

## Dateline Mexico by Isaías Amezcua

### Sonora narco-politicos falling?

*The "citizens above suspicion" are suddenly scrambling to cover up their ties to the dope mob.*

**I**n the aftermath of the capture of dope mobster Miguel Angel Félix Gallardo in Guadalajara, Jalisco April 8, panic has begun to set in among some of the mob's political protectors in high places. Exemplary is the northwestern state of Sonora.

In late April, Carlos Robles Loustenau, mayor of Hermosillo, Sonora, requested a "temporary" absence from his post for the ostensible purpose of disproving the accusations of electoral fraud made against him by the Attorney General of the Republic. Shortly thereafter, Robles, known as "El Calolo," tried to escape the country. An arrest warrant was issued for him on April 26.

The fall of Robles Loustenau does more than clean up election fraud, however. It also marks the beginning of a cleaning out of the extensive influence of the drug trade in Sonoran politics. Robles L. leads straight into the entire corrupt political network around Sonora Gov. Rodolfo Félix Valdés, including Sonoran secretary general and president of the State Electoral Commission Francisco Aldana Montano, PRI senator from Bulmaro Pacheco (Sonora), and the governor's "confidential" secretary José Antonio Arce Caballero.

Robles is well known for his links to the infamous Sonoran drug trafficker turned Mexico City chief of police Arturo "el Negro" Durazo Moreno. "El Negro" launched Robles's political career by making him a federal deputy from Xochimilco in the early days of the José López Portillo government (1976-82).

"El Negro" Durazo, currently sitting in a Mexico City jail, during his heyday was closely linked to the so-called Puebla Group of financiers through his vast investments in the hotel and tourist industry. The Puebla Group is centered around the Televisa media chain, many of whose luminaries have recently been accused of involvement with the narco-Satanic ring revealed in the Matamoros atrocities.

Similarly well known are Robles's extremely close ties to the group around former Hermosillo Mayor Alicia Arellano de Pavlovich Sugich, a friend of Durazo Moreno and the protégé of financier Arcadio Valenzuela. It is said that Valenzuela influences the office of the Sonora governor through secretary Arce Caballero, his former employee.

Valenzuela, as *EIR* has amply documented in previous articles, is tied to the Félix Gallardo drug trafficking band in a number of ways. In June 1985, the chief of Mexico's narcotics police, Florentino Ventura, arrested Guadalajara businessmen Eduardo and Javier Cordero Stauffer for the laundering of drug money for the Caro Quintero/Félix Gallardo gang. At the time, it was revealed that the Stauffer brothers had a close business partnership with Valenzuela. Among other things, the Stauffer brothers sat on the board of directors of Valenzuela's Banco del Pacífico, founded in 1976. They were also co-investors with Valenzuela in the Fiesta Americana hotel chain, owned by Holiday Inn. The president of Fiesta Americana is Gastón Azcárraga Tamayo, whose first

cousin is Emilio Azcárraga, the president of Televisa.

On April 21, the federal Attorney General's office revealed that trafficker Félix Gallardo owned 52% of the stock in Plaza México, the enormous shopping center in Guadalajara constructed and "owned" by Valenzuela.

Former Hermosillo mayor Robles is also tied to Sonoran Attorney General Sóstenes Valenzuela Miller. Valenzuela Miller helped Robles commit his electoral fraud when, as mayor of Ciudad Obregón, he illegally sent more than 100 people into Hermosillo to guarantee Robles's election. Valenzuela Miller is in turn linked to Félix Gallardo's brother, drug trafficker José Luis Félix Gallardo, who made vast real estate investments in Ciudad Obregón when Valenzuela Miller was mayor.

Robles has also been mentioned for having links to noted drug trafficker Jaime Figueroa Soto, currently facing 40 criminal counts against him by the Arizona state prosecutor. Robles, as Sonora Attorney General, reportedly interceded in Figueroa's favor when the latter was arrested on a minor infraction.

Sonora Gov. Félix Valdés attempted to mask his administration's cozy relationship with the drug traffickers by calling on April 19 for a "social alliance" to combat drug trafficking. He politely asked the traffickers to please "abandon" his state and "cease their activities."

And yet, few who know anything about the Sonora drug trade will buy the governor's theatrics. A series of massacres, like the seven killed in Navojoa March 22 or the 10 killed in Agua Prieta March 29, or the October 1988 drug violence in Nogales which forced the army out to patrol the streets, bear witness to the drug trade's bloody grip on the state.