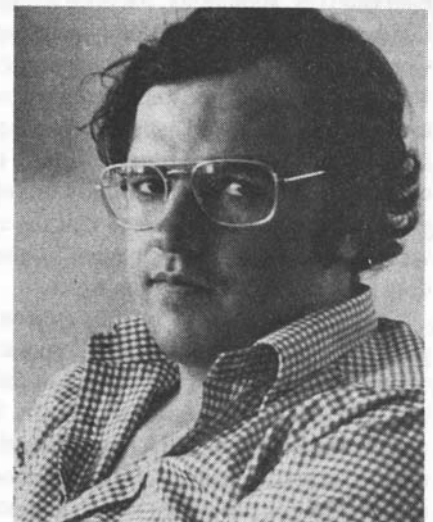




Alfonso López Michelsen



Jaime Michelsen Uribe



Ernesto Samper Pizano

## The Colombia-U.S. drug mafia: a dossier of LaRouche's enemies

*Colombia's drug trade has flourished under the protection of top-level financiers and politicians who are interlinked with the international dope lobby, yet who have escaped any prosecution. The Colombian Anti-Drug Coalition's exposure of these men, and the war on the drug mafia being waged by the government of President Belisario Betancur, however, are now placing these "citizens above suspicion" under fire. We present here dossiers on the key personnel.*

### Alfonso López Michelsen

As President of Colombia from 1974 to 1978, López Michelsen oversaw the mushrooming of drug production in Colombia, as dope came to replace coffee as the country's main export. These were the years of rapid growth in U.S. drug consumption, given impetus by the Carter administration and the successful crackdown against drugs in Mexico that spurred many drug runners to move operations to Colombia. During his presidency, López Michelsen:

- "reformed" Colombian banking and financial regulations to pave the way for drug-laundering operations and related financial speculation;
- directed Finance Minister Rodrigo Botero Montoya to set up a *Ventanilla Siniestra* ("Black Market Window") at

the Central Bank, to bring drug dollars into the above-ground money flows, with "no questions asked." This window was shut as one of the first acts of office of current President Belisario Betancur. López Michelsen's Liberal Party allies based in the drug-infested Antioquia region now demand reopening of the *Ventanilla Siniestra* as their condition for supporting Betancur's efforts to overcome Colombia's financial emergency;

- followed an avowedly Friedmanite "anti-inflation" financial policy which choked off the growth of legitimate business and investment in new production;
- handed lucrative government concessions and privileges to cousin **Jaime Michelsen Uribe** (see below). Journalist Jorge Child on July 31 wrote that López Michelsen, on becoming President in 1974, "placed his assets under the trusteeship of his cousin, Jaime Michelsen, who multiplied his wealth, thanks to López's financial decrees and hot money from the underground economy."

In 1981 López Michelsen suddenly re-emerged to capture the Liberal Party nomination for President. His campaign was financed by his own immense fortune and by:

- **Carlos Lehder**—One of the richest and most flamboyant of Colombia's dope czars, a fugitive from both Colom-

bian and U.S. authorities. An open admirer of Hitler, Carlos Lehder is a sponsor of a Colombian transplant of the German Green Party, and a partner of dope-lobby financier Robert Vesco in Caribbean operations; he gave over 20 million pesos to the López Michelsen campaign in a meeting in a Medellín hotel with **Ernesto Samper Pizano**, López Michelsen's campaign manager, and **Santiago Londoño White**, the campaign treasurer. Lehder stated that the clear understanding was that this was a down payment for the legalization of the drug trade if López Michelsen won.

- **Félix Correa Maya**—Sits atop an empire of 56 companies and banks, including the Corporación Financiera Antioqueña, founded in 1977 to exploit the loopholes granted by López Michelsen's financial reforms. U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) files show that Correa built this empire, centered on his 1978 acquisition, the **Grupo Colombia**, through deals with top drug figures.

- **Jaime Michelsen Uribe**—The President's cousin had established a beachhead in Miami banking, parallel to that of Correa Maya and **Alberto Duque**. Duque was indicted for his involvement in drug traffic in 1983; his father, coffee magnate **Luis Duque Peña**, was campaign manager for López Michelsen at earlier points in López's career.

