

de Gortari, charging him with being the mastermind of the José Francisco Ruiz Massieu assassination. According to an FBI report, Raúl Salinas had tight relations to Juan García Abrego, the boss of the Gulf Cartel.

- The authorities demanded the extradition of Mario Ruiz Massieu, brother of José Francisco, and deputy attorney general under Salinas, a fugitive in the United States accused of having covered up his brother's murder and of receiving drug money.

- With ups and downs, the investigations into the assassinations of Cardinal Juan Jesús Posadas Ocampo (1993) and Luis Donaldo Colosio (1994) were reopened.

Yet to date, President Zedillo has not dared to challenge the IMF-Salinas-Bush economic model, which is what sank Mexico's physical economy and created the infrastructure in which drug money and drug trafficking flourished.

Even so, what the Zedillo government has already done was enough to send the *Wall Street Journal*, Bush, Henry Kissinger and other international allies of Salinas into hysterics. Alan Stoga, the vice president of Kissinger Associates, said that the investigation into Carlos Salinas was "not serious" (*El Financiero*, June 16, 1995). And as for the trial against Raúl Salinas, Stoga proclaimed that this case would "not get past the first round" in the United States because it "is very weak, it is based 100% on verbal testimony."

The *Wall Street Journal* on various occasions has also come out editorially defending Carlos Salinas, who is now a director of Dow Jones & Co., which publishes the *Journal*. On Aug. 3, the *Journal* had to correct some statements by Mexican Attorney General Antonio Lozano García, which the *Journal* had misquoted to falsely assert that the Attorney General's office had exonerated ex-President Salinas of possible involvement in the Colosio and Ruiz Massieu murders. Lozano categorically denied that his office had done so, and the *Journal* had to admit its lie, noting that "Salinas is a director of Dow Jones & Co., publisher of this newspaper."

But the *Wall Street Journal* and Kissinger want to cover up what everyone already knows. For example, on July 27, Gen. Rosso José Serrano Cadena, director of the National Police of Colombia, stated in Washington, D.C., that during the Carlos Salinas government, Mexico was the "best ally of the [drug] cartels" of Colombia, and that "many" properties and businesses, when privatized, ended up in the drug traffickers' hands. And on July 20, the Mexican magazine *Siempre!* said in its editorial that "Carlos Salinas's partnership with the drug cartels turned him into an economically and even politically very powerful ex-President. Powerful because with the resources of the drug trade itself, terrorist acts can be organized which carry out massacres—like those in Guerrero—to kindle popular unrest and encourage guerrilla wars."

Now, with what has happened in Colombia, Mexico and its government are left with two alternatives: either to finish off this apparatus of the Mexican cartels (Ciudad Juárez, Pacific, and Gulf); or else these cartels will replace the Cali Cartel, with everything that implies.

Venezuela

The dope bankers are on the run

by David Ramonet

"I don't believe that [Colombian] President Samper can be accused of having received drug money for his campaign," former Venezuelan President Carlos Andrés Pérez told IPS news agency on Aug. 5, with all the moral authority derived from being under house arrest for multimillion-dollar corruption crimes. "Because if Colombia goes through a process of institutional destabilization like that Venezuela went through, regional integration will be in danger," added Pérez.

For a fact, Pérez (who is known as "CAP") and his partners—in particular, the now-deceased Pedro Tinoco, Jr., who was president of Venezuela's Central Bank (BCV)—made enormous contributions to the "regional integration" of the drug cartels, with Venezuela playing a special role as a regional money-laundering center. All of this was done in the name of "financial globalization," "open-market economy," and the "democracy" of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Pérez's forced departure from office in May 1993 began to clean the filth out of Venezuela.

According to the United Nations' Drug Council Report of 1992, in the middle of CAP's presidential term, Venezuela was already considered "the most important center of money laundering in Latin America." The same report adds, "the U.S. anti-narcotics agency [Drug Enforcement Administration, DEA] estimates that in 1992, some 200 tons of cocaine passed through the country into the United States, Canada, and Europe." At the time, CAP had hired as his international "anti-drug" adviser the former head of the Colombian political police, Gen. Miguel Maza Márquez, whose name appears on the payroll of the Rodríguez Orejuela brothers, according to the most recent revelations from Colombia.

