

Dateline Mexico by Isaías Amezcua

CIA-FBI Mexican operative burned

The truth behind the assassination of DEA agent Enrique Camarena has yet to be told.

The U.S. Department of Justice could be getting the CIA into serious trouble, without even knowing it. On Feb. 2, the DoJ formally accused two former Mexican police officials, Miguel Aldana Ibarra and Manuel Ibarra, of complicity in the kidnaping and assassination of Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) agent Enrique Camarena, which took place in the city of Guadalajara in 1985. The two former policemen are charged with belonging to a group of Mexican, Colombian, and Honduran drug traffickers known as the Guadalajara Cartel, which included such "notables" as Miguel Félix Gallardo, Rafael Caro Quintero, Juan Ramón Matta Ballesteros and Ernesto Fonseca, all currently imprisoned and accused of the Camarena murder.

However, the indictment makes no mention of the fact that Miguel Aldana Ibarra was (or is) a close collaborator of the CIA and of the FBI during the 1981-82 period in which he was the coordinator of the Federal Security Agency (DFS), and later, while he was director of the Anti-Narcotics Division of the Attorney General's office (1983-85), where he carried out dirty tricks for the FBI. It is also surprising that the Justice Department omitted the fact that Aldana Ibarra was the "right arm" of José Antonio Zorrilla, who was DFS director from 1981-85 and was forced to resign for his complicity with the drug traffickers ultimately indicted for the assassination of Camarena.

Although Zorrilla managed to evade for a while any indictment for his own criminal activities, his luck

ended with the advent of a new Mexican government, which arrested him in 1989. The DEA office in Mexico fingered Zorrilla in various ways as one of the protectors of Camarena's drug-trafficking assassins, but it was clear that Zorrilla's political contacts, and especially his close relations with the CIA office in Mexico City, succeeding in postponing his day of reckoning for several years. CIA collaboration with Zorrilla was the basis for a number of bitter confrontations between the DEA and CIA during that period.

The Justice Department's indictments, while intended to give U.S. authorities the veneer of dedication to hunting down drug traffickers "wherever and whoever they may be," in fact haven't the least validity inside Mexico, because there is no standing extradition treaty between the two countries. Further, if Aldana is guilty, the crimes were committed in Mexico and therefore, legally, his sentence would have to be served in Mexico. The Justice Department is fully aware of these facts, but its objective is otherwise: to use the case politically, to pressure, even blackmail, Mexican authorities, and to create the conditions for a possible paramilitary intervention by the U.S. in Mexican territory.

The most scandalous aspect of the Justice Department's action is that it maliciously ignores the fact that Mexican authorities had tried to arrest Miguel Aldana for his criminal links to Zorrilla, but had been blocked from doing so by the open interference of the CIA in Aldana's favor! On July 5,

1989, the Mexican Attorney General's office released the confession of drug trafficker and former police chief Rafael Chao, in which it was revealed that Miguel Aldana Ibarra had given Zorrilla approximately \$10 million a month to protect drug shipments from Colombia. Aldana denied the charge, but Attorney General Enrique Alvarez admitted that the charge was being seriously investigated. Every indication was that Aldana would be going to prison.

At that moment, the CIA came to the rescue. On July 30, Aldana Ibarra sponsored a lavish graduation ceremony at which he was to receive an honorary doctorate from Pacific Western University, headquartered in Los Angeles. Aldana received his doctorate from former U.S. ambassador to Mexico Joseph John Jova! The scandal was made worse by the fact that the "university" director was none other than Richard K. Lorden, a notorious CIA agent in Mexico, who praised Aldana's "spotless career."

In the early seventies, Lorden arrived in Mexico from Brazil, to work in the Mexican branch of the P.R. firm Robert Mullen Co., which functioned as a cover for the activities of CIA agent E. Howard Hunt during the dirty tricks that culminated in Watergate. The relationship between the CIA and Mullen Co. was exposed by Gordon Liddy in his book *Will*, (Dell Publishing Co., New York, 1981).

Further, the Mexican offices of Robert Mullen Co. also served as the offices of the Panamerican News Service, which employed CIA propagandist Daniel James. Panamerican was another CIA front. James and Hunt worked together in the disastrous Bay of Pigs affair, and in the 1954 Guatemala coup d'état. Later, and despite these failures, Hunt was rewarded for his services to the CIA by being named its Mexico station chief.