

# Venezuelans protest Cisneros-Playboy porn

by Alejandro Peña Esclusa

The news that Playboy Enterprises and the Cisneros Group plan to launch two new television channels dedicated to erotic programming, in Venezuela and the Ibero-American market more broadly, has provoked outrage throughout Venezuela.

An open letter from several Catholic bishops, addressed to Minister of Transportation and Communications Moisés Orozco Graterol, is now circulating within the Catholic Church. The letter reminds the minister that the establishment of these pornographic channels would violate the Constitution.

“Never before in Venezuela, had anyone dared to so openly promote pornography, and, if we allow this initiative to stand, it will merely be the beginning of the road toward the degradation of the entire nation,” the letter reads. “In the midst of the grave economic and moral crisis which our country faces, what we need is to return to a culture based on the love of God, the love of country, and the love of family, to find the strength needed to begin a national reconstruction. A counterculture based on pornography, materialism, and hedonism, such as that promoted by Playboy, would only ensure the definitive destruction of our country.”

“For all these reasons, we . . . request that you prohibit transmission of these two new channels, as also any other similar initiative,” the bishops state.

The Cisneros Group has already earned a bad reputation in Venezuela and Ibero-America, because of the questionable methods and thug tactics its empire of easy money employs. In 1985, Gustavo Cisneros obtained a court order prohibiting circulation in Venezuela of *EIR*'s book *Dope, Inc.*, because the book documents his family's ties to drug-money-laundering interests.

Similarly, this author was hit with a criminal suit in 1994, for the sole act of having requested that government authorities fully investigate the role which the Cisneros family played in the illegal financial transactions of the bankrupt Banco Latino, including possible money-laundering. Months later, Ricardo Cisneros was charged in the Banco Latino case, and fled the country to avoid being jailed.

But, luck has begun to shine on the Cisneros family again. They recently succeeded in getting prosecutors to annul the case against Ricardo Cisneros. Venezuela's President Rafael

Caldera capitulated to the neo-liberal (i.e., free trade) economic policies of the International Monetary Fund, which the Cisneroses and their international allies have promoted for years, and the Cisneroses clearly feel that they can now act with impunity. Thus, the brazen alliance with the perverts of Playboy Enterprises.

## Playboy's history

Given his background, Cisneros was the perfect partner—financially and morally—for the Playboy crew.

As I explained in an article in *Ultimas Noticias*, Venezuela's largest circulation daily, on Oct. 18: “Playboy is not merely a company dedicated to disseminating erotism, the which in itself is sufficiently serious; it is an evil organization that openly promotes drugs, homosexuality, and atheism.” That is, it is spearheading the cultural warfare of the British-spawned “New Age” against the values that sustain the nation-state.

Playboy not only has given millions of dollars to the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws, *High Times* magazine, and other organizations dedicated to promoting the consumption of marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, but in the 1970s, *Playboy* magazine itself launched an effort to legalize cocaine consumption, and put up a team of lawyers to defend those accused of consuming illegal drugs.

And not only drugs. Playboy financed the Sexual Information and Education Council of the United States, which promotes masturbation and homosexuality as “valid sexual alternatives.” Hugh Hefner, founder of Playboy and now partner of Gustavo Cisneros, boasts of having practiced homosexuality.

## Seeking a ‘Catholic’ cover

In an act of unalloyed cynicism, even as they were negotiating their partnership with Playboy's Hefner, but before the deal was made public, the Cisneroses invited President Caldera, a staunch conservative, and Ignacio Velasco, the archbishop of Caracas, to bless the very DIRECTTV facilities from which they intend to transmit their pornography.

Now, Banco Mercantil has issued a special credit card, Visa-DIRECTTV, to make it easier for viewers to sign up for the new pornographic service. Mercantil has traditionally been associated with the Vollmer family, old rivals of the Cisneroses.

Ironically, Alberto Vollmer is Venezuela's ambassador to the Vatican, while his wife Cristine heads a pro-life movement closely tied to the Catholic Church. It is not clear whether the Vollmers are unaware of the fact that DIRECTTV is to transmit the Cisneros-Playboy porn channels, or, if it is because the Vollmers are influenced by the University of Chicago's drug-legalization advocate and monetarist economist Gary Becker, whom they have been promoting within the Catholic Church internationally, that they decided to look the other way.