
EIR Memorandum

Who backs Samper's 'certification'

Colombian President Ernesto Samper Pizano has been an asset of the Colombian drug cartels for more than a decade, and an active lobbyist for international drug legalization since the 1970s. The proof has been in the public domain for years. His 1994 capture of the Colombian Presidency with drug cartel funds should have set off alarm bells in every capital of the world, and a concerted international effort should have been undertaken to assist the Colombian people in freeing themselves from this criminal scourge.

And yet, Colombia's "narco-President" was accepted into the fold by the international community, with backing in particular from powerful British and British-influenced political forces favorable to the legalization of the drug trade. For example, in June 1995, British Trade Minister Richard Needham traveled to Colombia and lauded its "attractive" investment climate, scoffing at U.S. government concerns over the drug problem. "That is their problem," he said.

Today, the Colombian people are trying to rid themselves of the Samper catastrophe, but he and his Cali Cartel partners are doing everything they can to cling to power. Central to their strategy is to avoid decertification by the Clinton administration. The question properly arises: Under these circumstances, what forces in the United States are backing the certification of the Samper government?

The public record clearly points to the following three groupings, each of which has a lengthy British political pedigree, which *EIR* has extensively documented in other locations:

1. Political forces allied to George Bush and Henry Kissinger. Exemplary is the case of the Forum for International Policy, which on Jan. 31 issued a policy statement, over the name of former U.S. Ambassador to Colombia Charles Gillespie, advocating U.S. certification of Colombia (see *Documentation*). The argument? That the United States should "support," but "not meddle in, honest Colombian efforts to work through their current difficulties." The brief also warns President Clinton against an "imprudent" use of evidence being provided by a high-level Cali Cartel informant in Washington, evidence which Gillespie nervously notes may expose high-level corruption "even in the United States itself."

The Forum for International Policy is run by Brent Scow-

croft and Lawrence Eagleburger, both of whom were with Kissinger Associates for more than a decade. The Forum's board of trustees is staffed heavily with former Bush administration appointees such as Carla Hills, Robert Gates, and Robert Strauss. Scowcroft is currently helping Bush write his memoirs of his White House years.

Kissinger's fingerprints are also all over the campaign to save Samper inside Colombia. For example, the Feb. 6 *Wall Street Journal* ran lengthy favorable coverage on Julio Mario Santodomingo, whom they describe as the most powerful man in Colombia, and almost "god-like." The *Journal* reports that Santodomingo is Samper's most important political and financial supporter in the country, and that his various businesses contributed as much as \$3.7 million to Samper's Presidential campaign. Santodomingo is quoted insisting that he will continue to back Samper unless and until he is found guilty in a formal trial.

What the *Wall Street Journal* fails to report is that Santodomingo is also a Kissinger intimate. For example, in April 1995, Santodomingo joined the former U.S. secretary of state for a tour of South America, right after he participated in a policy meeting in Chatham House in London.

2. The Inter-American Dialogue, the Washington-based bankers' lobby whose members shaped George Bush's foreign policy toward Ibero-America. The Dialogue maintained a strong policy profile inside the Clinton administration as well—at least until recently, when National Security Council Latin America adviser Richard Feinberg, a former president of the Dialogue, announced his resignation. The Dialogue, which has consistently argued in favor of drug legalization, and which has soft-pedaled the Colombia drug problem, includes on its membership roster both Scowcroft and Eagleburger.

On Jan. 25, the *Christian Science Monitor* published a commentary by Dialogue current president Peter Hakim, who calls for a "redefinition" of U.S. anti-drug policies in Ibero-America, away from what he dubs "a mostly unilateral approach," and toward "one that elicits cooperation, instead of provoking conflict." The commentary, occurring one month before the certification deadline, is an unequivocal call for Samper's certification.

3. Proponents of drug legalization, such as William Buckley, George Soros, and Milton Friedman, are on a renewed campaign to convince Americans and official Washington that there is no point fighting drugs, and that they should be legalized instead—a campaign which is intersecting the certification debate in Washington. For example, the Feb. 12 issue of Buckley's *National Review* magazine is devoted entirely to arguing why "The War on Drugs Is Lost," and that the only practical alternative is drug legalization. The release of that issue of the magazine has been accompanied by a media blitz of interviews and press coverage, to assure the widest possible dissemination of their call for surrender.