CAP left the handling of the Venezuelan economy entirely up to Tinoco, who left the presidency of Banco Latino in February 1989 to take up the presidency of the BCV. Before that, he had been president of the CADA supermarket chain, owned by the Cisneros group headed by television magnate Gustavo Cisneros Rendiles. Tinoco and CAP imposed a brutal austerity package in 1989, whose key feature was a "financial reform" and Decree 727, which allowed "foreign investment" to operate without special permission in nearly every field of activity. This turned Venezuela into the sewer of the entire Andean-Caribbean region, as drug money was permitted to freely circulate. The Venezuelan banking system, with Tinoco and the Cisneros at its head, entered into a speculative euphoria of

dirty money, which in the end dragged one-third of the nation's commercial banks into bankruptcy.

After CAP's fall, the truth about the financial sewer he had fostered began to surface. The first bank to fail, in January 1994, was Banco Latino of Tinoco and Cisneros. It had grown from the fifth or sixth bank of the country, to second in importance during the three years Tinoco headed the BCV. During that same period, Banco Latino acquired several banks along the border with Colombia, became partners with Medellín's Banco de Antioquia, and set up its first branch in Bogotá, steps which many viewed as big-time moves into money laundering.

Over the coming months, many banks were declared insolvent by the government, and in March 1994, eighty-three Banco Latino directors, managers, and advisers were indicted for embezzlement, fraud, and a host of other charges. Among these was Ricardo Cisneros Rendiles, an important Banco Latino shareholder. Most of these bankers, including Cisneros, fled the country one step ahead of the law, and are sought by Venezuelan authorities through extradition.

A number of Venezuela's indicted dope bankers are reportedly in Miami. For example, during the recent DEA

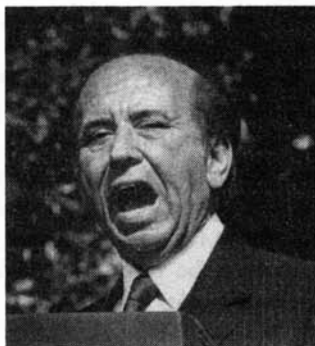
dragnet against the Cali Cartel in the United States, Venezuelan financier Hugo Perera was arrested in Miami. Perera has a number of casino and other investments on the island of Margarita. At the time of his arrest, Perera was travelling in a car registered to Roberto Malave, the fugitive former director of Banco Latino, who has been sued in a federal court in Miami by Venezuelan authorities representing Banco Latino depositors.

Another example is that of Cisneros-linked banker Orlando Castro Llanez. In 1994, Castro Llanez was accused in Miami of laundering drug money, but received legal counsel from former U.S. prosecutor Joel Rosenthal. Rosenthal is today a confessed agent of the Rodríguez Orejuela brothers, after being accused of these crimes in June 1995 in the Miami federal indictment.

The Caldera government has taken a number of steps to regain sovereign control over Venezuela's financial system, and finish off the job against the dope bankers. Critical was the July 1994 imposition of exchange controls, which has provoked violent howls of protest from the banking mafia, their international financial cohorts—including the International Monetary Fund—and others.

Carlos Andrés Pérez

Twice President of Venezuela (1973-78; 1989-93), life-long Socialist International leader Pérez (known as "CAP") was one of George Bush's closest allies during his second term in office. "Venezuela, under the command of President Pérez, is a leader of the



great movements which we are witnessing in Latin America to consolidate democracy," said Bush in December 1990. Indeed, CAP protected the Nicaraguan Sandinistas, the Salvadoran FMLN, Haiti's Jean Bertrand Aristide and his Lavalas movement, and the member groups of Colombia's Simón Bolívar Guerrilla Coordinator (M-19, ELN, FARC), including giving the last Venezuelan diplomatic passports.

Under his free-trade economic program, financial speculation and the drug trade zoomed. Advising CAP were Henry Kissinger, Venetian porno-businessman Lucio Benetton, American Express's James Robinson—members of CAP's Advisory Council on Foreign

Investment.

U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration sources told German anti-drug investigators that Gilberto Rodríguez Orejuela visited Venezuela frequently during CAP's regime, and even held a Venezuelan passport, according to the 1992 book *Die Verbrecher Holding: Das vereinte Europa in Griff der Mafia*. "The drug mafia has reached the highest levels of the Presidential Palace. . . . Involved in it are the closest collaborators of the President," wrote authors Jürgen Roth and Marc Frey.

CAP intervened to secure narco-czar Jorge Luis Ochoa's extradition from Spain to safety in Colombia in 1985, the authors charged. Ochoa and co-defendant Gilberto Rodríguez had also hired former U.S. Justice Department official Michael Abbell to defend them. Jorge's father, Fabio Ochoa, told journalists in 1988 that he had given CAP two purebred horses as repayment for helping with his son, and earlier, to free Ochoa's kidnapped daughter. CAP claimed he had only met Fabio Ochoa at "a horse show."

