

need disinterested help, unconditioned help, from countries like the United States, Japan, France, West Germany, or England, who seek to cooperate with Costa Rica in order to make this a base of stability. Instead they offer us military aid, as Mrs. Kirkpatrick did, rather than economic aid. We don't need weapons, we need economic aid.

We have always been unconditional allies of the United States. We can be classified as one of America's few true friends. And not just today: I am talking about our whole history. If they are prepared to let Costa Rica go down the drain, you can be absolutely sure that they will no longer have a friend here, and the domino effect will be felt with a monstrous force—not only in this area, but in all of Latin America. Mexico, Argentina, and ultimately the U.S. itself will feel it.

EIR: If Costa Rica follows the IMF's recommendations of drastically reducing the government budget, devaluing your currency, and so on, what will the results be?

A: If this is done, we will basically have a worsening of what we have already been suffering since August: a sharp braking of the economy, a drop in production, a rise in unemployment. You see, the problem is that the IMF recommends policies which are absolutely unreal, not thought-out. They are the policies of the bureaucrat, who sits behind a desk and sees only numbers, and not reality. Such policies would be very negative. We would not be able to create jobs, to increase production, to build more infrastructure, to educate our people.

It's true that for many years we have overspent, have distributed wealth that we did not have. But the solution is not to slam on the brakes; I am absolutely convinced of this.

The way I figure it, if a country like Costa Rica has to make the painful decision to not pay our debt—not because we don't want to, but because we can't—many, many other countries will follow suit, who are in situations as critical or worse than ours. And this would bring about the total shattering of the U.S. economy itself.

Just take a look at how much money U.S. banks have lent out to countries like ours. All you need is for one country, just one single country, to say, "I can't pay." And we will all go back to the Great Depression of 1930.

If you take a serious look at this, you will realize that things are very critical indeed. And it is decidedly *not* due to problems of overpopulation. Quite the contrary: Costa Rica has a great shortage of labor and manpower. Every year we lose a portion of our crops because there is a shortage of labor. And for that reason we have always been opposed to the *Global 2000 Report*, and not only through public statements. For example, we totally shut down that infamous attempt to hand out contraceptives across our entire country. We have been totally opposed to the idea of reducing the size of the population.

Colombia

Electoral setup for destabilization

by Cynthia Rush

The nomination Sept. 19 of hated former President Alfonso López Michelsen as the presidential candidate of Colombia's Liberal Party means a 1982 election campaign that will probably pit against each other two advocates of drug decriminalization—López and his Conservative opponent Alvaro Gómez Hurtado. At best, the choice of López will further destabilize Colombia's already shaky democracy. At worst, it could mean civil war.

Who is López Michelsen? In 1974, he was elected to head up the first administration after the National Front, the 16-year pact set up in 1957 that alternated Liberal and Conservative Presidents every four years. Son of the popular Alfonso López Pumarejo, who had served twice as Colombia's President (1934-37 and 1942-45), López was elected by a heavy majority and seen as the man who would restore both economic prosperity and Liberal Party hegemony in the nation.

Social democrat López betrayed these expectations. In alliance with Conservative forces linked to "opponent" Alvaro Gómez, he dismantled the nation's productive apparatus and facilitated the growth of the drug economy. By the time he left office, López was one of the most hated men in Colombia. A columnist writing in the Bogotá daily *El Tiempo* a month ago warned, "It's no secret that at least half the nation, and one-fourth the body politic, would rise up from the moment that a López candidacy were proclaimed, to prevent him from getting to the presidential elections."

During his first term in office López Michelsen supervised Colombia's conversion to a full-fledged drug economy. He authorized the creation of the *ventanilla siniestra*—the "sinister window"—at the central bank, a mechanism for laundering revenues from the illicit drug trade through the banking system. At the same time he applied the Friedmanite policies used in Chile, whose "economic miracle" he publicly lauds, to eliminate what remained of productive investment or industry.

The 1974 tax reform, designed with the aid of Brandt Commission member and Finance Minister Rodrigo Botero, encouraged investment in monetary and real estate speculation and labor-intensive activity, while killing heavy industry. Under López's "anti-inflationary"

austerity program, Colombia's steel-making and textile industries began their rapid decline.

