

## Foreign backers of Colombia narco power-grab exposed

by Valerie Rush and Javier Almario

The spectacular arrest on Nov. 18 in Medellín, Colombia of Werner Mauss, a shadowy “private detective” with long-standing and high-level connections to the German government in Bonn, has exposed an international network that operates outside the law of sovereign nations, and is responsible for multiple narco-terrorist operations worldwide, designed to destroy nation-states and impose one-world imperial rule.

The Mauss scandal, as it has unfolded in Colombia, lays bare clandestine efforts by that country’s Samper Pizano narco-government to cement a power-sharing pact with a narco-terrorist army that has come to be known as the “Third Cartel,” through contacts that run directly into the highest offices of the German government.

Narco-President Ernesto Samper Pizano’s plot to hold secret negotiations with the narco-terrorists, mediated through the offices of the German government, are part of his repeated efforts to make an “end run” around the Clinton administration’s hard-line campaign against the Colombian drug cartels, by building up a Europe-centered base of support for his corrupt regime. Samper has worked especially closely with the British government and British business circles, and with President Jacques Chirac in France, to try to break out of the containment imposed by President William Clinton, through his administration’s “decertification” of the Samper regime in March of this year, followed by the July 11 withdrawal of Samper’s U.S. entrance visa, because of his links to the drug cartels.

Mauss, along with a female accomplice believed to be his wife, was apprehended at Medellín’s Río Negro Airport, trying to smuggle out of the country one Brigitte Schoene, a

German national and wife of the former director of BASF Chemical in Colombia, who had been kidnapped three months earlier by Colombia’s narco-terrorist National Liberation Army (ELN). Mauss, who was using the name Norbert Schroder at the time, claimed that he was on a “humanitarian mission.” Several days after his arrest, the German government officially acknowledged that it had supported Mauss’s “humanitarian mission” all along, and has since indicated that it will officially intervene to seek his release.

### The Mauss trap

When he was arrested, Mauss was not only in possession of three separate official German passports, but also documents from the German embassy in Bogotá, authorized by Germany’s Assistant Foreign Minister Peter Hartmann, asking Colombian authorities to provide Mauss any assistance necessary for him to carry out his “humanitarian mission”—which presumably explains the Colombian gun permit he was also carrying. Mauss had just delivered somewhere between \$1 and \$2 million in ransom money to the ELN, in exchange for their captive. The money had been flown in a diplomatic suitcase directly from Bonn to the German embassy in Bogotá.

Also found on Mauss’s person at the time of his arrest, were documents linking him to several Colombian individuals who had negotiated the generous donations made by Colombia’s top drug-trafficking cartel to the Presidential campaign of Samper Pizano. Among them are Interior Minister Horacio Serpa Uribe, whom various intelligence sources have identified as one of the leaders of the ELN, his cousin Jorge

Serpa, who worked as an adviser to Colombia's National Civil Registry until the scandal broke, and former Colombian Sen. Eduardo Mestre Sarmiento, currently in jail on charges of taking money from the drug cartel.

According to Colombian authorities, Mauss and his wife—under a multitude of aliases—had entered Colombia repeatedly in recent years, to negotiate multimillion-dollar ransoms for a number of ELN kidnap victims. Film footage taken by *Der Spiegel* journalists who accompanied Mauss on such a mission in November 1995, show the ELN kidnapers warmly greeting Mauss and his wife, and saying farewell, “until the next time.” In the case of Brigitte Schoene, Mauss's arrival in Colombia had sabotaged ongoing negotiations by local Colombian authorities on her family's behalf, around a \$100,000 ransom offer.

### **Negotiations sabotaged**

Antioquia Gov. Alvaro Uribe Velez, who ordered Mauss's arrest, told the media that Mauss's modus operandi in ransoming ELN kidnap victims had consistently sabotaged legitimate negotiating channels and driven up the ransoms. Mauss and wife have since been charged by Colombian authorities with complicity in the Schoene kidnapping.

