

UCLA History 160B

Many Images of Mexico

Edited by
James W. Wilkie

*(If you do not understand the several articles in Spanish,
please ask the Professor or a fellow student.)*

Spring 2012

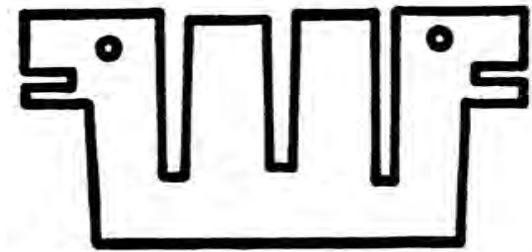
Many Images of Mexico (2012)

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LESLEY BYRD SIMPSON

MANY
MEXICOS



FOURTH EDITION REVISED

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1971

1

MANY MEXICOS

Once upon a time, in the immensely remote past—so long ago that only geologists and astronomers would be interested in computing it—Mexico was split across the middle by a great rift in the earth's crust. That rift, or tectonic seam, extends from Cape Corrientes on the Pacific coast, eastward to Tuxtla San Andrés in Vera Cruz, on the Gulf of Mexico. North and south of the seam huge blocks were uptilted into what we call the Central Plateau of Mexico, which covers about two-thirds of the total area of the country. How high the blocks originally were, no one knows, but where they meet along the seam they are still about 8,000 feet above sea level, although they fall off somewhat toward the west. From the line of the seam northward the Central Plateau slopes gently downward to an average elevation of about 4,000 feet along the border of the United States.

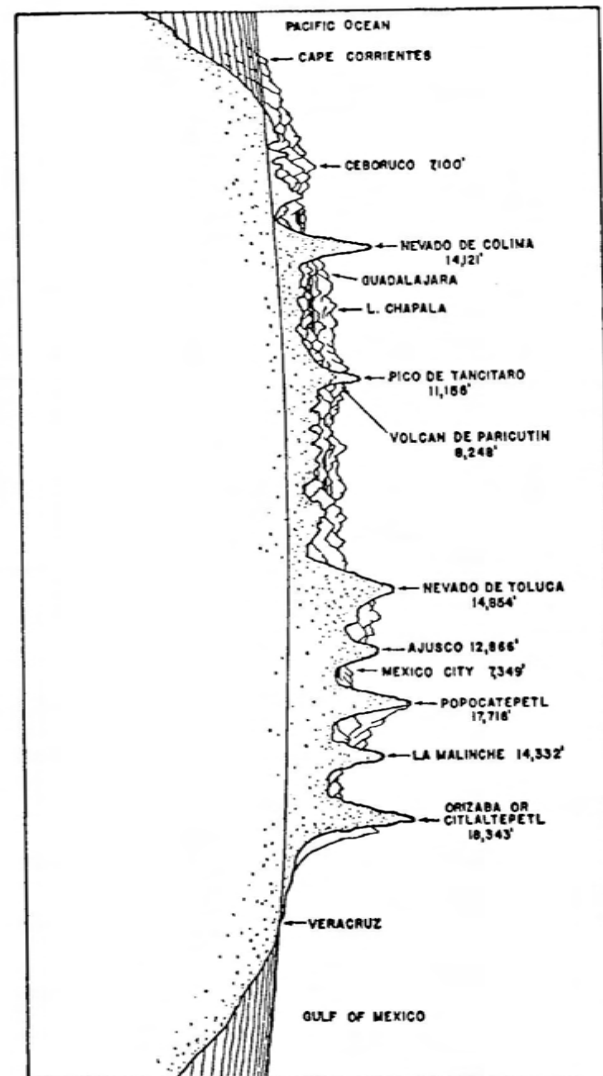
The seam itself is a chaotic belt of broken land 100 miles wide and 800 miles long. Through it a magnificent procession of volcanoes pushed up: Colima, Sangangüey, and Ceboruco, at the Pacific end; the Nevado de Toluca, Ajusco, Popocatepetl, Ixtaccíhuatl, and Malinche, on the Plateau; and the incomparably beautiful Pico de Orizaba, or Citlaltépetl, that is, "Mountain of the Star," as the Aztecs called it, whose dazzling snow-capped cone rises more than 18,000 feet and may be seen from a hundred miles out in the Gulf of Mexico. Scores of smaller volcanoes, which in less overpowering company would be worthy of mention, dot the seam from one end to the other, while lakes and rivers and mountains of lava and volcanic ash make the region in many parts a sort of gigantic natural slag heap, called *malpaís*, or bad country. *The effects of that upheaval*

were to determine (a few million years in the future) the conditions and habits of life of a great part of the Mexican people.

The upheaval did not happen all at once; indeed, it is still going on. Frequent earthquakes, some of them very destructive of life and property, keep the pious in a continual state of bewilderment over the inscrutable ways of Providence. In February, 1943, for example, after preliminary tremors and subterranean explosions, a fissure opened in a cornfield near the village of Paricutín, Michoacán, from which an immense stream of lava poured and inundated the countryside. The neighboring village of Parangaricutiro was completely buried, and ten other villages and towns of the vicinity suffered varying degrees of damage. Up to the time of its quiet death, on March 2, 1952, it is estimated that the Volcán de Paricutín had vomited up a billion or so tons of lava, which probably did less harm than the vast amount of volcanic sand and ash that it spewed over the region, killing crops and trees, and rendering the land useless for cultivation, although in time the ashes will make a new layer of fertile soil, a process that is already well along. There is no likelihood at all that such activity has ceased.

The block of the Central Plateau south of the great seam is more violently uptilted than its northern counterpart, broken and split into a labyrinth of lesser blocks, and pitched and tumbled about in all directions, forming several thousand square miles of the wildest country imaginable. These planless mountains and deep depressions are such an effective barrier to circulation that they quite literally cut Mexico in two. The timid little railway that twists and doubles its way between Mexico City and Oaxaca emphasizes the thoroughness of that barrier, and even it had to give up before the formidable mass of the Sierra Madre del Sur. Only lately has the barrier yielded to the onslaught of modern bulldozers, and the Pan-American Highway between Oaxaca and the Guatemalan frontier is a spectacular tribute to the skill of the Mexican road builders.

The lower axis of the southern block is the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, to the east of which the land again rises into the rough limestone plateau of Chiapas, which in turn drops off northward into the steaming coastal plain of Tabasco and Campeche. The difficulty of the terrain is indicated by the lack (until recently) of communi-



Profile of the Great Seam at approximately Lat. 19° N.
(After J. L. Tamayo, *Geografía de Mexico.*)

cation between Chiapas and Yucatan. The railroad (Ferrocarril del Sureste) that finally traversed the region was long wryly referred to as *el ferrocarril del centenario*, because it would be running a hundred years hence.

The peninsula of Yucatan is a huge sheet of rarely broken limestone, a paradise for archaeologists, but one whose thin soil and erratic rainfall make it a very spotty paradise for the people who live there.

Along the edges of the great land masses of Mexico, and everywhere within them, the earth's crust has been further creased and folded and ripped into ranges and clusters of mountains. From the border of Arizona southward, the Sierra Madre Occidental, which is about 100 miles wide on the average and 1,200 miles long, cuts the Central Plateau off from the coastal plain of the Pacific, so effectively that it can be pierced in only three or four places in its immense length. For those who like to flirt with danger, the hair-raising stretch of highway between Durango and Mazatlán can be recommended. Southeast of the great seam these mountains continue for a thousand miles more as the Sierra Madre del Sur, which comes down to the water's edge and makes a large part of the states of Oaxaca and Guerrero a forbidding and unmapped waste. Beyond the Isthmus of Tehuantepec they form the unbroken wall of the southern escarpment of the Chiapas highlands.

Along the eastern edge of the Central Plateau the same phenomenon is repeated. Beginning with the low brown hills of Nuevo León, just across the Rio Grande, the Sierra Madre Oriental separates the highlands from the coastal plain of the Gulf of Mexico for a thousand miles, rising toward the south to a stupendous green wall nine thousand feet in height.

As if the mountain barriers and escarpments were not enough to discourage any notion of geographic unity in Mexico, nature has further complicated the matter by slashing the plateau with innumerable gullies and canyons, called *barrancas*, cut by the heavy summer downpours. The canyon of the Santiago is one such barranca, bearing comparison with the Grand Canyon of the Colorado in Arizona. This vast abyss extends from the vicinity of Guadalajara several hundred miles across the states of Jalisco and

Nayarit to the Pacific. Another is the 400-mile gorge of the Moctezuma, which crosses the Central Plateau through the states of Querétaro, Hidalgo, and Vera Cruz. The rivers that flow down most of these barrancas are feeble trickles during the dry season and raging brown torrents from June to November, useless for transport and too far below the surrounding country to be utilized for irrigation. In pre-Conquest times the barrancas were easily defended barriers and became the natural boundaries between the nomad tribes of the north and the agricultural peoples of the south, and today they are formidable obstacles for highways and railroads to overcome. *Most streams of any consequence in the Central Plateau run through barrancas, from hundreds to thousands of feet deep.* An important exception is the meandering Lerma River, which drains and fertilizes the rich Bajío country of Michoacán, Guanajuato, and Jalisco, before flowing into beautiful Lake Chapala. In 1951 it was tapped to supply Mexico City with water at the rate of 22,718,620 gallons a day. What effect this heavy withdrawal will have on the agricultural life of the Lerma basin is an uncomfortable problem for agronomists to ponder.

The tale is not yet told. An almost equally great barrier to human circulation in primitive times was presented by the extremes of climate at the different altitudes. A moment's reflection will make the reason clear. The mean temperature at any given place drops one degree Fahrenheit for every 300-foot increase in altitude. Thus, Mexico City, at 7,300 feet, is normally about twenty-five degrees cooler than Vera Cruz, at sea level. That might not be so bad, but the humidity drops at a corresponding rate as one approaches the higher altitudes, until the rapid evaporation on the Plateau makes the *sensible* difference in temperature much greater than the thermometer indicates. The effect on living conditions should at once be apparent. In the hot coastal plains and in the depressions of the Plateau the Indian wears few clothes, and his children none at all, and his habitation is a flimsy affair of canes and thatch, through which the winds blow and the rains splash. The higher he climbs the sturdier must be his house and the warmer his clothing, and, lacking such protection, as he frequently does, he is more than likely to fall a victim to the respiratory diseases that are the scourge of the

high country in winter. Also, in the lowlands his lungs are conditioned to the breathing of air rich in oxygen, and he gets along on comparatively little of it. Transfer him to the highlands, however, and he must take in a great deal more air, with a corresponding strain on his heart, as all tourists soon learn. Contrariwise, a highland Indian brought to the lowlands has more lung capacity than he needs, and the unused part of his lungs makes an excellent breeding place for assorted deadly germs. The danger of bringing men from the low country to the high, or vice versa, was so great that the Spanish government forbade it by stringent laws, not always observed, to be sure.

The rugged terrain that I have described would not necessarily make life difficult within the various isolated regions of Mexico if it were not for the fact that it also determines to a large extent the amount of rainfall in a given locality. If, for example, you live on the windward side of the eastern escarpment, you will be drenched by a regular deluge for many months of the year. Move a few miles inland over the mountains, however, and you will spend a good part of your time praying for rain.

A second and equally important fact about the climate of Mexico is that the greater part of the country lies in the wide band of stagnant air between the path of the northern cyclonic storms (the prevailing westerlies) and the tropical rain belt, famous in the days of sailing ships as the "horse latitudes." This band moves north and south with the ecliptic but extends, roughly, from Lat. 32° N. to Lat. 16° N. Rainfall in these latitudes is extremely capricious, although, generally speaking, it is very light in the far north and very heavy in the far south, and occurs only in the summer months, with occasional exceptions in the winter. *Average* precipitation means very little. Years may go by with hardly enough rain to water the maize crop, followed by a succession of disastrous floods and such high humidity that the grain sprouts in the ear. There is hardly any such thing as a "normal" season for the Mexican farmer. In the summer of 1943, for example, a severe drought destroyed a large part of the maize crop, an estimated loss of 500,000 tons, and in the late summer of 1944 floods washed away 200,000 tons more.

The farmer is further plagued in the high country by unpredict-

able frosts, which may kill his maize while it is sprouting, or kill it while the grain is still in the milk. Losses of 50 per cent are not uncommon, and once in a long time comes such a frightful catastrophe as the great freeze of August, 1784, which totally wiped out the maize and bean crops of the Plateau, causing the death by starvation of an estimated 300,000 people.¹

Rainfall is of such transcendental importance in the life of Mexico that we must once again follow the map around in order to understand it. Beginning with the extreme northwest we find the long tongue of Lower California spanning the belt of greatest aridity. Its northern end, on the Pacific coast at least, comes in for a small share of the rains brought by the cyclonic storms, but the next 700 miles of it are a scorched and almost uninhabited desert, until its southern tip intrudes a little way into the fringe of the tropical rain belt. Crossing over to the east side of the Gulf of California, we come to the Sonora Desert, which for 500 miles south of the border is one of the most fearfully arid wastes on the surface of the globe, where the temperature rises to such heights as to make the desert impassable save in the relatively cool months of winter. But south of Guaymas the aspect of the coastal plain gradually changes, becoming greener and more habitable in Sinaloa, and, finally, going to the opposite extreme, becomes a dense tropical jungle north of Cape Corrientes.

East of the Sonora Desert the wide expanse of the Sierra Madre Occidental catches a fair amount of rain, and its long narrow valleys make a pleasant enough habitat for man. Continuing eastward

¹I find it excessive that Ernest Gruening, in his usually thoughtful *Mexico and Its Heritage*, should inferentially attribute the mortality of that famine to Spanish indifference. "A Spanish muleteer," he writes, "who became rich enough to lend the king a million pesos was created Conde de Regla; when his son was christened the whole party walked from his home to the church on ingots of silver. But in 1784, 300,000 people perished in New Spain from famine and its consequences." This is one of the most astonishing non sequiturs I have ever come across. The fact of the matter is that in the unprecedented disaster the viceroy opened the public granaries, and Crown and Church officials and private citizens organized relief on an immense scale. The records of the great famine fill many hundreds of folios in the National Archives of Mexico (*Ramo de Indios*), and are mostly concerned with relief measures.

beyond the mountains of Sonora, we enter the immense triangle of desert that stretches far down into the Central Plateau and covers a large part of the states of Chihuahua, Coahuila, Durango, and Zacatecas. The desperately dry plains of this central desert offer poor support for the population, except where the waters of the Conchos River, the Nazas, and other streams have been diverted into great irrigation projects, such as the Laguna district of Durango. Two hundred miles eastward across the desert we come to the beginning of the Sierra Madre Oriental and sufficient rainfall to put eastern Coahuila and Nuevo León among the best farming districts of the Republic. Dropping down into the Gulf state of Tamaulipas, however, we enter the hot and relatively sterile northern end of the coastal plain of the Gulf of Mexico, which is a continuation of the topography of the southern end of Texas.