Documentation

The Forum for International Policy, on Jan. 31, published an "Issue Brief," written by former Ambassador to Colombia Charles A. Gillespie, Jr. Excerpts follow:

The reality should be that we support, but do not meddle in, honest Colombia's efforts to work through the current difficulties. . . . [Decertification] would distance the U.S. from Colombians whose cooperation in the narcotics fight is needed. One can argue whether the largest drug-consuming nation ought to try to judge others, especially when it appears that drug use is once again on the upswing here. Be that as it may, the certification issue could not arise at a less propitious time. . . . The effect of withdrawal of U.S. support when that nation's democratic institutions are in crisis would be more than symbolic and it would hand an undeserved victory to the traffickers. The President should certify Colombia if he can; if not, he should make the national interest determination.

Inter-American Dialogue president Peter Hakim published a column in the Christian Science Monitor on Jan. 25, entitled "Latin America Policy: Some Proposed U.S. Steps." Excerpts include:

Third, it is time for the administration to redefine U.S. anti-drug policies in Latin America. Our current approach has led to some spectacular drug busts, the destruction of a few big cartels, and the arrest of many kingpins, but it has not reduced the flow of cocaine and other illicit drugs to this country—or strengthened the ability of Latin American institutions to deal with drug problems. And as a mostly unilateral approach, it remains a source of continuing friction in our relations with many countries in the region. The U.S. needs to develop a more constructive antinarcotics strategy—one that elicits cooperation instead of provoking conflict.

In 1986, the Inter-American Dialogue issued its annual report urging "selective legalization" of drugs. In 1988, this formulation was changed to "selective legislation," but it refers to the same thing:

1986: "Waging war on drugs costs money. More important, it will inevitably result in the loss of . . . foreign exchange that the drug trade provides [which] amounts are substantial for strapped economies carrying large burdens of external debt."

1988: "It may also be useful to begin distinguishing among different drugs. Social attitudes toward marijuana vary greatly from those toward heroin, for example. And the consequences for users and for society as a whole are vastly different. Moreover, there is a difference between the damage caused by the use of drugs and the harm that results from their illegality. It is premature to contemplate legalizing any dangerous drug—but it might be sensible to examine careful-

ly all of the likely consequences, positive and negative, of selective legislation."

The Feb. 12 issue of National Review magazine, edited by William F. Buckley, Jr., is devoted to advocacy of drug legalization. The title of the issue is "The War on Drugs Is Lost," and the editorial preface of the issue reads:

It is our judgment that the war on drugs has failed, that it is diverting intelligent energy away from how to deal with the problem of addiction, that it is wasting resources, and that it is encouraging civil, judicial, and penal procedures associated with police states. We all agree on movement toward legalization, even though we may differ on just how far.

International speculator George Soros has become the drug legalization lobby's largest benefactor. He began financing the pro-legalization Drug Policy Foundation (whose members' views are published in Buckley's Feb. 12 issue of National Review) in 1992. Soros's funds to the DPF are channeled through his Open Society Fund, whose president, Aryeh Neier, stated:

Soros doesn't think the drug war makes any sense from an economic standpoint. . . . We want persons involved in the drug culture, who are currently treated as objects of State action, to regain control over their own lives.

EIR Audio Report

Your weekly antidote
for New World Order 'news'

Exclusive news reports and interviews
Audio statements by Lyndon LaRouche

- Updates on:
- The Real Economy
 - Science and Technology
 - The Fight for Constitutional Law
 - The Right to Life
 - Food and Agriculture
 - The Arts
 - The Living History of the American Republic
 - Essential Reports from around the Globe

\$500 for 50 Issues

An hour-long audio cassette sent by first-class mail each week. Includes cover letter with contents.

Make checks payable to:

EIR News Service

P.O. Box 17390, Washington, D.C. 20041-0390

Phone: (703) 777-9451

Fax: (703) 771-9492