**Cuba connection**—López Michelsen established close ties with **Fidel Castro** and existentialist novelist **Gabriel García Márquez** during his 1982 presidential bid. Castro-intimate García Márquez campaigned extensively for Michelsen. In April 1981, García Márquez exhorted Colombians to be "proud" that their country was becoming a drug-growing haven. López Michelsen in December 1983 acted as an intermediary to Castro in negotiating the release of President Betancur's brother, Jaime Betancur Cuartas, who had been kidnapped by a drug-linked guerrilla band.

## Jaime Michelsen Uribe

The financial godfather of the drug economy, Michelsen Uribe, in 1972 engineered a merger, creating **Grupo Grancolombiano**, the most powerful financial conglomerate on the scene. Cousin López Michelsen invested his personal fortune in Grancolombiano, and, as President, steered control over special government trusts to the group, giving it close to a monopoly over the Colombian financial markets just as the drug bonanza hit.

Michelsen Uribe told *El Tiempo* in May 1981 that **Ernesto Samper Pizano's** drug legalization proposals (see below) are "eminently respectable, . . . perhaps a solution to the problem." The "hot money" from the illicit drug trade has "been of use to the country, directed into poles of development, . . . and offered solutions to people who might otherwise not have had them."

Highlights of Michelsen Uribe's recent career:

- From 1974-1976, assets of the Banco de Colombia and affiliated Grupo Grancolombiano institutions surged ahead;

during the first six months of 1976 alone, assets of the core institution of the Grupo Colombiano, the Banco de Colombia, tripled.

- In the same years, Michelsen Uribe initiated money-laundering operations in Panama, opened up for hot money transactions by **Nicolás Ardito Barletta**. By 1980, Michelsen's Banco de Colombia Panamá had assets of \$584 million.

- In 1982, he seized control of Colombia's Organizing Committee for the World Cup Soccer Matches to be held in Colombia in 1986. Michelsen Uribe coordinated with **Henry Kissinger**, of the international soccer federation. But in 1982, President Belisario Betancur decided that Colombia could not afford to host the championships. In September 1983, Justice Minister Rodrigo Lara Bonilla exposed the Colombian soccer franchises as major conduits for dope transactions and drug money laundering.

- In August 1982, Betancur revived investigations against the Grupo Grancolombiano for stock swindling and other financial manipulation. He confronted Michelsen Uribe with the evidence in a dramatic personal meeting on Dec. 31, 1983; Michelsen Uribe decided to flee the country rather than face the charges. Within a week, 11 of his henchmen were in jail. Using *El Tiempo* and *Radio Caracol* as his media channels, he launched repeated broadsides against Betancur.

## Ernesto Samper Pizano

Scion of one of Colombia's oldest monied families, Samper launched an international campaign in 1978 for the legalization of narcotic drugs. The drive was conducted under his direction by the **National Association of Financial Institutions (ANIF)**, the banking lobby-group which was an offspring of Jaime Michelsen Uribe's **Grupo Grancolombiano**. Michelsen Uribe served alternately as member and chairman of the ANIF board of directors.

On March 15-16, 1979, Samper Pizano sponsored an international symposium in Bogotá, titled "Marijuana: Myth and Reality." Among those present were: Colombian Attorney General **Guillermo González Charry**; U.S. Ambassador **Diego Asencio**; White House drug adviser **Lee Dogoloff**; spokesmen of the U.S.-based **National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML)** and *High Times*, the U.S. dopers' magazine. *High Times* quoted Samper Pizano arguing that only legalization of marijuana could prevent the country being turned into a police state ruled by the iron hand of the military and the mafia.

In July 1979, Samper Pizano came to the United States for a several-months-long trip that he described as combining economic research activities and lobbying activities on behalf of his proposal to legalize the marijuana trade.

In an interview made available to NSIPS in July 1979, Samper called for legalization of marijuana in both Colombia and the United States. To sell his plan, he said he was going to meet with congressmen, other officials of government,

and private organizations. Samper Pizano described the support for his legalization effort from the Carter administration's representative to the Inter-American Development Bank, **Ralph Duncan**, whom he met at the bank's Washington, D.C., offices on July 3, 1979.

In 1980, a 14-page pamphlet appeared in English under the title "A Proposal to Legalize Marijuana." It was authored by Ernesto Samper Pizano and published under the auspices of ANIF.

In 1980, Samper Pizano left his position as president of ANIF to become director of the Liberal Party, a post he was given by former President Alfonso López Michelsen. He went on to become the campaign coordinator of the López Michelsen 1982 presidential campaign.