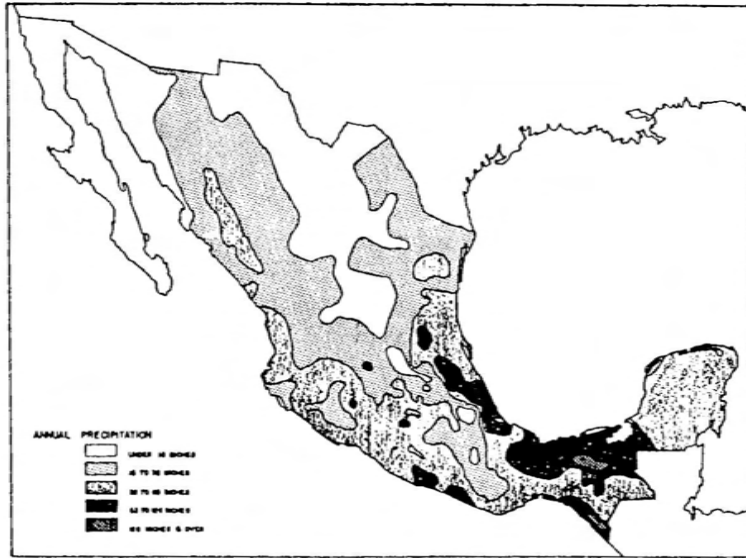
And so down to Tampico, Vera Cruz, where the great horseshoe of the coastal plain begins, appearing first as a narrow strip of land 500 miles long, lying under the shadow of the eastern escarpment of the Central Plateau and drenched by incredible quantities of water dropped by the wet winds blowing in from the Gulf. The precipitation increases as we go southward, until at the middle of the horseshoe, on the north side of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, it reaches the staggering total of *ten feet a year*. The numerous torrents, swamps, and jungles resulting from the continual deluge make southern Vera Cruz, Tabasco, and Campeche one of the most difficult regions of Mexico to traverse. Here the heavy runoff turns the country into a network of great rivers and its people into a race of boatmen. Rain, which is precious beyond all things on the Plateau, is here one of man's worst enemies, because it leaches plant food out of the soil and makes large areas hardly more than soggy green deserts, where a few sorry-looking villages somehow manage to eke out a living, in competition with the mosquitoes.

The coastal plains are further ravaged by destructive hurricanes which blow in from the Caribbean and the Pacific. These huge masses of saturated air, thousands of cubic miles of it, get to spinning and wandering about in the most curious and unpredictable fashion. Our fun-loving Weather Bureau gives these terrifying meteorological tops appropriate feminine names, such as Moll, Betty, and

Dolly, and watches their career with a sharp eye. But there is nothing funny about a hurricane, which is one of the most murderous weapons in the abundant arsenal of nature. Galveston will not soon forget the 6,000 citizens who perished in the flood of 1900, and one dreadful hurricane (typhoon) in 1737 killed 300,000 people in Bengal.

One of the favorite targets of the Caribbean hurricanes is the Gulf coast of Mexico, where they beat themselves to pieces against the mountains, and in the process dump their enormous cargoes of water. The hurricane of September, 1944, wandered in over Yucatan and the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, and struck squarely in the Papaloapan basin, where it dropped somewhere around ten thousand million tons of water, *all at once*. For five days winds attaining a velocity of 120 miles an hour battered the unlucky region. The Papaloapan River covered the city of Cosamaloapan to a depth of ten feet. Vultures scabbled in the mud for dead bodies, and the people who escaped drowning were attacked by the ferocious clouds of mosquitoes which rose like a plague of Egypt out of the steaming muck. The state of Vera Cruz suffered damages estimated at 100,000,000 pesos, and deaths from drowning and disease ran into the hundreds. In 1951 a hurricane smashed into the valley of the Pánuco and devastated the whole Huasteca region of Vera Cruz, Tamaulipas, and San Luis Potosí. The Tamesí and Pánuco scoured their basins clean of the works of man. The Lázaro Cárdenas Dam in San Luis Potosí had to be dynamited, and added its weight to the general destruction. The south coast is occasionally visited by these monsters. In the fall of 1959 an exceptionally violent hurricane raged in from the Pacific and struck in the state of Colima. The port of Manzanillo was all but wiped out, and the town of Minatitlán was totally obliterated and turned into a stinking inferno of unburied corpses. Some fifteen hundred people lost their lives, and the property damage was in the neighborhood of a billion pesos.

The moisture-laden winds from the Gulf of Mexico beat against the northern escarpment of the Chiapas plateau, and the heavy precipitation creates an all but impenetrable jungle in the depression between Chiapas and Yucatan. (This is the jungle that Cortés had to hack his way through in 1524.) The winds lose some of their



Average Annual Precipitation
(After Secretaría de la Economía Nacional)

fierceness as they pass over Chiapas and make that region one of the best watered and pleasantest in the Republic. When, however, they blow down over the southern escarpment they change their character again and howl across the narrow Pacific coastal plain in a fury of heat, dust, and flies in the dry season, which are only a shade less unbearable than the heat, mud, and mosquitoes of the wet season. To avoid the worst of these hazards, the Spaniards built a "summer road" over the mountains between Oaxaca and Guatemala, and a "winter road" along the coastal plain. The discomfort and danger of the Tehuantepec Gale have provoked sour comment from travelers for four hundred years. Thomas Gage, whose *New Guide to the West Indies* I shall have occasion to quote a number of times, negotiated the formidable pass of Macuilapa (between Oaxaca and Chiapas) in 1626, and was obliged to wait three days for the wind to subside enough to let him through. His pain was increased by his

having to live on green lemons the while. The Dominican historian, Francisco de Burgoa, wrote of this pass in 1670: "The other [summer road] to the east begins to climb the steep grade of Macuilapa, dangerous because of the north winds, which blow at the summit with such violence that they sometimes blow mules, together with their riders, off the precipice." A night spent in that screaming gale, or an airplane trip through it, is an experience to be enjoyed only in retrospect.

In our hasty journey around the rim of the Republic I have purposely omitted the most important part of it lying in the two sections of the Central Plateau north and south of the great seam: all the territory, roughly speaking, between Lat. 22° N. and the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, except the coastal plains. Three-fourths of the total population of Mexico live in this area. It is the essence, the very heart and kernel of Mexico, enjoying more or less similar living conditions, given differences in altitude. The reason, of course, lies in the rainfall, which, although capricious and unreliable, can usually be counted on to water the maize during the crucial early weeks of its growing season.

This rough sketch of the topography and climate of Mexico is admittedly only an approximation, since any generalization about them is likely to break down locally. Accidents of the terrain play unexpected tricks upon lovers of order in nature. A cool and well-watered valley nestles in the Sierra de San Pedro Mártir of Lower California, or an unaccountable bit of desert appears in the heart of the tropical rain belt, where it has no right to be, as on the northeastern tip of the peninsula of Yucatan. It should begin to be apparent to the reader, therefore, why there are many Mexicos—why, for example, there are some fifty distinct language groups among the Indians, and why the Maya of Yucatan are total foreigners to the Yaqui of Sonora.

**THE UNITED STATES
AND MEXICO**

Howard F. Cline

Revised Edition, Enlarged

Atheneum New York

1976

*Originally published by
Harvard University Press*

3. Ancient Legacies

The first Spaniards in Mexico were convinced that the Devil himself had been at work. They claimed he had preceded them to the area with the express and malignant purpose of thwarting the later Christians who found this pagan land. Spanish military men, priests, and administrators never ceased expressing amazement at the puzzling regions and peoples. They deplored the seemingly insuperable barriers they found to their attempts at civilizing and enlightening its varied inhabitants. Men of lesser conviction would have despaired, but stubbornly for three centuries Spaniards tried to make moderns out of the Stone Age groups they had found in Mexico.

1. ROOTS

When the Spaniards arrived they encountered the whole range of possible Indian cultural developments. Some native areas had flourished and were already far down the cultural gradient—in Yucatan, for instance. Others were approaching an apogee—the Central Mexican groups most notably, under the tutelage of centers of “high culture.” Still others had long remained undisturbed, static at varying degrees of sophistication, reflecting a long intricate history. As the Spaniards learned, Indians emerged from the unreal “Indian.”

The achievements of the outstanding cultures were many. Collectively the Indians had created physical monuments of extraordinary size and beauty, built and decorated by the patient rubbing of stone on stone and with untold expenditure of manpower. They had produced a monumental and unique architecture. Sculpture, crafts, learning of great merit and substantial content had also existed. But at the same time violence, disruption, cataclysm, had equally been embedded in traditions. Small areas formed the limits of thought. No broadly unifying concepts of religion, politics, or common destiny

bound aboriginal Mexico together into any sort of unity. Rather the reverse was true.

New technical reports come flooding in so rapidly from investigators seeking to unravel the ancient past of Mexico that many, if not most, seemingly immutable suppositions about the tangled realm of aboriginal history are now as extinct as some of the animals and peoples that are coming to light. Until rather recently scientists generally believed that man was a late-comer to the Mexican scene, but the spectacular uncovering of an old human skeleton, together with remains of prehistoric animals and human artifacts, near Tepexpan (just outside Mexico City) in 1947 unequivocally pushed the chronological frontiers back to 10,000 B.C. and subsequent intensive search indicates that 20,000 B.C. is well within the range of probability for the undated appearance of these crude hunters.

It is still an open question whether these several groups of paleolithic peoples were the immediate ancestors of the later inhabitants for whom archaeology provides testimony. Although the working hypotheses currently used to explain the sudden masses of new and upsetting findings of the past five years or so are still in flux, they do embrace a number of broad sequences. The large gap (? 20,000 B.C.—1000 B.C.) between the paleolithic hunters and the cultures for which archaeology provides some clue is now tagged “Basic.” During this time nomadic tribes settled down to agricultural pursuits, tamed plants and animals, and acquired skills of pottery-making and weaving.

Slowly, around the years 1000 B.C. or perhaps 500 B.C., the “Basic” cultures gave way to a “Formative” stage. It is the first stage that actually yields enough consistent material on which to make intelligent guesses about how ancient Mexicans lived and died. From the thick rubbish heaps on their small habitation sites it is inferred that generation after generation lived as primitive agriculturists subsisting on maize, and that their uneventful lives were spent under simple theocratic governments uncomplicated by much ritual apparatus. For reasons beyond our present ken an unknown number of these little groups suddenly burst into bloom by at least A.D. 300.

The ensuing three or four centuries witnessed an almost unparalleled cultural and political florescence in which mammoth and extraordinary building activity, high intellectual and aesthetic achievements, and complicated religious beliefs and social structures were keynotes. Neither metal tools nor the wheel aided these

astounding efforts. Both the Middle American highlands and the lowlands underwent transformation; peaceful interchange of ideas and goods between city-states is well attested by the innumerable physical remains constantly unearthed by investigators throughout the modern Mexican areas. Military motifs are lacking.

Pottery in Mexico from Basic days onward evolved without the use of a potter's wheel, which is still shunned by most native craftsmen there today. A variety of woven fabrics and techniques seemingly were tried out during Basic days, though no specimens have endured. Perhaps the salient lasting achievement of aboriginal Mexico was domestication of plants, for food and for other uses—dyes, medicines, and the like. Outstanding in this connection was the creation of a unique New World all-purpose cereal, corn (or maize), whose technical label is *Zea mays* L. It is now the world's second most important food crop.

For many years scientists believed that maize was first domesticated in Mexico. Recent probing not only has disproved that assumption but has changed other opinions about maize as well. A number of areas now have more valid claims than Mexico for primacy in its domestication, which is now widely thought to have followed the raising of gourds, legumes, and other tropical plants. Apparently for many years, perhaps centuries, a tapioca-like substance known as manioc was the staple of much of America (and especially southern Mexico) before the all-important maize plants appeared. There is scarcely a domesticable plant in America that was not known and used by American Indians during the Basic Period. Potatoes, tomatoes, peanuts, cacao, pineapples, pumpkins, cotton, are but a few of the contributions. But of all, maize was paramount.

As an economic item, maize is extremely important: it has relatively high food value, but more important, it can be grown in almost any climate and soil which will grow vegetation at all. In 1492 there were at least 700 varieties, some growing in areas of less than ten inches of rainfall, others where 200 inches fall. This all-purpose, all-weather food item is peculiarly American, and especially Mexican, though now it grows on all continents. In Mexico it has almost always been accompanied by its smaller companion, the lowly but important bean, and often by the useful gourd. Squash-maize-beans are the crop foundations on which aboriginal Mexican societies rested and on which half of modern Mexico still depends.

Maize now forms about 90 per cent of the diet of rural Mexico,

and its symbolic significance is even more important than its economic. In Yucatan, for instance, on plantations where workers are given excellent and balanced modern diets, workmen still make a small *milpa*—corn patch—in which to carry on old rites and to link themselves with the forces of nature thus propitiated. Maize agriculture is a way of life as much as an agricultural technique, and many of these symbolic practices apparently date from Basic days.

Much in the rhythm of European history following the fall of the Roman Empire, a Dark Age crept slowly over some of these classic Indian societies, while others seemingly collapsed in cataclysmic fashion. By about the year 1000 the previously peaceful, seemingly stable and prosperous scene had given way to civil wars, migrations, and incursions of wild tribes. Like the European Goths and Visigoths, these new intruders themselves settled down and took on more advanced ways while altering the earlier patterns almost beyond recognition. By perhaps 1300 the initial chaos of the Dark Age of Mexican prehistory began to pass, unveiling a group of militaristically organized social units. It was the further unrolling of this phase of early Mexican development that the coming of the Spaniards interrupted. Its now common label is "post-Classic."

