

..... Fugitive financier Robert Vesco ... [is] safely tucked away in Costa Rica, beyond the reach of a U.S. extradition treaty. But the Costa Rican government is coming under increasing internal criticism for allowing Vesco to use the country as a refuge, as we hear in this report from Internews.

[Jan Austen, Internews:] Thousands of students in Costa Rica today protested a new law aimed at preventing the extradition from that country of fugitive U.S. millionaire Robert Vesco. The new law says that no foreigner will be extradited simply on a request from a foreign country. The measure was rushed through the Costa Rican congress at the beginning of the week at the request of President Jose Figueres. Figueres is a close personal friend and business associate of Vesco, who is wanted in the United States on a \$244-million fraud case. Vesco is also being called to testify in connection with an alleged illegal cash contribution to the Nixon campaign.

In their second day of protest, students demonstrated in the streets of the Costa Rican capital, shouting, "The law casts shame on the country," and "Vesco, no - sovereignty, yes." A former president of Costa Rica, Jose Joaquin Treijos [phonetic], accused the Figueres administration of being the most corrupt government in the history of the country, and said that Figueres governs Costa Rica as if it were his private estate and his politics add up to his associations with international crooks like Robert Vesco.

Figueres reportedly sped the new law through the congress because his own term as president is about to expire. The new president, who takes office in May, is close to Figueres, but in the congress the government party will have a minority for the first time in many years. The National Independent Party, the main opposition group, will ask for a revision of the extradition law when the new congress convenes in six weeks.

Last December, Argentina moved to prevent Vesco from setting up an alternative residence in that country. Although permission to live in Argentina had been granted to the millionaire financier in September, the Peron government ordered all Argentine consulates to refuse to give him a visa.

This is Jan Austen, for Internews.

(incomplete list)

See entries: 22 Oct 73; 1 Nov 73; 6 Nov 73; 13 Nov 73;
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