Was Mauss performing a humanitarian service, paying a kidnap ransom and taking the victim back to her husband and five-year-old son, as both he and the German government claim? Or, as Governor Uribe Velez and others are charging, is Mauss a long-term collaborator of the narco-terrorist ELN, serving as their negotiator and ransom-collector, and, possibly, as the financial manager for the ELN's millions in ransoms banked abroad? And, if Mauss is, indeed, working for the narco-terrorists, what was he doing in a meeting between Colombian Interior Minister Serpa Uribe and German national security head Bernd Schmidbauer in Bonn last July, a meeting that laid the groundwork for “peace talks” between the Samper government and Mauss's narco-terrorist friends?

Although the evidence strongly suggests that Mauss functions as the ELN's international agent, and is the individual who provided the ELN with sophisticated satellite technology for kidnapping and negotiating ransoms, the reality is that the ELN is but one of many instruments of Mauss's one-worldist sponsors, as is Mauss himself, in this case deployed against Colombia's national sovereignty.

### **‘An ELN confidant’**

Mauss, who has worked in the so-called “gray zone” (i.e., unofficially) for various German intelligence agencies for several decades, first appeared in Colombia in 1983, when he helped negotiate a “security pact” between the German construction firm Mannesmann A.G., which had been sub-contracted by Occidental Petroleum to build the country's Caño Limón-Coveñas oil pipeline, and the Cuba-spawned

ELN, whose efforts at the time were largely dedicated to kidnapping engineering personnel for ransom, and sabotaging the pipeline construction effort.

As a result of the pact Mauss negotiated, the ELN received a lump sum payment of \$4 million, and monthly stipends (the ELN called them “war taxes”) to the tune of \$200,000. Mauss, of course, collected a hefty commission for his services. When the story broke in the press in July 1985, Occidental Petroleum's Armand Hammer told the *Wall Street Journal*, “We are giving jobs to the ELN. We give them work as suppliers, and we take responsibility for the local population. It has functioned until now, and they in turn protect us from other guerrillas.”

Offers from the local military units to provide security to the construction facility were explicitly rejected by Mannesmann and Occidental as “inadequate.”

As it turned out, Occidental and Mannesmann were not paying protection money to forestall attacks against their operations, but were providing outright financing to the ELN terrorists to go on blackmailing the Colombian state and destroying Colombia's energy infrastructure. Between 1985 and December 1987, assaults on Colombian oil and gas installations dramatically increased, totalling more than 120! And the rate of attacks has continued to increase, to this day. This “liberation army,” which was repeatedly caught trafficking in marijuana and cocaine throughout that period, has since joined forces with the Communist Party-linked FARC narco-guerrillas, i.e., the “Third Cartel,” for its expansion into the production and trafficking of both cocaine and heroin.

As the Colombian daily *El Espectador* put it, “Werner Mauss came to Colombia in 1983 as a ‘problem solver’ for the builder of the Caño Limón-Coveñas pipeline, and established himself as the ELN's financial ‘resuscitator.’” The daily *El Tiempo* adds that the millions Mauss negotiated for the ELN “enabled the guerrilla group to grow throughout the country, and to become one of the most dangerous. From that time onward, according to authorities, the German became an ELN confidant.”

### **Other illegal activities**

Mauss also played a key role in facilitating Mannesmann's illegal import of equipment and personnel that were prohibited in its contract; in this, he worked hand-in-hand with Colombia's then-Deputy Attorney General Jaime Hernández Salazar, whose Bogotá home became Mauss's base of operations. Hernández, now deceased, became infamous in mid-1984, just after the cartel assassination of Justice Minister Rodrigo Lara Bonilla, when he accompanied then-Attorney General Carlos Jiménez Gómez to Panama for a clandestine meeting with Lara's assassins—all the capos of the Medellín cocaine cartel—to try to arrange an amnesty for them.

In 1987, Mauss was investigated in Colombia for his ille-

gal activities on Mannesmann's behalf, but the investigation went nowhere when neither the German government nor the Colombian government wanted his links to "higher-ups" exposed.

In 1990, Mauss was also chosen by the German firm Siemens to act as its agent in dealing with the authorities of Colombia's Antioquia department vis-à-vis a stalled contract to build a municipal rail system in the state capital of Medellín, headquarters of the leading cocaine cartel at the time. Mauss's close relationship with Siemens continues to this day: The plane that had been waiting at the Río Negro Airport to spirit Mauss and Brigitte Schoene out of Colombia had been chartered by the former Siemens director in Colombia, Ariel Sharef.