What the Spaniards Found. A dominant note of late pre-Conquest Mexico was institutionalized violence. The written record (for now we begin to have native codices, some manufactured before the Spaniards came, some after) and archaeological testimony reveal a multitude of slayings, decapitations, animal and human sacrifices. Some of the sacrificial victims were children; others were prisoners of war. To supply their bloody gods, main Indian groups on the Mesa Central arranged ritual wars in order that each could systematically replenish its stock of sacrificial prisoners. Frontiers marking off domains from one another were now fortified, and, as might be expected, warrior and warrior-merchant classes played a large part in society. A plutocracy was developing.

Characteristic organizations of post-Classic times were loose confederations of native states, unstable coalitions that have been misnamed "Empires." Of these the most famous is the Aztec. Centered at Tenochtitlán, a city on an island in the middle of Lake Texcoco (where modern Mexico City stands) to which the barbaric Tenochmexica had been exiled for bad behavior during the aboriginal Mexican Dark Age, it was merely a loosely associated group of Indian tribute-paying towns and villages. Joined by a like-minded

tribe called the Culhuas, they conquered their neighbors. The Aztecs drew a variety of goods and services from innumerable subjugated hamlets and larger centers around the lake and through southern Mexico. The Mexica-Culhuas ("Aztecs") did not develop an effective central administrative apparatus for their "empire." However, they did make a start toward keeping records in rebus-writing. From their tribute records R. H. Barlow recently (1949) reconstructed the extent and nature of the groupings over which they extracted levies. So complex was the situation in 1500 that he was forced to subdivide the "Aztec Empire" of that date into seven major provincial divisions and 38 sub-provinces, each of which included diverse speech and cultural groupings clustered in village combinations. It covered the east central part of modern Mexico.

To the south, the situation was equally complex, though without even the rudimentary organization represented by the Mexica-Culhua confederation of the Mesa Central. Some states, like Tlaxcala, were sturdily independent. In Oaxaca as many as four rulers would claim jurisdiction over a given village, which usually had to pay tribute to all four. The Maya of Yucatan were divided into seventeen or eighteen dynastic units. To the west of the Valley of Mexico the Tarascans and other neighboring peoples soundly defeated Aztec attempts to bring them within the central web, but did not themselves join together on even a semi-permanent basis. The north was still the land of barbarians—"Chichimecs"—whom no one bothered, but against whom frontier defenses were kept in readiness. On all sides war had joined religion as the localized organizing and integrating principles of group and individual life.

Perhaps the main feature of the whole Mexican area was its heterogeneity, within groups and between groups. While the leader of the Culhua-Mexica, the Moctezuma, was being served trout cooled by snows which his servants had fetched from Popocatepetl, people like the Huastecs, the Otomi, and the "Chichimecs" continued to live much as others had during the Basic or Formative Periods. In some cultural pockets the land had been continuously occupied since perhaps the time of Tepexpan Man. At least two hundred and perhaps as many as four hundred languages and dialects reflected the distinct usages and ways of thought of as many tribes.

The truncated record of aboriginal Mexico here so sketchily presented tends to place its own conclusions before the reader. Taproots of certain and important current Mexican practices are deeply

embedded in a solid substratum of pre-Columbian experiences. Aboriginal days provided Mexico with some common usages and outlooks—agricultural methods, diet, social stratifications. But more impressive is the long sequence of major transformations, each ushered in on sharp breaks with previous tradition. Discontinuities outrank continuity and homogeneity in the aboriginal epochs.

2. THE HAPSBURG COLONIAL EXPERIMENT, 1521–1700

Contemporary Mexican culture is a cosmopolitan mixture of elements drawn from many sources, but its matrix is Romance, specifically Spanish. Iberian traditions provide the broad frameworks that still give order and meaning to all subsequent introductions. From the very outset, of course, extant Indian usages permeated this Hispanic stream and even now they peep through the Iberian overlay in surprising fashion. Very early the African Negro made an appearance and contribution. In later days other European modes, borrowed from England, France, and the rest of the continent, were Mexicanized. More recent influences come from the United States and even Russia. But notwithstanding these critical modifications, Mexico remains fundamentally Spanish-American.

On every hand magnificent Indian ruins inevitably recall Mexico's aboriginal glories, but often more compelling to the eye and the mind are monuments to the epoch when Imperial Spain dominated Mexico. For three hundred years, from 1521 to 1821, Europeans forced the passage of Mexican culture from the Stone Age toward modernity. As visible reminders of this feat they left material remains without number. Perhaps a main clue to the transformation which Mexico underwent during that long and critical span is that the known Indian ruins are points of interest for casual sightseers, while Spanish constructions are still used by the Mexican people in their daily lives.

The intangible legacies of the colonial past are even more impressive and widespread. The language that one hears everywhere is nearly always Spanish. In other overt ways, as well as in thousands of subtle and hidden ones, the Iberian culture placed an ineradicable stamp on the Mexican land. The deeper one delves into the Mexican colonial period the more apparent becomes the truth of E. G. Bourne's declaration that "What Rome did for Spain, Spain did for America."

To control its overseas holdings Spain evolved a bewildering and novel battery of organs and organizations that set models for later-comers in the imperial field—the French, the Dutch, the English. Unlike their Portuguese contemporaries the Spanish imperialists felt that they were carrying out a universal mission and that their duty was clear, to force conformity to regnant sixteenth-century norms. Though their lofty aspirations often outran their achievements and although the hazards of distance, communications, and discords at home hampered their efforts, they persisted in them. When all Spanish shortcomings are subtracted, the net accomplishment is stupendous and largely beneficial. Even to begin an enumeration quickly passes space limitations, since there is scarcely a phase of daily life in Mexico that escaped some tincture of Hispanic influence.

One of the great adventure stories of all times is the tale of Hernan Cortés and his handful of followers who in 1519–1521 conquered aboriginal Mexico. It has been given classic form by William Hickling Prescott, and many subsequent hands have set down the lesser narratives that describe how Mexico was secured and organized for Hapsburg Spain by its doughty pioneers. Once the first shock of conquest was past and the primary wave of romantic adventurers had washed southward to repeat their exploits in South America, Mexican institutional life adjusted itself on the new basis.

By at least 1580 Mexico had settled down to its main colonial occupations. As in earlier days, agriculture was the main concern of nearly all the population; now Spaniards had organized their own enterprises, plantations and farms, rather than attempting to live off the scanty surpluses that reluctant Indians could furnish, as in the first post-Conquest days. To existing use of the land, the Europeans added the raising of animals and the extraction of silver from the Mexican earth.

With changing conditions went altered economic institutions. After the realm was stabilized, for instance, free labor, forced servitude peonage, and outright slavery coexisted; land tenure became equally complicated. Institutional frameworks at all levels became increasingly intricate as the web of decree and law dropped over one activity after another. This highly articulated institutional context was one of the major legacies of colonial Mexico to the modern republic.

Local and regional diversity continued to exert its powerful pressures on Mexican developments, but these were enveloped in an all-

embracing imperial system that was premised on unity of culture and religion, mediated through a centralized and absolute political system. In sharp contrast to the later English attitude toward its North American colonies, the Spanish Crown constantly exercised vigilance in large and small matters and piled agency on agency to execute directives through a chain of command that started with the Crown in Europe and reached to village squares all over the New World, Mexico included. The structure and superstructure evolved before the Reformation, with its justification for individual dissent from authority. Therefore they had as one integrating element the intertwining of Church and State into a single Catholic whole. Colonists and officials came to Mexico as loyal subjects of an absolute Crown, not as dissenters. A main policy was to make equally loyal vassals of newly converted Mexican Indians.

The coming of Europeans to Mexico raised the standards of living of the area and elevated the moral tone of many of its indigenous groups. Cannibalism disappeared. As European heirs of the Renaissance, Spaniards arrived with a new and revolutionary knowledge by which to transform aboriginal Mexico. Indians, individually and in groups, competed with one another to obtain and share these material benefits.

Spaniards brought them new food items, simple but essential techniques, as well as effective instruments and implements. Citrus fruits, wheat, numerous herbs and vegetables, sugar cane, rice, olives, added to chickens, beef, pork, mutton, milk, and the like suddenly expanded the preëxisting dietary. Blends of the two have produced a Mexican cuisine unlike either the original Spanish or Indian. From the backs of Indians a considerable weight was shifted onto the humble burro and his more esteemed cousins, the mule and the horse. Without them modern Mexico would seem unnatural.

Before the coming of the Spaniards, no one in Mexico could dig deeply enough to produce a really workable well, and a similar lack of cutting tools threatened the whole agricultural system. No scythes, nor even sickles, were available to combat weeds. Even to chop down a tree required many and painful strokes with a pointed stone—a poor substitute for a Toledo steel ax or a Seville-made saw. Houses and public buildings had been restricted to honeycombs of small rooms, dark and unwindowed for want of glass and from absence of ideas about constructing a true arch; even nails were a European novelty. For lack of knowledge of the wheel, no one could make a

cart. Nor could anyone read a real book, much less write one. It shocked Spaniards to find so many native people sleeping on the ground. Among their very first chores they felt it necessary to teach Mexican Indians to weave hammocks (a trick which the Spaniards themselves had picked up from natives in the West Indies) and to build cheap but comfortable beds from cane. A popular Spanish innovation was distilling—native drinks as well as foods increased in number. The roster of material improvements could be amplified to incorporate medicine, clothing, weapons, and almost every other phase of everyday living, the main concern of most men. Even the wooden plow pulled by an ox was an improvement over a pointed digging stick.

Against these material and tangible items one must place intangible, human considerations. The social and personal losses, especially psychological ones, were great. They were the price of civilization. No one then or now has found how to impart revolutionary technical benefits without losses and changes. The central focus of Indian attention was ruthlessly twisted. The first psychological and physical strains of enforced acculturation took their toll of life, as did new diseases and unhealthy habits acquired from the Spaniards. The cherished native value systems were rudely and completely upset, with a consequent personal and group trauma, which hardened into a "psychological unemployment." The emotional bases for the Indian way of life were officially declared to be dangerous and inferior, and became the prime targets for extirpation. The Spaniards conquered minds as well as lands.

The final evaluation of the total colonial experiment is almost impossible to make. One difficulty is its sheer magnitude. Another is the highly emotional nature of all discussions about it, even by professional investigators. The larger answers they achieve visibly take on the colors of their individual and contemporary attitudes toward such controversial matters as Catholicism, the rights of labor, foreign penetration, the "welfare state" (of which the colonial government was an early and prime example), and similar fundamental and vital questions that enliven debates today. The colonial past lives on in current Mexican polemics.

In summing up the colonial period and its legacies to modern Mexico, perhaps the keynote is the slow and quiet change that occurred after the initial shocks. Peace and prosperity prevailed in New Spain at a time when in Old Spain a prolonged decadence had

already begun to set in. Mexican population losses from the Conquest and its disturbed aftermath had been made up by at least 1650. By that time too, militarism had faded from the scene, though the tradition was not wholly dead. In the scattered colonial cities, local literary and aesthetic movements had already begun to voice a dim spirit of "Mexicanism," a creole nationalism that reached full bloom much later. So tranquil and undramatic are the middle years of the colonial period, from around 1600 to 1750, that few historians even bother to look at them. This void in our information robs the investigator of nearly all details on which any final judgment of the colonial period can be based.

Rising above considerations of the "goodness" or "badness" is the major significance: the Spanish colonial period of Mexican history really represents a vast experiment carried on in innumerable laboratories. The mingling and intermingling of diverse European, African, and variant Indian cultural traits was universally occurring in small hamlets, on large haciendas, at countless mineheads, and even more intensely in the blossoming urban centers of New Spain. The results of this mixing, blending, compounding, and interplay give to colonial "Mexicanism" a fascinating complexity, one which has been projected into the present. Much of the cultural impress of colonial times is indelible. In the Hispano-Indian culture that the colonial melting pot produced, the native Indian and the imported Negro emerged vastly more changed than did the intrusive Spaniard. These centuries and elements forged the modern Mexican template.

From the close of the fifteenth century, European Spaniards conducted over a period of ten generations a series of experiments in imperialism and acculturation. On a foundation created from existing native Mexican materials they built a lasting edifice. The collective Western European, Christian traditions provided its specifications. The preponderance and strength of these patterns, when stretched overseas, linked Mexico to the civilized world of the time. It has been part of the Western community ever since. As the first modern European nation to attempt the thankless task of transoceanic colonizing, Spain reaped the rewards but also suffered the penalties of such an innovation. In both the literal and the figurative sense Spaniards were pioneers in Mexico, as elsewhere in the Americas.

But though Spain had labored long and lovingly to alter Mexico, the home country had (for complicated reasons we need not enter into) itself lapsed into a decline in which much of its former power

and glory were eclipsed by poverty and impotence. When the last Hapsburg king of Spain, Charles II, literally an idiot, could produce no direct heir, nearly every rival state in Europe waited tensely for him to die. Each hoped to establish some claim to the vacant Spanish throne or perhaps obtain a juicy portion of the rich and ancient Spanish Empire in America. Charles II died in 1700. The international sweepstakes then were officially started. The Spanish Empire, including Mexico, was the prize.

3. ENLIGHTENMENT AND REVOLT, 1700-1821

Initial impetus for innovating movements in eighteenth-century Mexico stemmed from a dynastic change in Spain following the death of the last Hapsburg, Charles II. In the scramble to succeed him, the grandson of Louis XIV of France, Philip V, was the successful candidate. With him, Bourbon ways superseded the long regnant Spanish Hapsburg policies. Under the Bourbon dynasty, France had risen to first magnitude; the family had decided that its Spanish branch should now apply the successful French formulas to the Iberian peninsula. For political reasons they wanted to rehabilitate an impoverished and decadent Spain, the junior partner of the new French-Spanish axis. Political renovation, however, waited on economic and social rejuvenation.

Eighteenth-century Spanish Bourbon Kings and their French-trained advisers tried their best to obliterate remnants of the Spanish Middle Ages at home and in the Empire. From 1700, they made continuous efforts to close the gap between the old sixteenth-century ideals and practices they had found and the modern and up-to-date eighteenth-century standards they brought to Spain. The homeland and its possessions overseas were in for a thorough housecleaning and basic remodeling. France, and especially seventeenth- and eighteenth-century France, served as the pattern. Old Spain, and New Spain as well, were to become "enlightened" and "modernized." The cumulative results are the "Bourbon Renaissance."

