

anti-drug struggle, despite all these threats we will never capitulate but will follow through in the full conviction that it is not the responsibility of one minister, one person, but a responsibility of the Venezuelan state to fight against drugs.

EIR: Many things have been mentioned, such as eradication of crops, prevention of consumption, but one point is seldom mentioned, which is how to stop the flow of drug traffic monies, since if the dope mob lacked the ability to hide these monies, business couldn't function. We think there is a certain complicity of the banks, both at the national and international level, to protect the names of the accounts and the origin of the money. What do you think?

Sgambatti: An interesting question. We spoke initially of the Venezuelan position of seeking the unification of our legal instruments to act in concert, as one man. One of the important things was not just facilitating extradition, but also easing the confiscation of wealth belonging to drug dealers, and, of course, within that wealth, investigation of money. That includes going much further and changing, modifying the burden of proof, not waiting until the definitive sentencing, but instead, if they have a flow of money whose provenance they cannot explain, they have to explain where it came from and, in the meantime, the state or the judicial branch will seize all the wealth they have illicitly acquired. This would be an emphatic and intimidating decision.

EIR: And in respect to economic policies, don't you think that, for example, the International Monetary Fund by applying its conditions to certain countries, in a sense, affects the real economy, but also forces the drug traffic to appear to be a possible economic option?

Sgambatti: No, I don't think so. I simply believe that obviously the drug trafficking problem is a problem of a transnational entity without scruples, without morality, without ethics, which not only targets the psychological health of a country, but also the institutions, the state, which it wants to subjugate. Therefore I think that the government as such, and each of our governments of this Andean Pact, all have to help each other, and cooperate to combat, destroy, attack at the very heart those individuals who degrade the human being.

EIR: There have been some politicians who have been benevolent about having a dialogue with known traffickers or, as in the case of Colombia, Ernest Samper Pizano, who was the secretary of Lopez Michelsen's presidential bid in the past elections, conducted a campaign favoring the legalization of marijuana. Don't you think that this type of attitude favors the growth of drug trafficking and means that the drug mob is starting to get political back-up?

Sgambatti: I think as an official of the Venezuelan executive, which simply has to do with fighting drugs, and must carry out a war without quarter, without looking over our shoulders, and never, never can be an interlocutor [of the drug traffickers].

Behind Mexico's big

by Josefina Menéndez

In a historically unprecedented crackdown against the drug mafia in Mexico the week of Nov. 8-15, federal agents backed by Mexican army troops uncovered and destroyed numerous fields and depots where the production, processing, and packaging of some 9,000 tons of marijuana and poppy were ongoing. The estimated value of the captured drugs on the black market, according to the Mexican authorities, was as much as \$10 billion. "Operation Pacific," as the anti-drug drive has been dubbed, was carried out in several different municipalities in the state of Chihuahua, located in northern Mexico, whose principal political controller is the National Action Party, or PAN.

Thanks to the vast proceeds from the illegal operations in its bastion, the PAN succeeded last year in "winning" elections in five municipalities of the state, including the border enclave and capital, Ciudad Juárez.

Confidential reports from the states of Chihuahua, Sonora, Nuevo León and Sinaloa, reveal that with Operation Pacific, the PAN has virtually lost the congressional and municipal elections scheduled to be held nationwide next year, in view of the billions of dirty dollars that would have gone to finance their electoral campaigns but which instead went up in smoke. Additional rumors that have begun to circulate are claiming that prominent political figures not only from Chihuahua but from neighboring states as well have been identified as up to their necks in the massive drug operations uncovered.

The three most important drug complexes discovered in the vicinities of Ciudad Jiménez, Ciudad Camargo and Ciudad Delicias—cities not unexpectedly controlled lock, stock and barrel by the PAN—are El Búfalo, with 4,000 tons of marijuana; Sierra del Chilicote, where another 4,000 tons were discovered, and Julimex, with 1,000 tons. Each drug depot was in the midst of a vast concentration camp.

Buried within the Sierra mountains, the drug fields and processing facilities were discovered to have some of the most modern installations available to agriculture generally. Once dried, processed and packaged, the drugs departed for the U.S. in giant trailers, primarily along the Ojinaga and Ciudad Juárez highways which border on the state of Texas. Trucks abandoned at the drug centers were found to carry Texas and Arizona license plates.