And, in July 1996, Mauss personally facilitated a meeting in Bonn between Colombian Minister Serpa Uribe, and the president of Siemens. Many suspect that that meeting dealt with a pending contract to be granted Siemens by Colombia's National Civil Registry, for the modernization of computers which keep records on every Colombian citizen. Negotiating the contract on the Colombian side was Jorge Serpa, the minister's cousin. Ironically, the \$93 million contract was approved the same week that Mauss was arrested.

In Mauss's possession at the time of his arrest was a letter from former Colombian Sen. Eduardo Mestre Sarmiento, asking Mauss to advance him \$50,000 for his services in facilitating the Registry-Siemens contract! Mestre Sarmiento is currently doing jail time as a cartel front man.

### **The German 'bridge'**

According to Carlos Villamil Chau, the former Colombian consul to Berlin, he first met Mauss in 1991, around the Siemens negotiations over the Medellín municipal rail system, in which both were serving as "advisers." Villamil reports that he was approached again by Mauss in early 1996, who offered to serve as a "bridge" between the Colombian and German governments, in facilitating peace talks with Colombia's narco-terrorists.

Villamil reports that President Samper approved the idea, and deployed Interior Minister Serpa Uribe as the Colombian side of the "bridge." Constant contact was maintained among Mauss, Villamil, and Serpa, leading to the interior minister's trip to Bonn in July of this year, to meet with Bernd Schmidbauer, the top security adviser to German Chancellor Helmut Kohl.

At that meeting, it was reportedly decided to hold the first phase of peace talks at the Chancellery in Bonn, in early December. Details on the talks were further refined during a meeting in New York between Samper Pizano and Schmidbauer, while the Colombian narco-President was attending the UN General Assembly. It was agreed that attending the first talks would be representatives of the ELN-FARC, Interior Minister Serpa, Schmidbauer, and representatives of the Colombian and German Catholic churches.

According to the Colombian media, the German Catholic representative to the talks was to have been Bishop Karl Lehmann, current president of the German Bishops Conference and a member of the board of the Catholic Church "charity" Misereor, which *EIR* has identified as a key protector and financier of the Zapatista terrorists in Chiapas, Mexico.

The role of the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in paving the way for the narco-terrorists' pact with the Samper government was most recently demonstrated by the actions of two leading self-proclaimed "human rights" groups, London's Amnesty International and George Soros's Human Rights Watch, based in Washington, D.C. Both NGOs have come out in the past month calling for a suspension of U.S. anti-drug aid and equipment to Colombia's Armed Forces, which they claim is going to support "killer networks" inside military and paramilitary forces "obsessed" with fighting the guerrillas.

The NGO intervention is timed to affect the outcome of a multi-agency report requested by President Clinton, on the degree to which drugs and terrorism are one and the same enemy in Colombia. The NGO argument that fighting drugs cannot be confused with counterinsurgency, is deliberately intended to tilt the balance in favor of narco-terrorism.

### **National security threat**

In a television news interview with Germany's Channel 1 on Nov. 18, Richard Meier, the former director of Germany's counterespionage unit, characterized Mauss as a typical example of the privatization of operations that "ought to be belong to the domain of the state." This privatization of intelligence operations, Meier warned, was cause for major concern, because of its scope.

A similar sentiment was sounded by Colombian Prosecutor General Alfonso Valdívieso, who described Mauss's activities as "a threat to national security. . . . Imagine that individuals linked to multinational companies can be the objects of a kidnapping, and that the very mechanisms through which their ransoms are negotiated, are encouraging and promoting the kidnapping! If these [ransom negotiations] correspond to schemes outside the expressly open and formal knowledge of the Colombian authorities charged with these same activities, it is very worrisome."

Antioquia Governor Uribe Velez was more specific, demanding that the international networks behind narco-terrorism be defeated:

"We accept the international community's offer to help us overcome violence. But, Mr. Mauss is simply an international agent at the service of the guerrillas and of administrative corruption. A person who interferes with Colombian authorities, who pressures the families of kidnap victims, violates Colombian law, and takes part in administrative corruption, cannot be at the service of humanitarian actions that favor peace. If we are to defeat the guerrillas, we must dismantle international complicity!"