The Bourbon Renaissance Policies. The Bourbons believed devoutly in the Divine Right of kings to rule. Their concept of what they wanted to do as monarchs was considerably different from earlier Spanish Hapsburg notions. Divergences came in policies, methods, organizations, and emphasis. Hapsburgs had based their system on large landholders, large monopolistic merchants, and Ibe-

rian institutions hallowed by history. The new Spanish Bourbons, equally absolutist, took an opposite tack.

They preferred to foster a smaller-farm society (yeomen), new middle-class industrialists, and numerous and diverse small commercial groups to compete with one another. Outsiders themselves, they freely imported European technicians and scientists to appraise and change old usages (however "hallowed") which did not meet the eighteenth-century norms of reason, utility, and immediate economic advantage. This reversed Hapsburg suspicion and fear of foreigners. Where Hapsburgs, especially the later weak ones, had considered the Church as a coordinate and even dominant arm of government, interlocked with the sprawling secular bureaucracy at every level, the Bourbons frankly distrusted the Spanish Church and insisted on supremacy of the civil power over the spiritual. They went even further; they were markedly anticlerical.

The Hapsburgs had governed by an infinite delegation of power to councils and semiprivate organizations, each with its own law or *fuero*. Activities of such corporate groups were scrutinized by a Hapsburg bureaucracy chiefly constituted of the sons of landowners, merchants, and minor aristocrats. In most instances, even tax-collecting had been farmed out to semiprivate enterprise. Bourbons would have none of this.

They wanted a clearly organized, centralized system where the direct lines of command and responsibility were uniform and unmistakable. They preferred to staff their fewer, more powerful, agencies with sons of the middle class, each professionally trained as a secular administrator. Ministers at home and their able subordinates in colonial posts were given wide latitude of discretion. The colonial officials were broadly instructed to do all in their power to foster industry, spread useful knowledge, rejuvenate agriculture, and streamline administration. The Bourbons wanted results, but were willing to pay for them. In all this new program, there was not the slightest leaning toward democracy. In an age of "Enlightened Despots" the Bourbon kings of Spain, their counselors, and their subordinates all agreed that everything should be done *for* the people, nothing *by* the people. The prime drive was to increase the wealth of the realm, but now national wealth was measured in production of goods and services, not in the amounts of bullion that a state could hoard, as in the sixteenth century.

In the specific case of Mexico, Spanish Bourbons made numerous

changes aimed particularly at increasing local prosperity and productivity. After surveys in the 1750's and 1760's, Mexican colonial officials were given large grants of authority to make needed changes. Many of the duplicating and overlapping agencies which the Hapsburgs had created as a purposeful system of checks and balances were scrapped or reduced almost to nullity. The land was divided into intendancies, like France; these became the frames of the modern states of Mexico. In the 1770's a train of able administrators and a succession of great viceroys were sent off to Mexico City to see what could and should be done about further improving the military, economic, and social conditions of the potentially rich area. Schools were founded and institutes started. Local interests were encouraged and foreign experts were hired to restore and multiply the mines, classify the plants, draw modern maps, beautify the cities, create roads, construct port works, and in short, remake the old place into a modern country. The Bourbons lost little time in ousting the Mexican Jesuits (1767), an eighteenth-century symbol of superstition and as a "state within a State," a threat to civil power. Insofar as possible such "feudalism" was to be uprooted; only reasonable, utilitarian, scientific institutions would do. But changes, even by eager and zealous men, go slowly in Mexico. Bourbon programs always outran the actual results, substantial as some of these were.

Bourbon monarchs and their like-minded subordinates did not stop with mere negative activities—eliminating barriers to progress (which had become a watchword of the times). Officials in New Spain re-drew administrative lines, knocked the shackles off commerce, and encouraged all manner of invention and innovation. Under these aggressive policies the total real wealth of Mexico increased, its population expanded, overseas commerce leaped, and royal revenues mounted upward to unprecedented heights. Local savants were encouraged to form discussion groups which shared with one another and the country the latest scientific knowledge of the world and blue-printed improvements in their regional or local economy. Their journals (for each such society felt almost duty-bound to disseminate new knowledge) covered a vast range of topics, from proper measurement of the equator to the advantages of vaccines, steel plows, and fertilizers. Benjamin Franklin was constantly hailed as a model for Mexicans to follow.

In the international field, Spain's Mexican possessions were being threatened by aggressive British Americans of North America, and

by Russians thrusting down the Pacific coast from Alaska. To meet these, and to tack down the northern approaches (borderlands of only strategic, not economic, value) which protected the significant parts of Mexico, Bourbon officials in Mexico City sponsored military and exploring expeditions. They extended the Mexican frontier by planting a line of mission-military outposts stretching from California (1769) eastward across what was then called the Great American Desert—the modern American Southwest. As part of the Bourbon military preparedness drive, militia companies were formed in nearly every town in the populated heartland a thousand miles further south. They were usually officered by local Mexican creoles,* proud to strut in their gaudy uniforms and willing to pay for commissions and even to finance the outfitting of their soldiers as well. Guns and eighteenth-century ideas, a truly explosive combination, entered Mexico about the same time. But with the rising levels of prosperity, able government, and continued peace, a rosy, quiet future seemed in store for Mexico under Bourbon guidance.

Struggles for Independence. If Mexico was faring so well under the Bourbon Renaissance, the query naturally arises why did the colony join in the general American movement for independence from Spain? The answers are, unfortunately, less simple than one could wish. The explanation breaks into three parts: confusion in Europe at the rise of Napoleon and a consequent reversal of Spanish efforts; the flaming examples of the American and the French Revolutions; and, finally, happenings in Mexico itself. The first two of these circumstances had universal results in Hispanic America, while the third gave to Mexico the peculiar and unusual stamp which its particular movements for independence display when compared to others of the Americas.

The revolutions for independence in Hispanic America were civil wars. Not until after Napoleon's fall could Spain dispatch many professional soldiery overseas to reinforce the efforts of its loyal colonial subjects, who tried to preserve Crown authority and its apparatus in the colonies. The colonial world thus became divided between loyalists and separatists, between royalists and republicans. In most places the two issues were fused into one: victory of the revolutionists commonly meant the establishment of an independent republic. Elements wedded to the old way—the local bureaucrats,

* Creole is a descriptive term applied to Spanish families and persons born in the American colonies rather than in the Spanish peninsula.

established merchants, landowners, and ruling Spaniards and upper clergy—normally opposed both separation and republicanism. The patterns of success of one side or the other varied in detail from country to country.

September 16, 1810 is Mexican Independence Day. On that memorable date Padre Miguel Hidalgo uttered the *Grito de Dolores*—"Independence and death to Spaniards!" His original force of four Indians swelled as they surged toward Mexico from Michoacan, spreading rapine behind and terror ahead. Whites, both creole and Spanish, linked arms to quash this primitive caste-war, and Hidalgo was defeated and then executed. José María Morelos nursed the embers of the Hidalgo movement and added republicanism to it before he too failed and died in 1813. By 1817 only sporadic bands carried on the new crusade lighted by Hidalgo.

Mexican movements formed a unique pattern. The twin issues of independence and the formation of a republic were separately resolved in such fashion that in place of destroying the traditional bases of royalist rule, it preserved them. Because of its responsibilities within the Spanish Empire, Mexico City and its immediately surrounding areas formed a stronghold of royalist strength, military and ideological. Separatist and republican military movements which neared the viceregal capital were crushed without much real difficulty. Not until the conservative elements of Mexico had belatedly decided that their main interests were more secure outside the Empire than in it, did the independence movement succeed. To protect their religion, social system, and position from a radical Spanish Cortes, moderates and conservatives joined an independence movement originally carried on by republicans. The price of such support was a Mexican monarchy, independent but dominated by the older colonial groups. These compromises soon failed.

Basically unchanged, the old Spanish viceroyalty of New Spain became the independent Mexican Empire in 1821, and then (in 1823) the Republic of Mexico. The changes in form did little to rearrange the traditional operation of power, and left society almost undisturbed. Paradoxically the elements which elsewhere in Latin America had been the main barriers to independence and chief targets of revolutionary activity were in Mexico the very ones which cut it adrift from Spain and controlled its national destinies for half a century thereafter.

4. Modern Heritages

1. SOVEREIGNTY AND NATIONALITY

After 1821, Mexico was a sovereign nation, in the political sense. Power to make decisions resided within the area, rather than in Spain. Despite the ups-and-downs, changes in form and actions of its national government, Mexico has not since lost her political sovereignty nor national identity. Achievement of these were the undeniable major consequences of the revolution for independence. Henceforth its international relations and its domestic problems were the sole responsibility of Mexico and the Mexicans. Foreign nations now dealt directly with Mexico rather than through Spain, and on Mexican shoulders alone rested the responsibility of the actions of their own government, whatever at the moment that might be.

The main outlines of Mexico remained much the same for a considerable period after it first started on its independent political life despite the heat lightning of partisan politics and the thunder of diplomatic exchanges. The severing of political lines that had bound it to Spain did not automatically transform society or even all ideas, much less institutions around which Mexican life had revolved for so long. Neo-Colonial Mexico in the social sense began to pass into Recent, or the most recently modern, Mexico, around 1867 when some of the old institutions and ideas were eliminated as the major determinants of the Mexican decisions. A long printed page can easily be filled with the names of those who headed early-nineteenth-century Mexican governments while the nation was experimenting politically.

Newly independent Mexico was socially much the same as it had been under the Bourbon viceroyalty. Economically, however, it was a buyer without funds and a seller without goods; seemingly as events unrolled, Mexico was doomed to increasing impoverishment.

This, in turn, bred political difficulties, both national and international. A vicious circle of deterioration was characteristic: forced to look abroad for capital and loans to rebuild a shattered economy and run their affairs, governments found their credit sinking lower and lower as default upon default made financial aid to them more and more risky; the ruinous rates of interest left smaller and smaller amounts of principal available. Even more serious, the future national revenues were increasingly pledged as collateral, so that eventually only foreigners benefited from any collection of customs dues, the main source of public funds. Politically, Mexico was sovereign and independent but the country was economically a fief. Poverty and misery only intensified the intestine factional struggles over power and policy.

The chief domestic political issues first centered around the form which the new nation should assume. Implicit was the major question of all politics: who should rule, and for what ends? The failure of a limited monarchy to satisfy the vast majority of creoles led to a temporary eclipse of the monarchical principle and its ultra-conservative supporters. By 1823 there was fairly general agreement in Mexico that a republic would be the only appropriate framework of the new nation. Beyond this, opinion was as varied as the individuals.

Political sentiments and platforms divided into two main streams. Names and labels changed but the general complexion of each remained much the same. One was a shifting coalition formed by Colonial and Neo-Colonial creoles who wished to preserve the earlier practices and institutions intact but narrow their application from an imperial to a national ideal. Their opponents, products of Independence, shared with them the idea that the Mexican nation should work out its own destinies and improve its economic base, but differed markedly as to the pace and direction, as well as by what instruments changes should proceed.

The first group looked mainly to Europe for inspiration and aid; the second, to the North American republic for guidance and models. Time and circumstance shifted their tag, but the former were usually called Centralists, and the latter, Federalists. Each was named after the type of republican government it proposed to operate if and when it came into power. Iturbide's flimsy Empire was overthrown by Federalists in 1823 but after a brief and unsuccessful flurry at organizing the republic which displaced it, their group (with one or

two breaks) remained out of power for more than a generation. Federalists, from 1824 to 1855, were in almost constant opposition to the ruling Centralists.

2. EXPERIMENTS, 1824-1853

The Centralist Experiment. The Centralist group had ability, concentrated power, and a program that continued the ideals of the Bourbon Renaissance. Local circumstance stripped the anticlerical biases of the Bourbons from their program, and added the necessity of including militarism as an essential feature. The political theory and ideology of Centralists can be compared, without major distortions, to the Hamiltonian concepts that helped shape the early United States.

The essential goal of Centralists was to form a stable, powerful, central, national government responsive to the desires of the main economic groups, the established supporters of Colonial and Neo-Colonial Mexico. Most of the Centralist political strength derived from the economic province concentrated in a small, highly developed geographical area; it included the Spanish-founded mining centers just north of Mexico City, the grain-growing country of the hacendados adjacent to both, the urban industrialist centers of Puebla in the corridor to the outlet at Veracruz, and part of the port itself. Centralists were also strong in other urban centers of the nearby provinces, where like-minded creoles hoped to join and emulate developments guided from Mexico City. As in the past, they looked to Europe, especially France and England, for guidance, support, and models.

Basically the Centralist position was strongly nationalist, economically and politically conservative, and culturally European Catholic. Its power base was the capital and its attached economic auxiliaries. The inclinations of the Centralists inevitably led them toward strong executive rule, as in Bourbon days. They were a homogeneous body, most of whom had received good educations at home or abroad. Their coalition embraced the military, the Church, and the creole upper classes.

If successful, their program would make an agro-industrial unit of Mexico, supplemented by swelling foreign commerce and mining. In the historical arena of power, the chief instrument of the Centralists was a colorful and demagogic general from Veracruz, Antonio

López de Santa Anna; in the sphere of policy and foreign relations, their leader was Lucas Alamán. His death in 1853 weakened centralist power and allowed extremists to dominate. Party prestige was diminished by the chaos and discredit accruing from the disastrous American War, and the short-lived attempt of Santa Anna to reestablish a personal empire. Rifts within the Centralist group, plus the growing strength of its opponents, the Federalists, equalized power between these two main Mexican political divisions. Parity of strength led to a protracted period of civil war for two decades after 1847.

The Federalist Experiment. At nearly every point (except nationalism and the hope for a rosy Mexican future) the Federalists were the antithesis of Centralists. They were scattered in space and outlook among the outlying margins and provinces of Mexico, united only in their determination to oust Centralists from rule and to substitute their own programs. Federalists represented the republican, revolutionary strands of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. They accepted Bourbon ideals of education, transportation, scientific agriculture, and the like. Similarly they retained Bourbon anticlerical biases and the Enlightenment insistence on reason and utility over tradition. Again without violence to either, their position was comparable to the Jeffersonian-Jacksonian outlook in the United States. Liberty, equality, fraternity seemed much more important to them than stability and economic welfare, when choices had to be made.