Like Nazi concentration camps

The thousands of peasants—men, women, and children—lured to work in the drug camps from around the

narcotics bust

country, had been submitted to levels of exploitation worthy of Hitler's Auschwitz. The peasants were forced to work as much as 16 hours of slave labor a day, without any pay, with mere crusts of bread and beans for food, and a vile bed of marijuana leaves to sleep upon at night. Hundreds reportedly died victims of malnutrition, some of tuberculosis due to inhalation of the drug, and many others from the violent treatment they suffered at the hands of the camp guards. Several trenches were uncovered with dozens of corpses of the peasants who died at the hands of the drug mafia.

The Mexican authorities estimate that more than five thousand peasants labored in these camps, at least half of whom are currently wandering lost in the Sierra Madre, terrorized by the police searches. Several government institutions have been mobilized to locate these pathetic souls and return them to their homes before they die of cold in the gigantic Chihuahua mountain chains. The authorities have also declared that criminal responsibility for the illegal drug operations will not fall upon these desperate fugitives, but upon the owners of the camps, the most important of which unfortunately are already fled into clandestinity.

PLM charges confirmed

With this clean-up operation in the stronghold of the PAN, the charges which the Mexican Labor Party (PLM) has sustained for more than a year against the "party of drugs" have been more than confirmed. As this publication has detailed on several occasions (see *EIR*, March 6, 1984) the PAN is anti-constitutional because it sponsors drug trafficking and similar illegal activities, and because it defends the genocidal austerity policies of the International Monetary Fund.

It was precisely these charges which formed the basis of the campaign the PLM ran in the 1983 elections in Baja California Norte, Sinaloa, Puebla and Tamaulipas, where the PAN had hoped to capture several mayoralties. When it was clearly demonstrated—with abundant and documented proof—that the PAN was illegal, that it received money from the U.S. FBI, the U.S. State Department and from the illegal drug trade, its defeat was overwhelming. More than one year later, and only three days before the federal authorities dealt this devastating blow to the mafia, the PLM crowned its mobilization by nationally distributing more than 300,000 leaflets against the PAN.

An excerpt from that leaflet reads as follows:

"The contrabanded weapons that are arriving in Mexico

to set off the violence which the PAN has threatened, are coming from the international drug mafia. In the northwest of the country, the most violent and radical PANistas are those who are directly tied into the drug trade, as in the case of Manuel J. Clouthier who unashamedly aspires to the governorship of Sinaloa despite the fact that in 1978 a warehouse of his was discovered filled with marijuana. Similarly, in Sonora, the PAN godfather Agustín 'Chato' Antúnes, who has been convicted of crimes against the public health, contraband, and who openly promotes the export of drugs, actively supports the candidacy of PANista Adalberto Rosas López for the governorship of that state.

"Recently, the PAN mayor of San Luís Rio Colorado, Sonora, Fausto Ochoa Medina, was exposed for hiding in his home his son-in-law Arturo Viveros Monge, who belongs to the most powerful drug trafficking bands in the region and was being sought for a double murder.

"The forces that back the PAN internationally are the same Sinarquist international network which controls the pseudo-Catholic sect Tradition, Family and Property (TFP), which has just been banned by the government of Venezuela for violating that country's constitution and for suspected conspiracy to assassinate Pope John Paul II. It is also the same network which controls the Universal Christian Gnostic Church of Colombia, whose political godfather, ex-President Alfonso López Michelsen, is committed to converting that country into an enormous marijuana and coca plantation to pay the foreign debt. It is the same network which controls the Maoist terrorist gang Shining Path of Peru, which is intimately linked to the cocaine mafia of that country."

PAN status in question

The mass circulation of this leaflet, which was also reproduced in the majority of the state newspapers in the north, center and south of Mexico, as well as by radio and even on television, created a nationwide environment in which the population began to openly identify the PAN with the Nazi policies they practice and advocate, and with the drug trade. It was in the midst of this political ferment that the giant drug busts were carried out. Now the population is awaiting the second phase: The withdrawal of the PAN's registration as a political party.

Not surprisingly, one of the most prominent leaders of the PAN, Jose Angel Conchello, has publicly associated himself with the theories of Hitler's economics minister, Hjalmar Schacht, who viewed slave labor as simply one more means of raising production levels in the short run. Similarly, the PAN has consistently defended the thesis of the IMF and of Milton Friedman that the foreign debt should be paid with the sale of drugs. It is no accident that the famous television news broadcaster and PANista Jacobo Zabłudowsky of "24 Hours" could scarcely contain his rage in reporting that the Mexican authorities had burned \$10 billion worth of drugs. Perhaps he was thinking of where his next paycheck would come from.