

“the Cali Cartel is dead,” thus proving that he has nothing to do with the cartel. He insisted that any evidence put forth to prove his connections to the Cali Cartel constituted “moral terrorism” against his government.

However, the arrest of Miguel Rodríguez was unable to hide the mounting evidence against Samper. On Aug. 7, a new “narco-cassette” circulated in the press, on which the voice of Samper himself could be heard talking with Elizabeth Montoya de Sarria, wife of Jesús Sarria, a drug trafficker who has been sought by Interpol since early 1993. Sarria and his wife attended Samper’s Aug. 7, 1994 inauguration as special invited guests. Elizabeth de Sarria, in particular, had raised large quantities of money from her friends and acquaintances for Samper.

Between a rock and a hard place

International pressure, especially from the United States and from nationalist civil-military sectors within Colombia, have forced Samper to jail those who financed his campaign, to try thereby to prove that his government is not a narco-government.

The outcome is not yet decided: The Cali Cartel has been seriously wounded, but is by no means dead, as Samper publicly insists. Gilberto, Miguel and Jorge Eliecer Rodríguez Orejuela, José Santacruz Londoño, and their various followers still possess all their vast properties. Nothing has yet been confiscated. They still have at their disposal their army of lawyers and another army of assassins, and they still hope to be judged by the penal code those lawyers wrote.

If Samper changes these conditions which benefit the drug lords, he will have definitively betrayed the traffickers who financed his campaign, but he will have done a great service to his nation, freeing it of the corruption which has been slowly suffocating it.

But even such an action would be no guarantee that he can stay in power much longer. The evidence against Samper is so extensive that covering it up would be like trying to block the sun with one’s thumb.

In 1989, cartel hitmen mistakenly assassinated José Antequera, a leader of the Colombian Communist Party. Samper, who happened to be at the airport, casually chatting with Antequera at the time, was hit by numerous bullets. Miraculously, and with the help of quick medical attention, Samper survived. At the time, a police source told *EIR* that Samper had received a multimillion-dollar indemnification from the drug traders while in Europe, who assured him the bullets were not meant for him.

In Medina’s famous confession, the former Samper treasurer reveals that after having recovered from the incident, Samper went abroad accompanied by the cartel’s Alberto Giraldo, who carried a suitcase stuffed with dollars to pay whatever costs Samper might incur.

It would appear that God spared Samper that day in 1989, in order to face the public scorn his government is now experiencing.

Mexico

Drug trade boomed in Bush-Salinas ‘miracle’

by Carlos Méndez

In a two-part article printed July 30 and 31, the *New York Times* claimed that during President Carlos Salinas’s 1988-94 administration, millions of narco-dollars entered Mexico, that U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration officials reckon that some \$7 billion went into Mexico, and that “American officials say huge amounts of drug money have flowed into Mexico’s tourism, transportation, and construction industries, helping to fuel the speculative rise of the economy until last year.” The article’s author, Tim Golden, also quotes James Moody, an FBI official, who stated “without offering details,” that “many of the state-owned companies privatized under Mr. Salinas had been bought by traffickers.”

The article also documents that the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), pushed by Salinas and then-U.S. President George Bush, was used to restrain anti-drug actions in Mexico. “People desperately wanted drugs not to become a complicating factor for NAFTA. . . . There was a degree of illicit activity that was just accepted,” said John P. Walters, a senior official for international drug policy at the Bush White House. Author Golden also quotes a U.S. official “who dealt extensively with the Mexicans,” according to whom, “Once Salinas and Bush decided to go ahead with NAFTA as their number-one goal, then everything else had to be made manageable. On the issue of high-level officials being involved in drugs, we said, ‘Carlos, as long as we are getting results, we are not going to micromanage.’ ”

What the *New York Times* is now revealing—with what intention we cannot say—*EIR* had already warned about four years ago: “NAFTA will also reorganize the entire Ibero-American banking structure, and thereby create the conditions under which the vast financial flows originating in the Ibero-American drug trade can be more readily laundered into the cash-strapped Anglo-American banking system.” And, “NAFTA’s banking takeover will open up the banking system of the Americas to all sorts of speculative hot money flows—including those of the drug trade. Such activity does not aid production; it destroys it.” (See “Auschwitz Below the Border: Free Trade Pact Is George ‘Hitler’ Bush’s Mexican Holocaust,” May 1, 1991.)

Years later, this *EIR* prognosis was confirmed by one of the main players in the process: Richard Thornburgh, the Attorney General of the United States in the Bush administration, stated cynically that the Justice Department was investi-

gating the Salinas administration from the beginning, because it considered that there were officials in it involved in the drug trade, but that in 1990 things “took an unexpected turn; Salinas said that he wanted to negotiate the Free Trade Agreement and the Bush administration was happy. Salinas at that point became not only the best friend of Bush in Latin America, but the ‘golden model’ for developing countries. Corruption and the war on drugs went into the background” (quoted in *El Financiero*, Mexico City, March 28, 1995.)