Collectively they viewed Mexico as a loose collection of little sovereignties. The sovereign states, bound together in a mutually beneficial national association, had as their agent a limited national government whose chief feature was a small, trained bureaucracy, controlled by Congress. Their political theory was based on innovation, a major break with the past: at no earlier time had sovereign Mexican states even existed, let alone exercised local power; Congress (the center of their system) was a far cry from the colonial Audiencia, responsive only to the monarch and his decrees. By and large, Federalists were rural-minded, distrustful of city ways, and unashamedly and almost lyrically provincial. They exploited and even created localistic loyalties which Centralists hoped to extirpate as barriers to "progress." In their devotion to lush diversity, Federalists were politically romantic, in contrast to the more disciplined, classic emotions of the Centralists.

The United States, as the only republic in the world successfully operating on federal principles, magnetized Mexican Federalist attention, and Federalists attributed the growing strength and prosperity of the northern country to its decentralized political system. Generally speaking, Federalists were notably short on economic analysis. The general admiration for the United States carried over into their other international views where a strong anti-European bias was notable. They considered Yankee aggressiveness attributable to Southern slavery factions not unlike their own Centralists. Federalists abolished slavery in Mexico in 1824. One of the reasons for the rapid United States success in the 1845-1847 war against Mexico was the widely diffused feeling in the provinces that it was a "Centralist's War." Political disagreements among Mexicans more than military divisions from the United States made possible the capture of Mexico City.

The credo of the Federalists had been formulated by many minds, but it was in the 1830's intellectualized by an obscure figure, Dr. Luis Mora. Strong in his attack against Centralist views, he was somewhat weak on a comprehensive positive program to replace them. In Mora's outline, Federalists stood for antimilitarism, on both theoretical and practical grounds: militarism was feudal, dangerous; large armies locked up manpower needed for utilitarian ends such as building roads and schools. Mora rejected the earlier easy-going optimism of the eighteenth century about the inevitability of Mexican progress—political or material—and stressed the affirmative need to rid Mexico of its feudalistic vestiges, especially *fueros*. These were ancient legal privileges given the military and clergy. His attack on the Church and the military men used economic, political, and cultural arguments: The Church was monopolistic, *ergo*, bad. Science, not religion, should be the common bond among Mexicans; it was rational and universal, modern and beneficial.

The first task of Federalist leaders, as Mora saw it, was to uproot the Church and the army and bring all the nation under one set of laws. Institutions stemming from these would promote equality, science, and material benefits. *Fueros* were the obvious and visible symbols of all that Mora and the Federalists opposed. Therefore, the first steps toward further "decolonizing" and "modernizing" of Mexico were aimed at judicial reform—exterminating the special privileges of corporate groups. This anti-corporative bent was later easily transferred to business, especially foreign corporations.

3. REFORM AND REVIVED EMPIRE, 1853-1872

The Reforma and the Constitution of 1857. Exiled in Paris, Mora scribbled away in sickness. But events in Mexico were shaping an opportunity for his theses to develop into political programs to be carried on by others. In the provinces a second generation of Mexicans was coming to maturity, younger men who had been born after Mexico had achieved political nationhood. They entered local politics. Soon many of them tasted the frustrations produced by Centralist rule from Mexico City over their areas. Centralist programs took no account of local aspirations that did not further their own interests. Two of these local leaders, Melchor Ocampo of Michoacan and Benito Juárez of Oaxaca, spearheaded a Federalist movement of protest which has come down in Mexican annals as "The Reform." One was the son of an hacendado, the other a full-blooded Zapotec Indian; each had served ably as governor of his state. Neither had shown much inclination for any kind of radicalism until clashes with Church authorities led Centralist officials in 1852 to exile them both to New Orleans.

There, with other Mexican political dreamers and schemers, they eked out a paltry living in the day and debated Mexico's future endlessly through the night. In the dreary circumstance of exile, they were hardened intellectually and morally. More important, as a group, these expatriates formulated a program to end Mexican miseries, if ever they could capture power in Mexico City. This seemed a hopeless prospect for middle-aged provincials without personal means or military support.

Dramatic episodes opened the future to them. In the provinces of Mexico a republican revolution headed by an old veteran of Independence Wars, Juan Álvarez, gained headway against the insufferable Santa Anna. This 1853 "Revolution of Ayutla" seemed at first to be merely one of the interminable local uprisings, except for one fact: it became a huge military success. Even Centralist elements (displeased with Santa Anna's fantastic airs and ways) joined it. Without really major difficulty the military leaders made themselves masters of Mexico and elected Juan Álvarez president. This tough but humble old Indian knew his limitations; he had power but no skill in government, so he turned over these matters to a coterie of Federalists which included the New Orleans exiles.

Backed by power, they were given a broad mandate, to put a real Federalist reform into effect. The results are known as *La Reforma*. It started in 1853 and continued for a troubled decade and a half.

The Reform Surges. The avowed objects of the Reform group (Federalists all, but divided into liberal and moderate wings) were to make Mexico a modern, middle-class state, based on a federal republican constitution, the supreme law. The first moves in that direction were to liquidate the special *fueros* of the military and clergy, and to subordinate these groups to secular, civil authority. Their economic reforms envisaged increasing the Mexican wealth by putting the monopolized assets of the Church into streams of commerce, and of building a nation of small landholders, each with his own farm purchased from the large ecclesiastical holdings now held in mortmain. If one likes such terms, the *Reforma* can be described as a bourgeois revolution, carried out by and for *mestizos*; it was equally antagonistic to the Europeanized creole Mexicans and to the seemingly brutish and superstition-soaked Indians controlled by the clergy.

Soon Mexico began to ring with legislative changes and the political responses to them. Chief initial Reform laws were the *Ley Juárez* (November 23, 1855) and the *Ley Lerdo* (June 1856). The former reorganized the system of Mexican justice and abolished *fueros* by suppressing the military and ecclesiastical courts' jurisdiction over civil matters. This, of course, rubbed across the sensitive nerve-ends of the two most powerful institutions in the country, and was the signal for uprisings, plots, and the reshuffling of political coalitions. But the Reformers plunged on.

The *Ley Lerdo* had even more far-reaching repercussions on the present and future of Mexico. Aimed at the Church, it ordered corporate bodies to divest themselves of their landholdings. The theory was that Church sales would stimulate commerce, that the national Treasury would tax the sales (and thus keep sums flowing in), and that peasant tenantry would become small private holders, as preference in sale was to be given to those occupying tracts. It turned out, however, that the law did not force the division of these ecclesiastical *latifundias* and that only existing large landholders were rich enough to pay the prices asked. Actually, at this time, few transfers of this sort were made.

An even more unexpected and far-reaching consequence of the *Ley Lerdo* was to strip native communities of their traditional pos-

session of communal lands. To encourage small private property interests, the Reformers considered village governments to be corporate groups, equally required to rid themselves of lands. In the ensuing sales, outsiders rather than villagers snapped up the best bits, and even a belated amendment, allowing communal holdings to be divided into private plots among the heads of families in the community, was ineffective in keeping the ancient fields under local ownership and control. The whole Federalist economic theory was based on the idea of sanctity of private property and its dynamic incentives to the middle-class virtues of thrift, hard work, and morality. This attitude underlay both their reform of the upper-class system and that of the lower, the Indians.

Constitution of 1857. Culmination of the Reform program came in the Constitution of 1857, which guided the Mexican nation until 1917. It embedded the whole Federalist credo into the highest law of the land. It opened with a long Bill of Rights to guarantee individual liberties of all sorts. The basic theoretical precept throughout the document was equality of all persons and every group before the law. Conversely stated, all special privileges were rejected.

But even the Constitutionals of 1857 decided not to go the full route and disestablish and disendow the Church. Confiscation ran counter to their whole theory of a limited government and the sanctity of property; disestablishment was still too explosive a concept to all but Radical Liberals. Consistently hostile to corporate groups, the Constitution stressed democracy, states' rights, the authority of Congress over the executive, and supremacy of national law over particular interests. It was an eclectic charter which borrowed from the Spanish Constitution of 1812, from documents of French and American Revolutions, and from practices used by Federalist state governments and those established in the United States. Indians, workers, military men, and clerics had been excluded from drafting its provisions, with the result that it was the product of provincial lawyers, small merchants, fiery (but until then unknown) journalists, and others of the same social stratum. The Constitution of 1857 aimed almost exclusively at solving political problems, with scant attention to social or economic ones.

Promulgation of the Reform Constitution, coming on the heels of the *Ley Juárez* and the *Ley Lerdo*, split Mexico again. Part of the Federalists thought the program too radical, others not radical enough. The vocal opposition of excluded Centralists turned into

political and military pressure. One group—Centralists and disaffected moderate Federalists—repudiated the Constitution and drove its proponents from office. Thereupon the Centralist-Moderate coalition set up a new regime in Mexico City. Juárez and his Radical Liberal Federalists (usually shortened to Liberals or Constitutionals) created another Mexican government at Veracruz, governed by the Constitution of 1857. For three years Mexico went through another blood-bath. The cruelest form of strife—civil war—ravaged the land as two governments disputed whether the Constitution of 1857 and the Radicals would rule all of Mexico. The civil war between the Constitutionals of Veracruz and their opponents in Mexico City had international repercussions. The United States supported Juárez, while European powers—including England—backed the other group.

The split in Federalist ranks permitted the Juárez government to complete the *Reforma*. The Moderate factions had sided with the Centralists who repudiated the Constitution of 1857; the Church was furnishing them with funds to carry on war. Both principle and need coincided in Juárez' decrees which disestablished and disendowed the Church. Church property was made subject to nationalization, a confiscation which would provide the Radical Veracruz government with funds while denying resources to their opponents. Further, the State rather than the Church was made agent for performance of legal marriages and of supervising burials. Ecclesiastical fees for religious ceremonies (in addition to the civil) were placed under government control. These decrees became Constitutional amendments in the 1870's; at the time they were war measures, valid only if the Constitutionals could oust their tenacious and powerful enemies from Mexico City. This they finally did in 1861. They reproclaimed the Constitution of 1857 as the sole organic law of the land and themselves the only government. Their triumph was short-lived.

Intervention and Revived Empire, 1861–1867. Defeated on the domestic field, the Centralists-Moderate Federalists sought aid abroad. The international situation was ripe for such action. Spain, France, and Great Britain had several reasons to intervene in Mexico, among them to collect their long overdue debts, on which Radicals had suspended payment. The American Civil War then raging made interposition by the United States improbable. To find England acting so European by agreeing to armed intervention

came as a shock to many Mexicans, and Latin-Americans in general. But for diplomatic reasons (connected with wider affairs in Europe and the world) Great Britain was a full partner in the Mexican Intervention of 1861.

Troops of the three European countries landed at Veracruz. For humanitarian reasons Mexicans allowed them to move up into the highlands above the port to avoid the perils of yellow fever. Dissension among the allies revealed the scheme of debt collection to be a mere pretext on the part of France (under Napoleon III) to add Mexico economically and politically to her satellite holdings. Spain and Britain then withdrew from the adventure.

French troops, however, broke their promises to remain immobile and pushed on to capture Mexico City. The check of their march at Puebla, where on May 5, 1862 Mexicans beat them badly, turned the debt collection pretext into one of French Imperial honor. Reinforcements followed. Juárez' legal government left the ancient seat of power in 1863. Without real military forces at his disposal, President Juárez called on Mexicans to employ guerrilla tactics like those so successfully used in Spain during the campaigns against the first Napoleon. But despite these, Mexico fell to the French. Juárez' government was forced into the northern Mexican deserts and kept on a constant move until 1867.

A fantastic subplot had been spun by Mexican monarchists in Europe during the 1840's. It now bore fruit. The French ruler, Napoleon III, using Mexican intermediaries, persuaded Maximilian of Hapsburg to accept the throne which the monarchists and even the Centralists were now willing to support. Maximilian, egged on by an ambitious wife and his own romanticism, solemnly took the proffered crown. This critical decision was made only after French troops had rigged a plebiscite in Mexico which resulted as expected—the Mexican people demanded Maximilian as their ruler. Under terms of agreements signed in Europe, Maximilian was to have French military support until the new Mexican Empire became stable, and in return was to give French concessionaires special privileges; it was assumed (because of the Pope's approval of the scheme) that he would restore the Church properties taken under the Mexican Reform, and would proceed to shape a program acceptable to the French monarch and the old Centralist elements in Mexico. None of these things happened.

Maximilian alienated conservative domestic and Papal support by

acting like a Liberal. But he didn't win Liberal backing, even though he had misjudged the temper of Mexican affairs so far as to invite Juárez to collaborate with him! European affairs and the hostility of an armed United States, newly freed from the Civil War, caused Napoleon III to withdraw his military support of Maximilian. The success of the guerrilla campaigns against the Mexican Emperor was an added feature which doomed the throne. Steadily Juárez and his followers surged south, and finally, in 1867, Republican forces (under Porfirio Díaz) recaptured Mexico City, isolated Maximilian's forces, and, after a summary trial, shot the Emperor and his two main Mexican military aides. His wife, Carlota, had embarked on a vain trip to Europe to secure support from Napoleon III and the Pope; she went mad, and lingered on as a tragic reminder of the phantom Empire until her death in 1927.

Liquidation of Neo-Colonialism. Once again that squat and somber figure, Benito Juárez, ruled Mexico as a symbol of Mexicanism. During the Intervention and Empire his moral stature had grown to gigantic heights; as the implacable foe of special privilege, professional militarism, and the political Church, and the inflexible champion of law and constitutionalism, he had brought the Mexicans through the most severe crises of their national history to date, largely by strength of character and belief in the Mexican people's abilities to shape their own fate. The liquidation of Intervention and Empire and the final triumph of *La Reforma* put an end to some of the main features of Neo-Colonial Mexico.

The Church and large landholders were henceforth doubly suspect as collaborators and instigators of the enterprise so costly in Mexican lives and honor. Both were on the social and political defensive. Their traditional and favored position at the elbow of government was no longer generally considered natural and desirable; they were now "colonial." Corporate interests had chosen the wrong side in this final showdown of force, and suspicion spread to cover all corporate entities. With loss of position, their outcries against the Constitution of 1857 were muted and, though constant, not very important. Moreover, for once and for all the idea of a Mexican monarchy had been seared out of the political realm. Mexico was a Federalist republic, governed by Mexicans under the precept of the Constitution of 1857. Technically that was what all the fighting had been about. Foreigners had disturbed that arrangement in 1861, and had been ejected.

