the Banco Latino for many years.

The daily *El Nacional* reported on July 20 that according to the U.S. Information Service, at a luncheon in Washington, D.C. sponsored by the Inter-American Dialogue, Gómez López had asserted that Venezuelan banks were pressuring the government to strengthen its laws against money laundering.

The person who has yet to say a word is the presidential candidate of the Social Christian party (Copei), Oswaldo Alvarez Paz, currently the governor of Zulia state. On July 5, two supporters of presidential candidate Rafael Caldera, José Miguel Uzcategui and José Nepomuceno Garrido, warned that "the ones who should be watchful about drug penetration and illegal financing of the electoral campaign, are those who have more money and who without a doubt have spent more money," a barely disguised reference to Alvarez Paz's campaign.

On July 12, the bishop of Caimas, Msgr. Roberto Lucker, said that "Zulia has the smell of laundered drug dollars."

Alvarez Paz had no comment.

Nonetheless, the odor mentioned by Monsignor Lucker became stronger on July 21, when Alvarez Paz met in the governor's mansion with none other than Colombian presidential candidate Ernesto Samper Pizano, Ibero-America's biggest proponent of drug legalization. Samper said that "Oswaldo Alvarez Paz is one of the best known Venezuelan political leaders in Colombia," and added that he has excellent chances of becoming Venezuela's next President.