

A further aspect of the American disregard for the principles of law prevailing among civilized peoples is the massive pressure exerted against the Papal Nunciature in Panama. The behavior of the American occupation troops toward the Papal Nunciature in Panama is unjustifiable in international law. It is an unconditional principle of international law, that the freedom of movement of foreign diplomats be guaranteed, and their immunity and the right to refuge in diplomatic missions respected, and to guarantee the free access to the missions of foreign nations under all circumstances and for everyone. The pressure exerted by the American government by means of noise terror through rock music and the threat, confirmed in the meantime, to abrogate the immunity of the Vatican Embassy if Noriega did not surrender, is in violation of international law. This breach of international law is merely underscored by the fact, that Noriega has in the meantime surrendered and been brought to the U.S.A., and is thus by no means over and done with. Historical parallels can at most be found perhaps in disparate incidents of Hitler's Germany against Polish diplomats in 1939 and 1940, as well as in the action of Napoleon Bonaparte against Pope Pius VII between 1809 and 1814. Even the communist regime under Stalin did not dare to violate the integrity of foreign embassies.

Also Moscow condemned the American invasion in Panama, although the unprecedented American action against the binding principles of law of civilized nations is nothing but the application of the Brezhnev doctrine to the American sphere of interests. One might interpret this posture as a welcome turn by Gorbachov away from the Brezhnev doctrine.

The peoples' right to self-determination stands in opposition to the power politics of the world powers, which, as subjects of international law, claim for themselves a special status. It is a hopeful omen, that the principle of arbitrary whim has never been crowned with lasting success in the life of the peoples. The estrangement of the United States of America from the path of classical international law is consistent with a vast loss of culture in law "at home." Indeed, one must say, that the breach of international law becomes the mirror image of the erosion of the nation-under-law in the United States itself.

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Colombian Liberals embrace drug mafia

by José Restrepo

The ruling Liberal Party of Colombia, under the influence of former President and drug mafia asset Alfonso López Michelsen, has officially embraced drug legalization in its 1990 electoral platform. According to the just-released document, the Liberal Party urges the Colombian government "to adopt and study a policy toward drug trafficking, following the course of world tendencies which propose drug legalization."

The statement was issued on the heels of López Michelsen's unilateral offer to the drug cartels just one week earlier, that they could expect "appropriate treatment" (i.e., amnesty) from the authorities, were they to release a score of kidnap victims and pledge to abandon their illegal trafficking activities. The López offer, made despite President Virgilio Barco's repeated refusal to negotiate a deal with the cartels, was immediately accepted by the so-called "Extraditables." López's initiative appears to have produced the first important chink in the government's anti-drug armor: Not wishing to have hostage blood on his hands, Barco publicly declared his willingness to be "flexible" on the issue.

A mafia 'musketeer'

The brazenness of López Michelsen and his mafiosi cohorts in fronting for the drug cartels is not undertaken without a certain degree of nervousness, however, for in their own self-congratulatory propaganda they worry openly about how the anti-drug forces around Lyndon LaRouche will counterattack. López's media mouthpiece, co-owner of the newspaper *El Tiempo* Roberto Posada Garcé Peña, editorialized on Jan. 21 that López's "patriotic service" and "historic act" will doubtless "revive the moral disciples of LaRouche" in their campaign of denunciation against the former Colombian President.

Wrote García Peña, under his pen-name D'Artagnan, "It was exactly positions like this which cost López the attacks of Lyndon LaRouche (former U.S. presidential candidate and founder of the American Labor Party [sic]), the power behind individuals who until recently distributed his writ-

ings, such as *Executive Review* [sic] in the streets of Europe, in which López was the object of all kinds of incriminations for his occasional contact with the drug trade in Panama in 1984. . . .

“The state has the moral obligation . . . to end the war [on drugs] with the least social cost possible. Many are the lives and goods already lost because of this violence. Such is the role that former President López has played in this whole scenario. It is not simply episodic. It is an historic role, although it may hurt some, and comes with some very high personal costs, since the moral disciples of LaRouche everywhere will surely not hesitate to revive, in order to stigmatize him for his supposed links to the drug trade, and to incriminate him.”