Equally important for the Mexican future was the dim sense of Mexican national consciousness that had begun to pulse during the Intervention and Empire. Then one was either a *mocho*, roughly equivalent to a Quisling, or a *pelado*, a true Mexican willing to make any sacrifice to rid the land of meddling foreigners. Unlike the American War fifteen years earlier, Mexico's struggle against the French gave Mexicans a common goal and glimpses of a common future. The Mexican culture, so rich and so varied, was beginning to take on a political cast. Nationalism had at its base a stable territory, an established frame of government, and now a set of common emotional experiences to give it coherence, force, and direction. It was only a beginning, a foreshadowing.

Mexican culture had been further enriched by Intervention. France's political domination had been unequivocally rejected, but its culture, so forcibly intruded, had been thankfully retained. Maximilian had renovated Mexico City in the French mode; French goods had changed Mexican tastes; and French books and plays had made a deep impression in urban centers. Sophistication and French became almost synonymous. Odd vulgarizations, the typically Mexican filtering of foreign ideas, spread the Gallic leaven by imitation from the upper into the lower and less literate levels of society. In 1883 the French language was even taught in primary schools. For nearly half a century after France had ceased to be an active political factor in Mexican political affairs, French culture thrived. The whole *milieu* of the late nineteenth century in Mexico was Franco-Mexican.

When Juárez resumed his interrupted tenure in Mexico City in 1867 he faced a prospect both heartening and dismal. The liberal ideals so long disputed and so deeply cherished now seemed irrevocably established. Mexico was free of foreign commitments and liens, repudiated with Intervention. It could shape its own international future. But its flimsy political institutions had collapsed under continuous civil strife; its people were wretchedly poor and without means to better themselves; and violence had again become a way of life for the major part of the citizenry. Many of them had never been peacefully employed; their trade was guerrilla scrounging and plundering. Banditry and revolution had been a patriotic duty for so long that any attempt at discipline seemed to infringe upon an inalienable right.

The economic outlook was pessimistic. Long ago the mines had

been abandoned even by foreigners. Each little Mexican state, trying desperately to make ends meet, had built a high tariff wall around its domain, so that the inconsequential amount of goods that could bump their way on the backs of mules from one valley to another were scarcely worth sending or receiving, so exorbitant was the price. Mexico had neither diplomatic nor trade ties with European nations; even individuals capable of supplying the credit, capital goods, and ideas necessary to a modern economy were justifiably skeptical of the Mexican future. Not a bank, nor less a railroad, functioned while Juárez was still alive. Indian revolts and bandit forays kept life insecure and precarious. Juárez, with heartfelt thanks but no pensions, rapidly dismantled the guerrilla-trained army and let its unpaid hordes loose on the countryside.

Juárez died in 1872, shortly after Porfirio Díaz, a war hero, had narrowly missed defeating him at the polls for his third term as president. His passing closed an era. He immediately joined other Mexican immortals in the pantheon of national heroes. Under him and his Federalist-Liberal group Mexico had, between 1853 and 1872, made another of its critical passages toward the present.

4. MATERIALISM AND OPTIMISM, 1872-1910

After a troubled interregnum under President Lerdo de Tejada, Mexicans were ready to pay nearly any price for peace and order in 1876. From its inception the nation had oscillated between war, revolution, and shorter and shorter postwar periods in which to make some fundamental adjustments to changing times. Reforms had never had much chance to affect the old structures; reconstruction and rehabilitation always outranked improvement as the pressing need of the moment. Lack of economic and political stability had bred further poverty and increased misery; these in turn always set off another cycle of strife that scattered any productive forces. How to end it? That was the question in many minds. Typically, one Mexican wrote (in 1877) that Mexico was once again at a crossroads, "Between a past that horrifies, a future not clearly seen." It had always been thus.

It was at this point that Porfirio Díaz stepped onto the political stage and offered some attractive solutions. At first his programs were less important than the man; later the balance shifted. Personally he was the very model of Adam Smith's "frugal man." He

neither drank nor smoked, and had built up a reputation for unshakable personal integrity. His patriotism had been proven by his war record against the French, and his Liberal Federalism was unquestioned. Though an army man, he was anti-militarist, and wherever he had been stationed as zone commander, schools had risen and prosperity had bloomed as his soldiery built roads and straightened trails.

Díaz came to power on a military coup and a program of no reelection. At the end of his first term he dutifully stepped down, as did all his patronage appointees. As a honeymoon for his second wife he made a triumphal tour of the United States. Things in Mexico went poorly while he was away. As the indispensable man, he was called back to the president's chair in 1884.* He did not leave it until 1911. This was the Porfirian Era, created by Díaz.

Unencumbered by political debts, in 1884 he set about solidifying his power and shaping Mexico to the models of the age, the age of Victoria and Grover Cleveland. His bureaucrats, few in number and high in skill, collected endless statistics to help him frame policies. Technical advisers, young men weary of strife, flocked to his side.

The whole apparatus of a modern economy was dropped into place within a generation: railroads, banks, heavy industry, stable currency and gilt-edged national credit abroad. Above all, there was peace, even though the army had dwindled to a clutch of mummified generals and the total protective force in the country was merely a handful of colorful *rurales*—a national constabulary created by his predecessor.

Díaz's rule was not pinned together by bayonets, but by ideas. Those ideas have been discredited with the passage of time and the success of the Revolution, aimed at overthrowing Díaz and all his works. Even in his day the doctrines conflicted with many earlier strands of the Mexican tradition, itself a skein of contradictions. Díaz and those who advised him were concerned primarily with two major issues: to preserve Mexico from further foreign aggressions and meddling (like the Intervention and Empire), and to make the nation great. The two were intertwined objectives in which international and domestic affairs were joined.

Porfirio Díaz and the men around him analyzed Mexico's problems in economic rather than in political or social terms. They sincerely believed that the salvation of Mexico, from the trauma of endemic

* He had prearranged his election.

civil war and foreign interventions, lay in making it solvent. This was a necessary measure to break the vicious circle of degeneration. Their views coincided with those of all the articulate Mexicans of their time: Conciliation among factions, and peace, were essential.

For the first fifteen or twenty years of Porfirio Díaz' rule, his regime was probably the most popular government that independent Mexico had enjoyed to that time. Its strength was based on a conscious policy of reconciliation among divergent interests and factions. By a sharp bit of political surgery (1876–1880) Díaz established his supremacy. Thereafter he rarely resorted to what he called "spilling a little bad blood to save all the good." Another version was "Join us or die" (*Pan ó palo*). Francisco Bulnes, one of the Porfirian advisers, characterized the power system as one based on "the maximum of benevolence, a minimum of terror." Much of Díaz' power was purely mythical.

Individual liberties, one of the Liberal legacies from the *Reforma*, again were subordinated. These, as well as older vested interests, had to be sacrificed to make Mexico a powerful and respected nation. Liberty alone was not enough to preserve Mexico. Among the political advisers of Díaz the conviction grew that guarantees of a political constitution had little meaning unless there was solid economic power to make them meaningful. Quite typical is one statement, "The day that we may say that the fundamental charter has given us a million colonists, then we have encountered the constitution that really suits us; it will not be a phrase on the lips—it will be a plow in the hands, a locomotive on the tracks, and money everywhere." Liberty bred anarchism in Mexico, they said, so liberty was a luxury which Mexicans could not yet enjoy.

Emphasis, then, was to be economic, not political. The ideology of the administration unconsciously combined many earlier strands of Mexican political traditions. The limited nature of the state, whose job was to provide peace and order, had been at the heart of the Federalist credo. Díaz expressed it often. One of his slogans was that under him there would be few politics, much administration (*poca política, mucha administración*). Hapsburgs would have understood that formula, but Bourbons and Centralists too would have applauded its motive—economic betterment of Mexico through private enterprise, protected but not aided by government.

Men around Díaz gave to the general Doctrine of Wealth, current in the United States and Europe, a local Mexican habitation

and a name: "scientificism."* Mexicans concocted a philosophy based on French Positivism to justify their actions. *Científicos* saw the future of Mexico dependent on the scientific allocation of scarce skills and scanty resources by an appointed élite, drawn exclusively from the "rational" (science-minded) and productive Mexicans. The middle class—between the rude Indian and the arrogant aristocrat—was to act as a trustee for the rest of the nation until the national economic plant, created by self-interested bourgeoisie, poured out goods and services. These, trickling downward, would make liberal democracy a possibility. To reach political democracy—never abandoned as an ultimate ideal—the active enterpriser was to be encouraged. On him the future rested.

In the *científico* scheme Mexico would go through a difficult transitional period. In it only a minority—"rational" and productive groups—could be favored. To squander slender fiscal resources on humanitarian and welfare programs among Indians and *mestizos*, who were characterized by Porfirians as being unscientific—fanatic and superstitious—seemed an obvious economic and political fallacy. They must wait.

Economic analyses convinced the *científicos* that within the Mexican nation there was little available liquid capital. It was insufficient to finance the rosy future they foresaw; obviously, therefore, most of the needed sums had to come from abroad. But in the 1880's, and later, Mexico was only one of several rival underdeveloped areas competing for such foreign investment. To attract capital and keep it from skittering off to more stable or financially more attractive areas (such as the Far East and Africa), Mexican returns on investment must be high. Further, the Mexican social situation had to remain relatively static; constant turmoil was no way to trap one elusive franc, pound sterling, or dollar. Their ultimate hope was that such foreign investment, pouring into Mexico, would mix with whatever small local capital there was available and create (by the multiplier principle) a constantly greater store of local funds. These in turn would then force out the more intrusive investment from abroad. After all, that was the way the United States rose to power. This general Mexican policy began to work out specifically in the railroad field, but in few others before the Revolution.

* Proponents of the doctrines were *científicos*, a name at first applied to a small group of young intellectuals who voiced the credo, then later applied widely to those who believed it.

One other main strand of Porfirian ideology is worth noting. Like all Mexican governments from the time of independence, the men around Díaz stressed Mexican nationalism. For economic and for social reasons, they proposed that all Mexicans be brought into the same psychological circle by indoctrinating them with the universal truths of science. Education was to be "neutral"—it should not impart religion or even controversial political doctrines. It was to be scientific and modern, utilitarian and civic. Under a limited national government, it became the duty of local units—towns and states—to provide schools modeled on the purposely few but advanced national ones of the capital. Federalism was still a potent word; it meant limited national government and states' rights.

As a social doctrine, the *científicos* resurrected both the Colonial and the Neo-Colonial traditions. The idea that "blood" somehow affected social capabilities (a basic premise of the sixteenth century) went through a world-revival at the end of the nineteenth; its Mexican adaptation was the theory that Indians and mixed breeds were a pretty hopeless and dangerous lot, doomed by biology to inferiority and wardship. Dictatorship of the creole, white bourgeoisie seemed destined to last until these unfortunate anachronisms could somehow be absorbed.

But money everywhere made up for lack of proper biological background. It was *prima facie* evidence of economic and social virility. The country that had millionaires was obviously endowed with virtues; Mexico wanted many. Fooled so long by intangible abstractions like liberty, justice, and the like—promised but never delivered—*científicos* claimed that the Mexican people needed roads, bridges, dams, buildings, and other such solid, visible achievements. Far from being out of step with their times, the Porfirian *científicos* were in the main streams of world opinion. Under Díaz the universal ethic of materialism, a common bond of the period everywhere in the western world, was a mixture of the Mexican past and new international viewpoints being developed in the late nineteenth century. The new dynamism of Positivism from France, and social Darwinism, basically English but widespread in the West, were engrafted on earlier Mexican traditions. Nearly all precluded government action in the social and economic spheres except to encourage the agents of Progress, the élite enterprisers. To indict the Porfirian Era on its manifest insensitivity to social woes is to reveal basic ignorance of contemporary trends throughout the world.

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Message-Id: <1.5.4b12.16.19960411143523.0de74b82@peganet.com>
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To: aramex@interserv.com (Dennis Hays), 74174.3670@compuserve.com (Sergio Aguayo), mpioliac@dns1.intermex.com.mx (Carlos Arce), mbasanez@umich.edu (Miguel =?iso-8859-1?Q?Basa=Flez?=), bil@cunyvms1.gc.cuny.edu (Eugene Miller), cdh-bcasas@laneta.apc.org, cejil@igc.apc.org (=?iso-8859-1?Q?Jos=E9_?= Miguel Vivanco), dialogos@apc.org (David Brooks), foodfirst@igc.apc.org, ddresser@eniach.rhon.itam.mx (Denise Dresser), jonathanfox@igc.apc.org, heath@mail.internet.com.mx (Jonathan Heath), 74111.2004@compuserve.com (Vijay Vaitheeswaran), ford-mexico@fordfound.org, grassroots@igc.apc.org, =?iso-8859-1?Q?labornotes=40igc.apc.org=2C?=laborrights@igc.apc.org (Pharis Harvey), lcalzada@colmex.mx (Leticia Calzada), phrusa@igc.apc.org (Phys for Human Rights), pueblo@laneta.apc.org (Carlos Heredia), schulzd@carlisle-emh2.army.mil, whalenc@l-r-i.com (Chris Whalen), wilkie@histr.sscnet.ucla.edu, wola@igc.apc.org (Eric Olson)
Subject: PNS piece on Guererro, 18 March 1996

PACIFIC NEWS SERVICE, 18 March 1996

Small Town Mayor Gets the Last Word--A Sign of Hope in Stemming Southern Mexico's Lawless Tide

Last week's forced resignation of Ruben Figueroa, governor of the Pacific coast state of Guerrero, is the first sign of hope in southern Mexico's otherwise grim political landscape increasingly marked by electoral fraud, assassination and generalized lawlessness.

Last June, in a conversation with the mayor of a small town north of Acapulco, Governor Figueroa warned he would have to take action against a group of peasant activists known as the Campesino Organization of the Southern Sierra (OCSS). The following day, state police lying in ambush at the crossroads of Aguas Blancas opened fire on a truck bringing peasants down from the mountains to the market town of Coyuca de Benitez. They killed seventeen of them, and, according to eyewitnesses, executed the wounded while a state helicopter flew overhead.

Governor Figueroa denied any involvement, despite the statement he had made a day earlier to Maria de la Luz Nunez, municipal president of the neighboring town of Atoyac de Alvarez. To substantiate his innocence, the governor released a videotape of the incident, which he claimed showed the police had responded in self-defense, after peasants had threatened them with machetes.

