

## CONMEBOL: YANKEES COME HOME

By Ezequiel Fernández Moores

The plaque reads “Diplomatic Immunity” (PHOTO-1). It warns that no judge may enter there. Is it the United Nations headquarters? (PHOTO-2) No. It’s Nicolás Leoz’s CONMEBOL, in Asunción, Paraguay (PHOTO-3). The plate remained there for seventeen years. The privilege was ended last June by the president of Paraguay, Horacio Cartes. Ha! Back in 2005, Cartes was president of the Libertad sports club. Do you know what name he gave to its stadium? It was “Nicolás Leoz” (PHOTO-4). Today, thanks to the FBI, we celebrate the end of the era of people like Leoz, Grondona, Ricardo Teixeira, and Eugenio Figueredo. But in South America, I beg your pardon, gentlemen, people like Uruguayan writer Eduardo Galeano (PHOTO-5) learned us to distrust when we receive favors from the North.

Look now at this other image (PHOTO-6). It shows the final match of the Copa América 2015, when Chile became champion for the first time in its history. Forty years ago, that same National Stadium of Chile was an improvised prison used for the torture and killing of *desaparecidos* (PHOTO-7). Did anyone in this room watch *Missing*, the Costa-Gavras’ film that won an Oscar in 1983? (PHOTO-8). It’s about Augusto Pinochet’s dictatorship in Chile. It is also about the USA, the FBI and the CIA supporting coups and dictatorships all over South America. But we are now in 2015. The FBI no longer looks for political activists. Now it investigates leaders of the Conmebol (PHOTO-9).

The FBI talks about \$ 100 million dollars in bribes by Datisa. Poor Leoz! (PHOTO-10). He used to be Paraguay’s most respected citizen. The newspaper ABC Color, which always protected him, published incredible details about money transfers made by Leoz from CONMEBOL accounts into his personal accounts (PHOTO-11-12-13). On March 23, 2000, 3 million dollars, on April 7, 2000, \$ 10 million, on April 13,

2000, another \$ 10 million. Yes, you listened correctly, that is 23 million dollars in twenty days. All these transfers were made through Banco do Brasil. Leoz owns that bank's building.

In South America, the main accuser against Datisa is Paco Casal. The book *Paco Mafia* (PHOTO-14) reveals that Casal used to win TV rights in Uruguay without bidding and even offering less money than his competitors. Casal's protector was the same Figueredo who is now arrested in New York. One historian said: "The past becomes increasingly unpredictable (PHOTO-15)." Other one added: "And the future was a lie" (PHOTO-16).

The one who got away with it was Julio Grondona (PHOTO-17). This Argentine was the true patron of the CONMEBOL. He was so clever, we say in Argentina, that he managed to die exactly on time. Where is his money? My informants say it is where Datisa-Torneos executive Alejandro Burzaco's money is (PHOTO-18-ESQ1). The Netherlands and the Cayman Islands. Burzaco (PHOTO-19), who already gave a lot of information to the FBI, was fired from Traffic by order of DirecTV, the majority shareholder. DirecTV now belongs to AT&T. Wow. Also Fox laid off Burzaco. Fox had the best matches. It's News Corporation. It's Rupert Murdoch (PHOTO-20). And what about Traffic? It became a millionaire company thanks to Nike. Just do it (PHOTO-21). Datisa's contract was broken six days ago. Copa America will celebrate the Centennial Cup 2016 in USA. Conmebol's leaders were afraid of celebrating the birthday in Alcatraz (PHOTO-22).

My sources try to convince me that Burzaco acted alone. They say that his business was reselling. He used to declare less money than he should. He ripped off his partners and distributed the profits between him and the CONMEBOL (PHOTO-23-ESQ2). An example: Datisa bought the rights to the Copa América that took place in Chile in 2015 for 75 million dollars. My sources tell me that he resold those rights for more than \$ 600 million.

Let us suppose that the Burzacos, the Leoz, acted alone. But I read US press and I talked with lawyers here and

there. Some of them ask why such a harsh crackdown, such a show off of the judicial system's prosecution that we see in the FIFA case, is not being carried on also against Wall Street's bankers? (PHOTO-24). OK, the fine against them was record. But it was a crime without criminals. Not one of them went to jail. (PHOTO-25) The extraterritorial RICO Act is unusual, and to use it as creatively and as aggressively as is being used in the FIFA case is risky. It could be construed as if the United States wanted to take over international soccer, said Noah Feldman, a Harvard constitutionalist.

It's curious. We know that soccer is increasingly becoming business and politics. Or is it false that the governments of Germany and France asked to vote for Qatar as host country for the 2022 World Cup? It has always been easier to moralize by using sports. So, let's accept a FIFA Code of Ethics that lies to us, that states that the FIFA leaders will be independent and free.

Chuck Blazer (PHOTO-26), the greatest thief of all, is the most dedicated snitch. He revealed that South Africa 2010 paid bribes. Will Blazer be freed while Mandela, if he were alive, could go to jail? I refuse to idealize the judicial system of a country that won't even adhere to the International Criminal Court. Today the target is FIFA, and we are all happy about that. Tomorrow, I don't know. In South America, their "backyard", we cannot say: "I don't know", because we have already suffered by their hand. Today, Obama is their President (PHOTO-27). But tomorrow it may be a lunatic like Donald Trump.

Eugenio Zaffaroni (PHOTO-28) is one of the most respected criminal attorneys in Latin America. He is an ex member of Argentina's Supreme Court. "The United States - says Zaffaroni- knows all the transnational payments. If they bring it out now, it's because there was something they didn't like." Zaffaroni makes one more question: would the United States grant us the extradition of Kissinger (PHOTO-29), an ex friend of dictators Pinochet and Videla?

Remember the German satirical magazine *Titanic*? The one that jokingly wanted to "bribe" FIFA officials with a cuckoo clock and sausages to vote for Germany to host the

2006 World Cup? (PHOTO-30). The magazine received nine hours of insults from angry German fans who feared that the stunt could put the German triumph at risk. A fan asked that the reporters be punished as if they were murderers. "Prison?", asked Martin Sonneborn, director of *Titanic*. "Much worse," replied the fan. "The amputation of a leg and an arm?", dramatized Sonneborn. "Electric chair", asked the fan. "But we don't have electric chairs in Germany," Sonneborn informed. "That is a pity -lamented the fan-. If we were in the United States, they would have immediately put you on the electric chair" (PHOTO-31).