Although drug trafficking started to grow at a dizzying pace under President Miguel de la Madrid (1982-88), it was the Salinas-Bush free-trade economic model which pushed the drug trade in Mexico toward its apogee:

- Hot money started to arrive by the truckload and drug-money laundering turned into an everyday affair.

- Overnight, multimillion-dollar fortunes arose, without anyone being able to explain where they came from or how. In statements made to the Mexican magazine *Proceso* (No. 855, March 22, 1993), Manuel Espinosa Yglesias, who was the main stockholder in Banco de Comercio, said, “There is no doubt. In the last six years fortunes have been created in Mexico which are bigger than many in the United States . . .

and they have been created fast.”

- Criminal activity grew, and some high-level officials and many lower-level ones were part of it, to the point of political assassinations, as in the cases of presidential candidate Luis Donaldo Colosio and party Secretary General José Francisco Ruiz Massieu, both of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI)—killings in which the drug mafias very probably took part, as instruments.

- Violent actions were unleashed by narco-terrorist groups clearly tied to the international drug trade, as is the case with the EZLN “liberation army” in Chiapas.

- Deep operational ties were developed between the Mexican cartels and the Cali, Colombia cartel. This went so far that Boeing 727 jets were used to carry drugs from Colombia to Mexico, to be passed on into the United States.

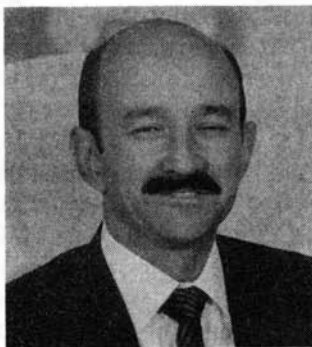
Salinas leaves, and fresh air comes in

With the departure of Salinas de Gortari from the presidency in December 1994, and from the country later, it became possible to reverse all this and rebuild the nation under the new President, Ernesto Zedillo.

- In February 1995, the authorities arrested Raúl Salinas

Carlos Salinas de Gortari

Harvard-trained Carlos Salinas de Gortari became the President of Mexico in 1988, following elections universally viewed as fraudulent. That stain did not prevent him from becoming George Bush’s “golden boy,” however, especially when Salinas made it clear that not only would he continue his predecessor’s free-market proclivities, but that he had every intention of turning Mexico into a continental showcase for the British free-trade “ethic” that Bush embraced.



With the abandonment of nearly all restrictions on foreign involvement in the Mexican economy and banking system, the drug economy that had begun to flourish under President Miguel de la Madrid took off like a rocket. New millionaires began to surface daily, and the corruption spread deep into the ruling institutions. Passage of the Bush-Salinas package known as the North American Free Trade Agreement, dramatically accelerated the process.

Salinas’s rise was accompanied by that of his thuggish brother Raúl, who was given “technical” charge of that vast slush fund known as Pronasol, and rapidly turned it into private fiefdom run by an army of “ex”-communists and “former” terrorists. Through Pronasol, a *Salinista* political machine parallel to the ruling PRI party was created, and money was poured into groups like Peasant Torch, an armed Marxist-Leninist organization with all the characteristics of a “Shining Path North.” It was these networks that provided the support for British intelligence’s Zapatista project in Chiapas, in 1994.

While George Bush was busy holding up Salinas’s “Mexican miracle” as a model for the continent, the narco-terrorist core of that “miracle” was deployed, at the behest of foreign interests behind the Salinas brothers, to assassinate anyone who stood in their way, from Cardinal Juan Jesús Posadas Ocampo to PRI’s presidential candidate Luis Donaldo Colosio and Secretary General José Francisco Ruiz Massieu. When Salinas’s “miracle” collapsed in late 1994, so too did his “golden boy” image. Raúl is today in jail, accused of orchestrating the Ruiz Massieu assassination, and Carlos Salinas is in de facto exile, suspected by the majority of Mexicans of being the mastermind behind the terror. Carlos Salinas’s own incarceration is no longer a question of evidence, but of political will. It is not surprising that his chief defenders abroad have been the *Wall Street Journal*—Salinas is on the board of directors of Dow Jones and Co.—and Alan Stoga of Kissinger Associates.

de Gortari, charging him with being the mastermind of the José Francisco Ruiz Massieu assassination. According to an FBI report, Raúl Salinas had tight relations to Juan García Abrego, the boss of the Gulf Cartel.

