

## Andean Report by Cynthia Rush

### Cisneros clan suffers setback

*The "Bronfmans" of Venezuela are destabilized by losing their bid on the state telecommunications company.*

Venezuela's powerful Cisneros family, intimates of Henry Kissinger and Rockefeller interests, is said to be shaken up by the recent loss of its bid for CANTV, the state-owned telecommunications monopoly undergoing privatization. It had been assumed that the Cisneroses would get the bid, but when the envelopes were opened Nov. 15, their consortium—which included Bell Atlantic and its Canadian subsidiary—fell far short of the offer made by a consortium made up of the Spanish telephone company, AT&T, GTE, and Banco Mercantil, owned by the wealthy Volmer family interests. The latter group offered \$1.9 million, as opposed to the Cisneroses' \$1.4 million bid for 40% of CANTV stock.

The daily *El Universal* reported on Nov. 16 that when business magnate Gustavo Cisneros realized he had lost the bid, he "turned white" and mechanically went over to congratulate the winners, while repeating that "Venezuela won, Venezuela won."

Given its wealth and power, this was not the result the family had expected. Just a few days before, Gustavo Cisneros had met with President Carlos Andrés Pérez and Bell Atlantic officials, which was taken as a sign that the CANTV deal had been clinched. Some local media and political groups had fiercely opposed the Cisneros bid, warning that if the family won, it would create a private monopoly in the strategically important national telecommunications sector that could have grave national security implications. However, last-minute changes in the concession agreement were thought to have mol-

lified the opposition.

The Cisneroses also put tremendous effort into a high-profile campaign against the Venezuelan Labor Party (PLV), not only because it opposed their CANTV bid, but because it is demanding the lifting of the ban on the book *Narcotráfico, SA*, the Spanish-language version of the best-seller *Dope, Inc.*, which the Cisneroses ordered banned in Venezuela in 1985. Information has recently surfaced confirming allegations made by *Narcotráfico, SA* regarding the family's ties into Cuban exile circles involved in drug trafficking and money laundering. The PLV is asking that the unconstitutional ban on the book be lifted.

*Narcotráfico, SA* refers to the Cisneroses as the "Bronfmans of Venezuela," because the family's ties to organized crime-linked and drug money-laundering circles are as unsavory as those of their Canadian counterparts. By publicly allying with the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith (ADL) in the current campaign to slander both the PLV and U.S. political prisoner Lyndon LaRouche—who commissioned the writing of *Dope, Inc.*—the Cisneroses have virtually confirmed the charges made against them by *Narcotráfico, SA* and others.

Using its hireling Congressman Gastón Guisandes as a front, the family has joined with the ADL's Jerkow Institute for Latin America, and circulated pamphlets and put out newspaper ads and other "anonymous" material attacking the PLV and LaRouche. This has gone to such an extreme that,

in his latest ad, Guisandes made the libelous charge that LaRouche is a drug trafficker. With the loss of the CANTV bid, it would appear that not only has the Cisneros slander campaign failed, but the family is now very much on the defensive.

They were certainly hurt by a hard-hitting PLV ad exposing the ADL's filthy history which appeared in two Caracas dailies on Nov. 14, and in the English-language *Daily Journal* the next day. Headlined "The Authentic Connection to Narco-Laundering," the ad referred to the anti-LaRouche pamphlet put out by Guisandes and the Jerkow Institute and explained that since Prohibition, the ADL has been tied to bootleggers and, later, drug-runners. Under the false pretext of defending Jewish concerns, the ad asserted, the ADL attacks as "anti-Semites" anyone who opposes its shady interests. It detailed the ADL's links to gangster Meyer Lansky, fugitive financier Robert Vesco, and his buddy, Colombian drug kingpin Carlos Lehder.

Moreover, the PLV reported that "the ADL serves all intelligence services equally; it is implicated in the scandal of the Israeli spy Jonathan Pollard in the United States, whose information also reached the Soviet KGB. At the same time, Mrs. Mira Lansky Boland, an ADL official (and author of the pamphlet against the PLV), recently admitted that she was employed by the United States CIA." The ad called on Venezuela's attorney general to investigate the links between the ADL and the Cisneros group, to determine whether Venezuelan laws have been violated. *EIR* has also learned that leaders of the local B'nai B'rith chapter, along with those of other Jewish organizations, marched off to meet with editors of the daily *El Nacional* to pressure it into not publishing the PLV ad.