Two facts readily indicate how a new López administration will approach the country's drug problem: López has contracted Ernesto Samper Pizano, Colombia's most prominent advocate of marijuana legalization and executive board member of the International Cannabis Alliance for Reform (ICAR), as the top adviser to his presidential campaign. The candidate is also generously financed by his cousin Banco de Colombia President Jaime Michelsen Uribe. Since the April 1978 election of current President Turbay Ayala, López has spent most of his time strengthening his ties to the Socialist International, acting as a spokesman for the zero-growth perspective expressed in the Brandt Commission report, and recommending that Colombia resolve its domestic subversion problem by negotiating with the avowedly social democratic terrorist group M-19. Associated during the early part of his political career with the M-19's top leader Jaime Bateman Cayón, López recently announced that he favors the declaration of a "broad amnesty" that would bring the M-19 into the political system as a legitimate party.

What are the options?

Whether López can get close enough to the presidency to implement these policies is another question. It is likely that his candidacy will decisively split the Liberal Party, repeating events of 1946 that handed the election to the Conservatives and plunged the nation into a fratricidal, 10-year civil war known as "La Violencia." Although López's chief Liberal opponent Sen. Virgilio Barco has dropped his bid for the presidency, former President Carlos Lleras Restrepo is organizing his Liberal constituency to oppose López's candidacy, and vote either for Sen. Luis Carlos Galán or perhaps for conservative "national unity" candidate Belisario Betancur. Either way, the Conservatives have the advantage.

The person who stands to gain most from this is Conservative Party leader Alvaro Gómez Hurtado, who is also a proponent of marijuana legalization. Son of the pro-Nazi dictator Laureano Gómez, who unleashed the first "Violencia," and an intimate of some of Europe's leading oligarchs, Gómez has been trying to become President for years. He has always been repudiated, however, by a population that vividly recalls the atrocities committed by his father and the 300,000 or more people massacred during the Violencia. Now Gómez may actually have a chance to attain his goal, either personally or through a surrogate like Bentacur. Given the degree of hatred for Gómez, and the potential for an upsurge of armed guerrilla activity resulting from increased military repression, a victory could plunge the country into an El Salvador-style civil war.

Documentation

Colombian churchmen speak out on drugs

The Colombian Church has taken an unprecedented lead in denouncing Liberal Party presidential candidate Alfonso López Michelsen's pro-drug and pro-divorce positions, while carefully refraining from naming him publicly.

Excerpts from the Aug.

Bishops Episcopal Conference: We cannot believe in the sincerity of those who self-righteously speak of morality and of the good of Colombia, while offering as alternatives to the process of moral decomposition the legalization of marijuana, who would "remedy" the crime of abortion by legitimizing it, who would "protect" the family by dissolving it through divorce. . . . These are the increasingly audacious proposals which have found an echo in the decadence of a permissive or complicit ruling class.

Statement of Bishop Darío Castrillón, Pereira, Sept. 1: Legalize drugs? Permit abortion? It is evident that societies are deteriorating, are becoming corrupt. I'm sure that through simplistic analysis, many people think of the foreign exchange which can come in from sales of marijuana. But if any of these people . . . were to see the human wrecks of the drug addicts, the suffering of their mothers. . . . The Church cannot permit such degradation of morals. It cannot permit such overwhelming irresponsibility, it cannot co-exist with the barbarity certain politicians . . . are offering on the eve of elections. Evidently they want to attract the youth with these proposals of civil matrimony, of divorce, abortion, and legalization of drugs. They want to commit the youth to their sins. They want to harm them irremediably.

Statement of the President of the Latin American Episcopal Conference (CELAM), Bishop López Trujillo, Medellín, Sept. 28: The political candidates must not only be honest, but also must be attuned to the people. . . . Part of this being in tune with the people is respect for their Christian souls. Some of our politicians seem to be living in Sweden, and have not taken into account how our people think and react. . . . These politicians greatly lack a true humanist perspective and an integral Christian conscience.