The case was referred to the National Human Rights Commission, which uncovered two damning facts. First, the Commission had previously recommended the removal of Gov. Figueroa's state police chief, for excessive use of force on other occasions. Yet Figueroa stood by his deputy even after the Aguas Blancas massacre. Furthermore, experts easily determined that the videotape had been edited before being made available to the press. There was, moreover, strong circumstantial evidence implicating the governor. His father, who had been kidnapped by

guerrillas while governor of the state in the 1970s, had later responded by massacring villagers. It was no secret that the younger Figueroa feared a zapatista-inspired uprising in Guerrero, and wanted to lay down the law, Guerrero-style.

Mexico's major opposition parties called for impeachment. But President Zedillo, who is godfather to the governor's children, steadfastly refused to intervene, insisting he must respect states' rights. While such legal niceties might make sense in a country accustomed to the rule of law, in Mexico they are interpreted to mean what they have always meant: that the president is standing by an influential member of his party, and citing the law only because it is convenient.

Whenever the law is seen as nothing more than a tool for the preservation of the interests of an unaccountable few, it loses its authority. Within weeks of the Aguas Blancas massacre, armed peasants ambushed a state police convoy, slaughtering five policemen. Unable to trust the police and the law, citizens turned to vigilantism. The police responded in kind. In the months since the massacre, at least seven members of the OCSA have been murdered. So have activists of the state's major opposition party, the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD). Last October, Marta Morales, a prominent physician and PRD leader, was gunned down in Tecpan de Galeana. On New Year's Day, PRD activist Gildardo Morantes was shot to death.

With the killings undermining Zedillo's pledge that no one will remain above the law, the president responded by appointing a special prosecutor. But in a country that has been ruled by a single party for two-thirds of a century, and in which no prosecutor has ever dared offend his boss, the outcome was a foregone conclusion. Last week, the special prosecutor exonerated Governor Figueroa.

Two days before the verdict, however, someone anonymously slipped a copy of the unedited Aguas Blancas videotape to a Mexico City television station. The tape, which was telecast nationwide, demonstrated that the police had murdered unarmed peasants without provocation, evidently as a political message from the governor. Though the tape did not sway the special prosecutor, it swayed the nation.

President Zedillo had no choice but to ask the Supreme Court to review the case. When a still unrepentant Figueroa responded by busing supporters into city squares to demonstrate against the president's decision, he threatened to undermine Zedillo's already shaky authority. Zedillo asked for his resignation.

Though no testament to President Zedillo's commitment to political reform, the resignation of Governor Figueroa is a tribute to the development of civil society in Mexico. That same development is evident in municipal efforts to make police forces more accountable. In Atoyac, the mayor who first disclosed the governor's intentions has documented at least 21 cases of murder, kidnapping and arbitrary detention alleged to involve the State Judicial Police and the Motorized Police between 1993 and 1995. In a campaign that is gathering support from municipalities throughout the state, Mayor Nunez is proposing that only well-respected local residents with clean records be allowed to police communities. Only by restoring a sense of confidence in the rule of law, Nunez insists, will peace and economic development return to Guerrero and the other troubled states of southern Mexico.

3

guerrillas while governor of the state in the 1970s, had later responded by massacring villagers. It was no secret that the younger Figueroa feared a zapatista-inspired uprising in Guerrero, and wanted to lay down the law, Guerrero-style.

Mexico's major opposition parties called for impeachment. But President Zedillo, who is godfather to the governor's children, steadfastly refused to intervene, insisting he must respect states' rights. While such legal niceties might make sense in a country accustomed to the rule of law, in Mexico they are interpreted to mean what they have always meant: that the president is standing by an influential member of his party, and citing the law only because it is convenient.

Whenever the law is seen as nothing more than a tool for the preservation of the interests of an unaccountable few, it loses its authority. Within weeks of the Aguas Blancas massacre, armed peasants ambushed a state police convoy, slaughtering five policemen. Unable to trust the police and the law, citizens turned to vigilantism. The police responded in kind. In the months since the massacre, at least seven members of the OCSS have been murdered. So have activists of the state's major opposition party, the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD). Last October, Marta Morales, a prominent physician and PRD leader, was gunned down in Tecpan de Galeana. On New Year's Day, PRD activist Gildardo Morantes was shot to death.

With the killings undermining Zedillo's pledge that no one will remain above the law, the president responded by appointing a special prosecutor. But in a country that has been ruled by a single party for two-thirds of a century, and in which no prosecutor has ever dared offend his boss, the outcome was a foregone conclusion. Last week, the special prosecutor exonerated Governor Figueroa.

Two days before the verdict, however, someone anonymously slipped a copy of the unedited Aguas Blancas videotape to a Mexico City television station. The tape, which was telecast nationwide, demonstrated that the police had murdered unarmed peasants without provocation, evidently as a political message from the governor. Though the tape did not sway the special prosecutor, it swayed the nation.

President Zedillo had no choice but to ask the Supreme Court to review the case. When a still unrepentant Figueroa responded by busing supporters into city squares to demonstrate against the president's decision, he threatened to undermine Zedillo's already shaky authority. Zedillo asked for his resignation.

Though no testament to President Zedillo's commitment to political reform, the resignation of Governor Figueroa is a tribute to the development of civil society in Mexico. That same development is evident in municipal efforts to make police forces more accountable. In Atoyac, the mayor who first disclosed the governor's intentions has documented at least 21 cases of murder, kidnapping and arbitrary detention alleged to involve the State Judicial Police and the Motorized Police between 1993 and 1995. In a campaign that is gathering support from municipalities throughout the state, Mayor Nunez is proposing that only well-respected local residents with clean records be allowed to police communities. Only by restoring a sense of confidence in the rule of law, Nunez insists, will peace and economic development return to Guerrero and the other troubled states of southern Mexico.

Massacre Probe Signals Mexican Political Reform

■ Court alleges cover-up in slaying of 17 peasants. Report is seen as break from tradition of immunity for top lawmakers.

By MARK FINEMAN
TIMES STAFF WRITER

MEXICO CITY—The scandal rocking Mexico this week is known here simply as "White Water." But unlike its American counterpart, it does not trace back to a failed rural development, and the president here has cast himself in a lead role—for reform.

Aguas Blancas, or White Water, is the name of a small village in Guerrero state where police fired on a group of peasants on June 28, killing 17 of them. The massacre was videotaped, and, within hours, an edited version designed to show that the peasants were armed was aired nationwide.

But when the raw videotape was broadcast eight months later, showing police spraying unarmed peasants with bullets—then filming their corpses with planted weapons—it became an instant rallying point for critics of Mexico's traditional one-party state.

In the weeks that followed, evidence surfaced linking the peasant executions and a subsequent cover-up to decisions made at the highest levels of the state government. Guerrero's powerful ruling-party Gov. Ruben Figueroa—a close friend of President Ernesto Zedillo—replaced a few top state officials and finally took a leave of absence last month.

Stubbornly professing his own innocence, the strongman governor refused to resign.

On Tuesday, after a two-month Supreme Court investigation ordered by Zedillo—a historic presidential action—Mexico's highest court issued a report that was hailed as a landmark of political reform and judicial independence.

At the least, the Supreme Court commission found, Figueroa was guilty of "covering up the truth" and had "deceived" the public and obstructed justice by "manipulating" the White Water investigation.

The court unanimously recommended



Associated Press

Guerrero's Ruben Figueroa



President Ernesto Zedillo



VICTOR KOTOWITZ / Los Angeles Times

that Figueroa and seven of his highest-ranking state officials be subject to criminal charges in the case.

"In Aguas Blancas," the two investigating judges stated, Figueroa and his aides were responsible for "creating an artificial version of the facts in an effort to make the public believe that the massacre of civilians [took place after] members of the South Peasant Organization of the South audaciously attacked police at a routine roadblock."

Human rights groups praised the court's findings as a breakthrough in Zedillo's campaign against the decades-old tradition of immunity from prosecution among ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party politicians.

Privately, Zedillo's aides said the findings represented a new way of doing business in Mexican politics, with the president using the constitution rather than back-room maneuvers to put all 31

governors across this country on notice that if they or their aides break the law, they will be punished.

Zedillo's friendship with Figueroa only reinforced that message, the aides said. They asserted that Zedillo's hard line in Guerrero—a key state that includes Acapulco—already has had nationwide impact.

It pushed another ruling-party governor in Morelos state into firing his state police chief within hours of a police shooting that left a peasant leader dead there last month, they said. And it helped convince yet another PRI governor to resign earlier this month in Nuevo Leon amid an array of scandals.

But the nation's political opposition remains unconvinced.

Behind the lingering distrust is the fact that in the days since the court ruling, not a single state or federal agency has indicated it has immediate plans to file criminal charges against Figueroa.

In a debate in Mexico's House of Deputies on Wednesday, members of the two leading opposition parties insisted that Congress should try Figueroa.

Zeferino Torreblanca Galindo, an independent lawmaker, said the failure of Guerrero authorities to charge him shows that little has changed.

An interior department spokesman tried to explain the problem: "This is the first time a Mexican president has used his constitutional right to intervene," he said. "We are facing a totally unprecedented process, and we cannot say with certainty what should happen next."

IMAGENES RECIPROCAS

La educación en las relaciones México-Estados Unidos de América

RECIPROCAL IMAGES

Education in U.S. - Mexican Relations

Quinta Reunión de Universidades de México y Estados Unidos

Fifth Symposium of Mexican and United States Universities

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IMAGES AND THE CONTEXT OF U.S. POLICY RELATIONS WITH MEXICO

JAMES W. WILKIE
PRESIDENT OF PROFMEX

It is my pleasure to write on behalf of PROFMEX to preface these proceedings of the V Symposium of U.S.-Mexican Universities. PROFMEX owes a debt of gratitude to Secretary General Juan Casillas García de León for the fine organizational work done by ANUIES. In addition to thanking Dr. Casillas and his Director of International Programs Ermilo J. Marroquín, we owe our appreciation to President Mario Ojeda Gómez, who put El Colegio de México at our disposition for the symposium.

The fact that we meet in Mexico City is important because it marks the first time that the PROFMEX-ANUIES symposia does not meet near the border. Our purpose in changing the locale to a national capital is intended to place our earlier focus on the border within national affairs. Yet an important component of this symposium takes up life on the border, life which has shaped the images of so many U.S. Americans who have made one-day visits across the border into Mexico or seen visits portrayed in film and fiction.

U.S. images of Mexico are in the process of changing dramatically. These new images contribute to a more complex view of larger U.S. official and unofficial international relations with Mexico, U.S. views of its southern neighbor began to change in the mid-1960s, before Mexico's "oil boom" (1976-1981) and "debt bust" (1982-present) about which U.S. public opinion simplistically has risen and fallen. Although images of Mexico are changing in the United States, then, the process is slow and often seems to show as many losses as gains.

Let me take this opportunity to review here:

- One. Traditionally Negative U.S. Images of Mexico;
- Two. Changing U.S. Images of Mexico: the Case of the U.S.-Mexican Border;

Three. Recent History of U.S. Policy Toward Mexico: Simple and Complex Images;

Four. Realities Versus Images.

It is my view that although negative U.S. images often have seemed to predominate in relations with Mexico, the context of solving real problems between the two countries has begun to cumulatively, and quietly, overcome stereotypes. (Mexico's images of the United States are also important, but I leave analysis of those images to others.)

ONE.

TRADITIONALLY NEGATIVE U.S. IMAGES OF MEXICO

The rise of a new U.S. image of Mexico has been handicapped by the fact that new understandings must continue to overcome a series of negative and incredibly thoughtless remarks about Mexico expressed through time by some influential U.S. leaders.

Let me review selected infamous quotes by U.S. public figures whose following words have complicated relations:

You never have to bother about an American President being shot by a Puerto Rican or a Mexican. They don't shoot very straight. But if they come after you with a knife, beware.

-FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover (1970) ¹

[We denounce] Mexico's slide to Communism under President Echeverría . . . The present one-party government of Mexico is following [Cuba's] path. For moral and humanitarian reasons alone, we should prefer not to see 65 million Mexicans forced to choose between slavery and exile. And for overwhelmingly important strategic reasons, we should prefer not to see what some Mexican writers can already visualize—a Cactus Curtain along the Río Grande.

-Seventy-Six U.S. Congressmen (1976) ²

The main threat against the United States is from the "have not" nations of the world, such as Mexico, rather than from the Soviet Union . . . The doubling of the population of Mexico by the end of the century

... [will lead to an] extra 60-odd million Mexicans [and] 20 are going to end up [in the United States.]

Former CIA Director William E. Colby (1978) ³

President López Portillo and I have, in the short time together on this visit, found that we have many things in common. . . . We both run several kilometers every day. As a matter of fact, I told President López Portillo that I first acquired my habit of running here in Mexico City. My first running course was from the Palace of Fine Arts to the Majestic Hotel, where me and my family were staying.

In the midst of the Folklórico performance, I discovered that I was afflicted with Moctezuma's revenge.

-President Jimmy Carter Toast,
February 15, 1979,
at close of state visit to Mexico ⁴

The Communist-led student uprising in Mexico City in 1968, a well-documented operation of the Soviet K.G.B., was suppressed by President Gustavo Díaz Ordaz. However, many of the "leaders" of that uprising, who had allowed themselves to be manipulated by the K.G.B., have been made officials of the Mexican government. . . . In addition, the Communist and other ultra-leftist parties have been encouraged by recent "political reforms" of President López Portillo. And, in addition, tens of thousands of Marxist terrorists from Latin America and elsewhere have been admitted to Mexico.

Any takeover threat in Mexico today comes, obviously, from the extreme left. We cannot stand aside. . . . [Our government] must take appropriate action to ensure that a new Mexican government headed by President-elect Miguel de la Madrid Hurtado does not continue—or even bring to completion—the program carried out by the previous two administrations. That program is demonstrably disastrous for Mexico, and potentially so for both Mexico and the United States. Mexico in chaos, or Mexico under Communism, would present extremely difficult problems for the United States. We are within our rights to attempt to prevent the development of a disastrous situation. That is one of the things any government is paid, by its citizens, to do.

-Twenty-One U.S. Congressmen (1982) ⁵

[Political unrest in Mexico could turn it into another Iran].

-Former U.S. Nation Security Advisor
Zbigniew Brzezinski (1983) ⁶

[Mexico is] the most corrupt government and society in Central America. [and it could become the U.S.'s Number One security problem within the 10 years].

-Chief of the U.S. Southern Command
General Paul Gorman, (1984) ⁷

[Corruption in Mexico is so widespread that I assume that any Mexican official is dishonest unless proven otherwise.]