CAP and his close buddy, Spanish Socialist Prime Minister Felipe González, shared another mutual friend, Spanish "businessman" Enrique Sarasola, linked since the 1960s to Robert Vesco, the U.S. fugitive financier who set up money laundering for Carlos Lehder's Medellín Cartel, before moving to Cuba. It was Sarasola who, in 1982, reportedly invited Colombian narcos, and then-Congressmen Pablo Escobar and Alberto Santofimio, to attend González's inauguration as prime minister.

Gustavo Cisneros

Going from bus ticket collectors to billionaires over the last four decades, the Cisneros family has become synonymous in Venezuela with the interests of the Rockefeller family and Henry Kissinger. Before the January 1994 blowout of



their Banco Latino financial empire, the family had come to dominate Venezuela's news media and entertainment industry, and had holdings in food, banking, and minerals.

The Cisneros family was at the center of the so-called "Twelve Apostles," the inner circle which advised the presidencies of Carlos Andrés Pérez. The Cisneroses were notorious for destroying their adversaries through mafia-style tactics run through their media monopoly and their corruption of the judiciary.

In July 1984, the Venezuelan magazine *Resúmen* reported that Oswaldo Cisneros, Gustavo's cousin, was up to his neck in dope-money laundering in Florida. Subsequent *EIR* investigations, included in the 1985 edition of the book *Dope, Inc.*, found the Cisneros family to be linked closely to known international money-laundering interests: the Royal Bank of Canada, Florida dope banking circles, the drug-legalizers of Friedrich von Hayek's Mont Pelerin Society, etc.

Less than one week after the Spanish-language edition of *Dope, Inc.* hit Caracas, Gustavo Cisneros got a court order banning its circulation in Venezuela, and his police agents raided *EIR*'s offices. Every leading official involved in the police raid has since been jailed or charged with drug or corruption charges. The overkill deployed by the Cisneros led the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to upgrade its watch on the Cisneros family, *EIR* subsequently learned.

In September 1991, the Venezuelan daily *El Globo* reported that a congressional committee had found that the Cisneros organization owned a Miami-based company, Celere, Inc., which was under investigation by the DEA for cocaine trafficking. In 1994, Venezuelan columnist Andrés Galdo and former Venezuelan anti-drug official Thor Halvorssen charged that Banco Latino was a major money-launderer for the Colombian cartels.

Clinton broke Bush's deals with drug cartel

by Jeffrey Steinberg

When William Clinton was first inaugurated President, the drug lobby in the United States prepared to move the campaign for legalization into a new phase. During the Bush years, the Drug Policy Foundation and other pro-dope fronts had successfully hammered away at the administration's draconian, but thoroughly unsuccessful and hypocritical "war on drugs." The propaganda effort to discredit even the notion of a Bush war on drugs was greatly abetted by the fact that Bush's Attorney General, Richard Thornburgh, had surrounded himself with longtime aides who themselves would be prosecuted and convicted of trafficking cocaine, leading ultimately to Thornburgh's own "early retirement." One of the aides, Henry Barr, was serving as Attorney General Thornburgh's liaison to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) at the time he was indicted by federal prosecutors in Pennsylvania on cocaine-trafficking charges!

Thornburgh's drug taint was minor-league when compared to President Bush's own notorious track record of dealings with Colombian and Mideast dope traffickers during the Reagan administration, when, as vice president, he was the head of covert operations at the White House. When, in December 1989, Bush sent thousands of American troops into Panama to overthrow the Noriega government (ostensibly because of the general's links to drug traffickers), he handpicked the successor regime of President Guillermo Endara, which was comprised almost entirely of well-known front-men for the Cali Cartel, including Endara himself—a fact even the Bush-loving *Wall Street Journal* eventually conceded on its front page.

Bush's nar-contras

At the point in 1985 when George Bush reached the zenith of his power over American secret intelligence operations, he was personally responsible for trashing any last prospect of the Reagan administration embarking on a serious war on drugs effort.

Two events that year epitomized this policy shift: the February kidnapping and torture murder of DEA agent Enrique Camarena by Mexican-based drug-cartel figures, and the late-1985 White House decision that "you can't fight communist guerillas and drug traffickers at the same time."

Evidence later surfaced that Camarena's murder took place at a drug-cartel ranch that was also being used by the Bush-Oliver North team to train Contra guerrillas. The decision to "fight commies, not narcos," signaled an outright