### **Samper Pizano and the U.S. dope lobby**

Samper Pizano was a member of the executive council of the **International Cannabis Alliance for Reform (ICAR)** and was quoted in the ICAR publication calling for the United States to recognize the legitimacy of Colombian marijuana exports. ICAR's roster of members and supporters reads like a *Who's Who* of the dope counterculture and terrorist-linked radical groups, among them the Ethiopian Coptic Church, the Italian Radical Party, the Legalize Cannabis Campaign of Great Britain, and the West German Initiative for Hashish Legalization (InHaLe), which was founded by the U.S.-based NORML in 1974 and has the same lawyers who have defended the terrorist Baader-Meinhof gang.

Other assets ICAR could claim were high-placed appointees of the Carter-Mondale administration, Mathea Falco and Dr. Peter Bourne.

**Mathea Falco** was a member of the advisory board of NORML. She was appointed to head the State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics Matters and provided an "open door" to ICAR as well as to Samper Pizano during his tour of the United States. In fall 1980, Falco had meetings with ICAR's international director Robert Pisani; the topic was the legalization of marijuana.

**Dr. Peter Bourne**, Carter's designated "drug czar," was forced to resign his White House position as head of the Office of Drug Abuse Policy after he was caught red-handed writing phony prescriptions for Quaaludes for a fellow employee. Bourne also served as the Carter family psychiatrist and played a crucial role in the Soviet scheme to make the Caribbean island of Grenada a base for terrorist and military operations in 1983. Involved along with Bourne were his father, **Dr. Geoffrey Bourne**, a former Carter adviser and vice-chancellor of the St. George's Medical School in Grenada, and **Robert Pastor**, an adviser to Democratic Party presidential candidate Walter Mondale who had previously served as Latin American affairs specialist for the National Security Council under Carter.

NORML is a member organization of ICAR, and *High*

*Times* is an avid supporter of its work. These institutions provide a crucial link between the U.S. drug traffickers and the terrorist Youth International Party ("Yippies").

### **The drug lobby vs. LaRouche**

These organizations are the footsoldiers in the dope lobby's war against Lyndon H. LaRouche and the Anti-Drug Coalitions which his associates founded on three continents. The Yippies, as well as *High Times* (whose early writers included anti-LaRouche fanatics **Dennis King**, **Chip Berlet**, and **Mark Nykannon**), have since the inception of the Anti-Drug Coalition used every means available to slander, libel, and directly threaten the ADC and its leadership.

*High Times* wrote an attack on the ADC in May 1981, under the headline, "They Want to Take Your Drugs Away": "It sounds like a nightmare experienced by an overly paranoid dealer: a national 'war on drugs.' . . . It's real, however, and it's called the National Anti-Drug Coalition."

Earlier this year, the National Broadcasting Corporation televised a 20-minute slander against then-Democratic Party presidential candidate Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., in which many of the primary sources were the above-named editors and writers for *High Times* and other publicists for drug legalization. That slander, aired on the "First Camera" program, is the subject of a \$150 million libel action.

These operations against LaRouche and the ADC are controlled from the top by the **Anti-Defamation League of B'Nai B'Rith**. Sources within the U.S. intelligence community have relayed information that the ADL's Fact Finding Division, headed by **Irwin Suall**, functions as a control point over the New York-based dope lobby assets, including the Yippies, the Communist Workers Party, the Jewish Defense League, and the Revolutionary Communist Party. Suall appeared on the NBC program to denounce LaRouche as "an American Hitler."

On a higher level is the ADL's involvement with such money-laundering and drug-trafficking operatives as **Robert Vesco** and **David Graiver**, and such institutions as the Sterling National Bank. Vesco is a business partner of Colombian cocaine kingpin **Carlos Lehder**, who is a fugitive from a drug trafficking indictment in Colombia, and who was a big funder, via Samper Pizano, of **López Michelsen's** 1982 presidential bid.

Shortly before the abduction of Patricia Paredes de Londoño, the Yippies launched an open attack against the Andean Labor Party (PLAN) in Colombia, of which she is a member. The July 1984 edition of their newspaper *Overthrow* issued the wild charge that the PLAN was financed by drug traffickers and that the DEA had tried to start an investigation into those connections but was blocked by pressure from the White House. These libels paralleled charges in the Colombian press against top officials of the Betancur government.