In his Jan. 19 *El Tiempo* column, D’Artagnan proposed as the “sole solution” to the drug trade “the legalization of the production and consumption of cocaine . . . as [presidential candidate Ernesto] Samper Pizano has bravely maintained.” The next day, the same pro-legalization crew urged the Barco government to adopt the role of mafia spokesman in talks with the United States. *El Tiempo* devoted its Jan. 20 editorial to proposing that the Colombian government take advantage of the Feb. 15 presidential anti-drug summit in Cartagena to discuss the drug traffickers’ conditions with President Bush. “In Cartagena, the new situation created by the drug traffickers’ offer could be defined with seriousness and decision.”

López versus EIR

This is not the first time that López and his apologists have attacked *EIR*. In 1984, shortly after López held clandestine negotiations with cocaine czars Pablo Escobar and Jorge Luis Ochoa in Panama, the former President sent a telegram to then-President Belisario Betancur, in which he moaned that “in Panama, New York, Madrid, Copenhagen, and I presume throughout the world, the report has been circulating in *Intelligence Executive Review* [sic] that I have been at the service of the drug mafia.” López called on the Betancur government to take action so that “my honor not be universally exposed in newspapers like *ABC* of Madrid.” That “exposure” served at the time to stop López’s pro-legalization lobbying dead in its tracks.

This time, thanks to López’s expertise in political blackmail, the cartels and their legalization allies have gained a foot in the door. Pablo Escobar will no doubt release his hostages—one by one—but only if President Barco agrees to dance at the end of López Michelsen’s leash. Confidential sources have assured *EIR* that the cartel’s first condition for release of the hostages will be a lifting of the state of siege imposed by President Barco in the aftermath of the October 1989 mafia slaying of presidential candidate Luis Carlos Galán. It was under the state of siege that the measures currently employed in the war against drugs, including extradition and confiscation of cartel assets, were authorized. The cartel’s final condition will be legalization of the drug trade.

López’s political heir and presidential candidate for the Liberal Party, Ernesto Samper Pizano, greeted the Extraditables’ favorable response to López’s letter as a cartel offer of “unconditional surrender.” So it was also played up in the international news media. But in a letter written to *El Tiempo* on Jan. 24, cartel chieftain Pablo Escobar made it crystal-clear what kind of “retirement” he has in mind. Escobar wrote that “if some day the Colombian government should decide to fight bravely and sovereignly for the peace of our people, it would find a long and interminable list of extraditables, drug traffickers, assassins, and paramilitary forces who wish to accompany it in the peace process.” At no point did Escobar talk about “surrender.”

Aside from the LaRouche forces in Colombia, López has come under attack from serious anti-drug proponents in Colombian political circles. The daily *El Espectador* has devoted repeated editorials to denouncing López’s shameless complicity in cartel blackmail of the country. And on Jan. 22, Alfonso Cano, whose brother Guillermo was of the assassinated director of *El Espectador*, wrote that “a dialogue with the criminals is a moral impossibility. Further, it is a juridical impossibility, since they are confessed criminals.”

The U.S. connection

López’s actions are well-coordinated with powerful interest groups inside the United States which seek to open the way for a legalized drug trade. Immediately after the joint López-Escobar initiative, several major U.S. dailies began their own legalization drumbeat. The *Washington Post* editorialized on Jan. 19 that López’s deal with the drug traffickers “is political plea-bargaining writ large, but it is not to be dismissed.”

On Jan. 22, the *Washington Times*—with a long history of advocating legalization of everything from marijuana to heroin—“reported” on page one that the entire Washington, D.C. government bureaucracy is involved in drugs, and that many officials actually sell drugs. The next day, the *Times* devoted a front-page article to praising the “Holland model,” where the state itself makes legalized drugs available. The message of both articles? The war on drugs doesn’t work, and the answer is legalization.

On Jan. 23, the *New York Times* published a commentary by lawyer Frederick Campbell, who proposed “carefully controlled legalization” as the “key element in a strategy to put drug pushers out of business.” Campbell revealed what he means by “controlled” when he suggested that were drug addicts to be supplied by licensed clinics which could assure that female addicts did not get pregnant, there would be fewer “crack babies” to contend with.

The *Wall Street Journal* also dedicated its entire letters to the editor page on Jan. 23 to a “debate” on legalization. One of the legalization advocates was Stephen Hochman, former member of the New York State Advisory Council on Substance Abuse.