
About Pardo Llada and other Colombian media

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José Pardo Llada, a popular Cuban political pundit, follower of Eduardo Chibás and sympathizer with the Cuban Revolution, until he defected, ended up in Colombia in the early days of a civil war that lasted more than five decades and it is not fully over in the South American nation.

I knew him when I was a little kid when my father handed him a private letter here in Havana and then in the municipality of Jatibonico, former province of Camaguey. I bought from him the Communist Manifesto for ten cents, which he used to sell from town to town. Few days later, he defected.

Truth is, he confessed shortly before his death, he was scared of an American invasion and thought it was crazy to face the empire with our weapons.

In the interview he granted to Luis Baez, who published his book "*Los que se fueron*," Pardo Llada affirmed he never attacked the Cuban Revolution or Fidel (Castro), and it was respected in every Colombian media he worked for according to Baez, who was named the *Benjamin of journalists* by Jorge Mañach—in my opinion the best biographer of José Martí.

Maybe in that time he respected himself a bit, plus Uribe's time had not come yet. Uribe, who in one way or another, was followed—in a very sibylline way—by Santos and now by Duque, one of Uribe's greatest fan. All of them are friends of the Cuban opposition residing in Miami.

We have referred many times to the impunity in Colombia, to the several massive crimes committed methodically there with crystal-clear evidence, but all of them vanish not only into the mercenary judiciary, but also into the media conglomerates.

According to the latest world list released by **Forbes** magazine of the wealthiest men, the owners, or major shareholders of the most traditional and widespread media of the country are coincidentally the four wealthiest men in Colombia.

This is a major coincidence. At least the two wealthiest of the four have earned their wealth from major banks and financial firms.

In a country regarded as the largest cocaine producer in the world, there is no chance to know exactly the impact of this lucrative business for the domestic economy, but logic suggests it is huge. And most of that money is laundered inside Colombia; therefore, banks are necessary as well as businesses traditionally used for this purpose, such as major construction companies.

Coincidentally, both businesses have made Luis Carlos Sarmiento Angulo the wealthiest men in Colombia and one of the wealthiest men worldwide. His family bought *El Tiempo* newspaper in 2012, the most important and traditional newspaper in the South American nation.

The second man in the **Forbes'** list is Jaime Gilinski, who "surprisingly" has amassed its fortune in the financial sector. Recently, his family bought the important political magazine *Semana* and the first thing he did was to carrying out a major internal purging of journalists and setting an editorial policy allied to the current government.

Number three is Santo Domingo, who owns *El Espectador*, *Caracol Televisión*, and *Blu Radio*. On the other hand, Ardila Lülle, fourth in the list, owns *RCN*, *NTN24*, and *WIN*, among several other media.

The same national phenomenon occurs regionally, where major mass media are owned by families controlling the

regions economically and politically.

This general panorama lets us understand better how the Colombian public opinion is manipulated. It also tells us why none of these media support popular struggles, or why they insist on attacking the Bolivarian Revolution and in this case, why they back the Colombian oligarchy before the public opinion and fight to defend the submissive stance of Colombia's policy to Washington's commands, and release newsy fusses that end up affecting the long-term memory of the Colombian people.

Pardo Llada was there only in the early days of the phenomenon. If he were alive, he would have probably followed the commands of the master. If not, he would perish.

Translated by Sergio A. Paneque Díaz / CubaSí Translation Staff
