

Chile, the shadow of corruption



Implicated in a case of corruption and financial crimes in Chile

by Guillermo Avarado

The Chilean society is attentive these days to the development of a notorious case of corruption and financial crimes involving a prestigious criminal lawyer, two of his associates, several prominent businessmen and officials of state agencies.

At the center of the storm is the lawyer Luis Herмосilla, well known here for having represented before the courts and other instances well-known personalities, among them the former Minister of the Interior during the government of Sebastián Piñera, Andrés Chadwick.

It turns out that the investigation of a journalistic entity revealed in November 2023 the recording of a meeting between the lawyer, his partner Leonarda Villalobos and the then businessman Daniel Sauer, owner together with his brother and father of a financial operator called Faxtop.

The tape talks about making illegal payments to officials of the Internal Revenue Service and the Financial Markets Commission in exchange for privileged information to benefit the Sauer's business, who is currently in prison for these and other illegal activities.

If this was scandalous, it was only the tip of the iceberg.

Subsequent investigations revealed that Herмосilla, Villalobos, and her husband, Luis Angulo, received millions of dollars, much of it in cash, which they then transferred to the accounts of other businessmen,

Álvaro and Antonio Jalaff, who were burdened with heavy debts.

In addition to tax evasion, money laundering, and corruption of public officials, they also used false or falsified invoices to cover up their illegal transactions.

To give an idea of the tangled web, the reading of the charges by the prosecutor alone took two full days in a court in the capital, and the hearing is expected to last until next week.

Meanwhile, new names are appearing in this network, including a Supreme Court judge and a former candidate for the presidency of Chile, who, by the way, has announced legal action against Hermosilla.

Meanwhile, ordinary people are wondering whether this time the courts will act forcefully against those responsible for the scheme, or whether, as has happened on other occasions when important people are involved in this type of scheme, they will take soft and even ridiculous measures.

And it usually happens, as the popular saying goes, that justice can be like snakes that only bite those who walk barefoot.

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