- The authorities demanded the extradition of Mario Ruiz Massieu, brother of José Francisco, and deputy attorney general under Salinas, a fugitive in the United States accused of having covered up his brother's murder and of receiving drug money.

- With ups and downs, the investigations into the assassinations of Cardinal Juan Jesús Posadas Ocampo (1993) and Luis Donaldo Colosio (1994) were reopened.

Yet to date, President Zedillo has not dared to challenge the IMF-Salinas-Bush economic model, which is what sank Mexico's physical economy and created the infrastructure in which drug money and drug trafficking flourished.

Even so, what the Zedillo government has already done was enough to send the *Wall Street Journal*, Bush, Henry Kissinger and other international allies of Salinas into hysterics. Alan Stoga, the vice president of Kissinger Associates, said that the investigation into Carlos Salinas was "not serious" (*El Financiero*, June 16, 1995). And as for the trial against Raúl Salinas, Stoga proclaimed that this case would "not get past the first round" in the United States because it "is very weak, it is based 100% on verbal testimony."

The *Wall Street Journal* on various occasions has also come out editorially defending Carlos Salinas, who is now a director of Dow Jones & Co., which publishes the *Journal*. On Aug. 3, the *Journal* had to correct some statements by Mexican Attorney General Antonio Lozano García, which the *Journal* had misquoted to falsely assert that the Attorney General's office had exonerated ex-President Salinas of possible involvement in the Colosio and Ruiz Massieu murders. Lozano categorically denied that his office had done so, and the *Journal* had to admit its lie, noting that "Salinas is a director of Dow Jones & Co., publisher of this newspaper."

But the *Wall Street Journal* and Kissinger want to cover up what everyone already knows. For example, on July 27, Gen. Rosso José Serrano Cadena, director of the National Police of Colombia, stated in Washington, D.C., that during the Carlos Salinas government, Mexico was the "best ally of the [drug] cartels" of Colombia, and that "many" properties and businesses, when privatized, ended up in the drug traffickers' hands. And on July 20, the Mexican magazine *Siempre!* said in its editorial that "Carlos Salinas's partnership with the drug cartels turned him into an economically and even politically very powerful ex-President. Powerful because with the resources of the drug trade itself, terrorist acts can be organized which carry out massacres—like those in Guerrero—to kindle popular unrest and encourage guerrilla wars."

Now, with what has happened in Colombia, Mexico and its government are left with two alternatives: either to finish off this apparatus of the Mexican cartels (Ciudad Juárez, Pacific, and Gulf); or else these cartels will replace the Cali Cartel, with everything that implies.

Venezuela

The dope bankers are on the run

by David Ramonet

"I don't believe that [Colombian] President Samper can be accused of having received drug money for his campaign," former Venezuelan President Carlos Andrés Pérez told IPS news agency on Aug. 5, with all the moral authority derived from being under house arrest for multimillion-dollar corruption crimes. "Because if Colombia goes through a process of institutional destabilization like that Venezuela went through, regional integration will be in danger," added Pérez.

For a fact, Pérez (who is known as "CAP") and his partners—in particular, the now-deceased Pedro Tinoco, Jr., who was president of Venezuela's Central Bank (BCV)—made enormous contributions to the "regional integration" of the drug cartels, with Venezuela playing a special role as a regional money-laundering center. All of this was done in the name of "financial globalization," "open-market economy," and the "democracy" of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Pérez's forced departure from office in May 1993 began to clean the filth out of Venezuela.

According to the United Nations' Drug Council Report of 1992, in the middle of CAP's presidential term, Venezuela was already considered "the most important center of money laundering in Latin America." The same report adds, "the U.S. anti-narcotics agency [Drug Enforcement Administration, DEA] estimates that in 1992, some 200 tons of cocaine passed through the country into the United States, Canada, and Europe." At the time, CAP had hired as his international "anti-drug" adviser the former head of the Colombian political police, Gen. Miguel Maza Márquez, whose name appears on the payroll of the Rodríguez Orejuela brothers, according to the most recent revelations from Colombia.

CAP left the handling of the Venezuelan economy entirely up to Tinoco, who left the presidency of Banco Latino in February 1989 to take up the presidency of the BCV. Before that, he had been president of the CADA supermarket chain, owned by the Cisneros group headed by television magnate Gustavo Cisneros Rendiles. Tinoco and CAP imposed a brutal austerity package in 1989, whose key feature was a "financial reform" and Decree 727, which allowed "foreign investment" to operate without special permission in nearly every field of activity. This turned Venezuela into the sewer of the entire Andean-Caribbean region, as drug money was permitted to freely circulate. The Venezuelan banking system, with Tinoco and the Cisneros at its head, entered into a speculative euphoria of