-U.S. Customs Service Commissioner
William von Raab (1986) ⁸

[I don't] have a problem with the term 'Mex.' I don't think our officers and dispatchers use the term in a derogatory manner, they use it in a descriptive manner."

-Santa Ana [California] Latino City Councilman
John Acosta (1988) ⁹

The position that Communism will never conquer Mexico because the United States will not permit it, is absurd. On the contrary, the White House itself could fall in the the absurdity of supporting Marxist revolutionaries to power [sic] just as it did in 1979. Jimmy Carter helped the Sandinistas achieve power even though he had received proofs that Sandinistas were Communists trained in Havana and that the nine comandantes were chosen by Fidel Castro himself. Mexicans can only hope that the American media that has already given Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas and Porfirio Muñoz Ledo such good platform to speak against [our] democratic and friendly country will investigate the other side of

Cárdenas. The United States cannot afford a repeat in Mexico of the Cuban (1958) and Nicaraguan (1979) fatal errors.

-Anonymous "Committee for Improved
U.S.-Mexican Relations" (1988) ¹⁰

[The DPBSEPADD (Dual-Purpose Border Security Enhancement Project and Drainage Ditch) is aimed at preventing illegal immigrants and drugs from crossing from Mexico into California near the port of entry at Otay Mesa.]

-Unnamed Bush INS Administration Official,
quoted by State Department Spokesman
Charles Redman (1989) ¹¹

If such views about Mexico were not harmful enough to U.S.-Mexican relations, some U.S. "patriots" have stated or abetted in the statement of reckless views about Mexico and the border, thus complicating international relations because they provide a framework in which government officials must justify their actions:

Tijuana is the toughest, roughest, gaudiest, filthiest, loudest—the most larcenous, vicious, predacious—the wickedest bordertown of them all. It is all border towns wrapped into one smelly reefer and freaked out on its compulsion to "skin the gringo."

-Ovid Demaris (1970) ¹²

[There is a] rising flow of color washing over our border, washing away our culture, our racial fabric and changing America as we know it. . . . [We will proceed with our plans to patrol the border against entry by illegal aliens.]

-Knights of the Ku Klux Klan (1977) ¹³

Mexico's debt has not stopped it from bidding for power in the Western Hemisphere, and it is naturally the United States that Mexico considers its rival. . . . Whereas the United States has little influence over leftist regimes like the Sandinistas, Mexico gets on splendidly with them, is their link to the Western world, and becomes their diplomatic protector.

Mexico and the United States are both playing their own games in Central America, and it is a mistake to assume that because the Mexican position is more discreet than that of the Reagan administration, it is therefore any more ethical. The United States [at least] . . . has made democracy the key to its regional strategy.

Mexico, on the other hand, . . . is not a truly democratic country. It is corrupt and repressive, and has no interest in establishing democracy in Central America.

-Ambrose Evans-Pritchard, (1984) ¹⁴

"Mexican National Anthem," sung to the tune of "She'll Be Coming 'Round the Mountain" (with the words tortilla, Taco Bell, ¿qué pasa? and Frito-Lay heard in the background):

They'll be coming across the border
when they come.

They'll be coming across the border
when they come.

They'll be coming across the border,
cause there is no law and order;
they'll be coming across the border
when they come.

They'll be carrying drugs and
handguns so they can have some
real fun; they'll be carrying drugs
and even handguns when they come.

They will not have a green card
but they will sure know how to run
hard; well, they will not have a
green card when they come.

Now, all they know is Spanish
and if you don't they will vanish;
well now, all they know is Spanish
when they come.

-San Diego Radio KS-103
disc jockey Randy Miller (1986) ¹⁵

[We should take reprisals against the Mexican illegals. We should deport five Mexicans for every illegal Mexican captured in the United States.]

-Telephone caller to Los Angeles Radio KIEV
talk-show host George Putnam (1986) ¹⁶

The brown tide lapping against our southern border has led to an eye-opening proposition. By the turn of the century, the babies of Mexico could be a greater threat to the United States than the (presumably unused) nuclear missiles of the Soviet Union.

-Jack Anderson and Dale Van Atta (1987) ¹⁷

Also jokes, ads, and rumors have played an insidious part in shaping the image of Mexico in the United States:

Did you hear about the two Mexicans on the TV show "That's Incredible"?
One had auto insurance and the other was an only child.

-Anonymous (1978)

Have you heard that Mexico will not be sending a national team to the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Games? Every Mexican who can run, jump, and swim is already in the United States.

-Anonymous (1984)

IF, GOD FORBID, L.A. IS NEXT [TO SUFFER A MEXICO CITY-TYPE EARTHQUAKE], OUR COMMITMENT WILL REMAIN UNSHAKEN. We shall be instantly available to disaster relief and other government authorities. . . . without a prior reimbursement agreement.

-Rose Hills Mortuary and Forest-Lawn Mortuaries,
full-page ad (1985) ¹⁸

Q[uestion]: O.K., Reverend [Moody],
explain [the earthquake in] Mexico City.

A[nswer]: Three views:

1. *God did it.* His moral standards are lower than mine.
2. *Physics did it.* Atheistic or deistic idea. Not good enough.
3. *Satan did it. My view.* If you don't believe in Satan, you must be an atheist or believe in a Sadistic God. I choose neither.

Satan causes tragedy.

-Reverend Jess Moody,
First Baptist Church,
Van Nuys, California, ad (1985) ¹⁹

[Watch out for that Mexican Beer called Corona, 73% of its bottles are contaminated with urine--those Mexican workers relieve themselves in the beer vats.]

-Anonymous (1987) ²⁰

Just like Panama, drug corruption in Mexico remains deep and pervasive, and in almost every part of that country there is a local Noriega, a commandante, a general, a governor getting rich dealing with Colombian drug bosses.

-Reporter Brian Ross, NBC News Special
"Drug Wars: Tonight," following broadcast of the first
part of the NBC three-part miniseries entitled
"Drug Wars: The Camarena Story," January 7, 1990

Although many people in the United States and certainly a number of legislators and presidential assistants located in Washington still seem to believe some of the above negative images, let us note the change regarding the case of the border image.

TWO
CHANGING U.S. IMAGES OF MEXICO:
THE CASE OF THE U.S.-MEXICAN BORDER

The traditional U.S. prejudice against the Mexican border with the United States was summed up in Ovid Demaris's 1970 view which failed to see that such an image was already in the process of becoming more positive. According to Damaris:

Of a long string of ancient, squat, forlorn, sun-dried, neon-lit cases [on the Mexican side of the border] . . . a dozen qualify (in gringo terminology) as bona fide hellholes. To Mexicans in the interior, the border is *pozo del mundo* (idiomatically, the lowest hole of the world). It is an old opprobrium, gained by some cases back in the days of longhorn cattle and cowboys along the Rio Grande . . . Other bordertowns earned their mark later, in the days of revolution and the traffic in guns, gold and adventures. It was the Twenties and Prohibition that earned the border its national reputation and it was the GI of World War II who popularized it on an international scale . . . [as involving a] pleasure trip measurably oriented to gringos with low libidinal thresholds.²¹

Contrast the Demaris negative interpretation of 1970 with the positive, new view of Daphne Overstreet boosting in 1981 the expansion of in-bond production sharing between maquila (or "twin plants")²² established along the Mexican side of the border. In the words of Overstreet:

The in-bond business on the U.S.-Mexican border is booming. When Mexico passed enabling legislation permitting [U.S. plants to set up a Mexican branch, thus making "twin plants" across the border] in the mid-1960s, 12 U.S. companies set up operations in the first year. Now, 15 years later, more than 650 companies have [twin plant] production facilities . . . There are a number of reasons for this phenomenal growth. [First,] companies in high technology countries are being forced to cut production costs to stay competitive while maintaining their quality. Mexico offers all the advantages of an "offshore" location plus proximity to U.S. markets, materials, and technical support . . . [Second, in Mexico] competition for jobs is keen and the work ethic is thriving [because of high unemployment and a rapidly developing middle class]. The labor force is characterized by high productivity, low absenteeism and turnover, and an ability to adapt to technological transfers. American twin plant managers report an average productivity improvement of 10 to 15 percent in their Mexican facilities compared to the states, and absenteeism and turnover are reduced to two percent on the average. Quality is also reported as being better overall.²³

Yet new images of the Mexican border with the United States are still in the process of displacing old views. For example, it is only since the late 1970s that the region has emerged through private U.S.-Mexican relations as an area to be taken into major account by scholars in the two countries,²⁴ as well as by Mexican and U.S. government officials in Mexico City and Washington, D.C.

Before 1980 the border region tended to live "undiscovered" except by an

articulate few serious observers who gradually have won an audience to their view that the region plays a crucial role in larger international relations between Mexico and the United States.²⁵ During the 1920s and 1930s the border was identified as a concept of academic study notably by historian Herbert E. Bolton (who stressed the role of acculturation), economist Paul S. Taylor (who studied socio-economic conditions and immigration), and geographer Carl D. Sauer (who treated culture and ecology).

A big step in U.S.-Mexican cross-border studies came in the area of sociology under Charles P. Loomis. Loomis (who wrote, for example, in 1942 on "Wartime Migration from the Rural Spanish Speaking Villages of New Mexico,"²⁶ generated substantial funding for research during the 1950s.²⁷ Out of that research the following examples of studies came to fruition:

- 1955 William H. D'Antonio and William H. Form, "The Integration and Cleavage Among Community Influentials in Two Border Cities"²⁸
- 1959 William H. Form and Julius Rivera, "Work Contracts and International Evaluations: The Case of a Mexican Border Village"²⁹
- 1960 Charles C. Cumberland, "The United States-Mexico Border: A Selective Guide to the Literature of the Region"³⁰
- 1961 Elwyn R. Stoddard, "Catastrophe and Crisis in a Flooded Border Community"³¹

Further, Julián Samora, a student of Loomis, directed later the doctoral studies of the Mexican scholar Jorge Bustamante, whose classic account entitled "Through the Eyes of a Wetback: A Personal Experience," would be included in Samora's 1971 volume on *Los Mojados: The Wetback Story*.³²

To shift the Mexican axis of research on the border from Mexico City to the border itself, in 1982 Jorge Bustamante founded a research and teaching institution in Tijuana, Baja California. First called the Centro de Estudios Fronterizos del Norte de México (CEFNOEMEX), in 1986 it became El Colegio de la Frontera Norte (COLEF). Bustamante has developed an excellent research group which works closely with scholars on both sides of the border. COLEF is now co-publisher of the yearly *International Guide to Research on Mexico*, originally established by UC MEXUS in 1982.

With regard to conferences dealing with the U.S.-Mexican border, in 1975 Stanley R. Ross called the first major international meeting to make a concerted bilateral scholarly analysis of the region. The results were published as *Views Across the Border: Mexico and the United States*, which remains one of the most important volumes on the region.³³

Since the early 1980s the PROFMEX-ANUIES symposia have sought to refocus the image of the border in order to bring it into consonance with reality. The results of these symposia have been published in Mexico City by ANUIES:

1. *Estudios Fronterizos*
(proceedings of the I Symposium, La Paz, Baja California Sur, 1980),
edited by Mario Miranda, 1981
2. *Ecology and Development of the Border Region*
(proceedings of the II Symposium, Austin, Texas, 1982), edited by
Stanley R. Ross, 1983
3. *Rules of the Game and Games Without Rules in Border Life*
(proceedings of the III Symposium, Tijuana, Baja California, 1983),
edited by Mario Miranda and James W. Wilkie, 1985
4. *One Border, Two Nations: Policy Implications and Problem Resolutions*
(proceedings of the IV Symposium, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 1986),
edited by Oscar J. Martínez, Albert E. Utton, and Mario Miranda,
1988

This series continues with our analysis of reciprocal images here in this V Symposium held in Mexico City.

Research growing out of symposia and conferences such as the above on the U.S.-Mexican border soon began to reveal the extent of change that had been spurred by changes in society in both countries. Let us recall that the United States had undergone social upheaval in the late 1960s and early 1970s when so many of its youth rejected the War in Vietnam as an "illegal and immoral" act. Indeed the United States had faced near civil war as students fought police from Berkeley to Chicago and New York City. This massive questioning of U.S. politics was accompanied by a questioning of all U.S. social values by many groups. Because such questioning was accompanied in the United States beginning in the 1960s by sexual "liberation" and drug culture, soon U.S. citizens could find more licentious activity in their own country than in Mexican border towns.

Mexico also changed during the 1960s. Even as the border economy based on prostitution, pornography, and drugs began to decline, the Mexican maquila industry began to rise. Too, at the same time as U.S. divorce laws began to weaken during the late 1960s, the Mexican government had become increasingly concerned about the country's image as a divorce mill catering to the United States; thus in 1971 Mexico City outlawed the "quickie border-divorce."

By 1970, illicit and suspect activities enticed few U.S. Americans to Mexico, except in the area of alternative and experimental medicine still outlawed in the United States. For a time rational alternatives (for example, the use of laetrile to ease the pain of cancer) predominated. Soon, however, Mexican physicians delved into "irrational" medicine, such as "fighting" cancer with staggered enemas of coffee, celery juice, and seaweed.

With legalization of alternative cancer therapies in the United States by the 1980s, the Mexican border "health industry" at Tijuana turned from treating cancer to offering semi-religious programs designed to "rejuvenate and

reactivate" the immune systems of sick persons, who often continued to receive staggered enema therapy. Health experts in the United States even began to take the border health industry seriously by studying its "alternative system of medicine" and its sometimes zany cures so opposed by U.S. medical authorities.

Meanwhile, for Mexicans the border came to mean modern industrial activity and trade with the United States. By the 1970s, analysis of life on the border and cross-border interactions began to enter into the mainstream of scholarship.

A number of significant border studies have been published, led by Oscar J. Martínez: three major works: *Border Boom Town: Ciudad Juárez Since 1848* (1978), *Fragments of the Mexican Revolution; Personal Accounts from the Border* (1983), and *Troublesome Border* (1988).³⁴ Martínez's works were preceded by John Price's *Tijuana: Urbanization in a Border Culture* (1973) and Niles Hansen's *The Border Economy: Regional Development in the Southwest* (1981).³⁵

Subsequently, scholars at UCLA examined the border from various angles: Peter L. Reich edited the first *Statistical Abstract of the United States-Mexican Borderlands* (1984) and Thurber Proffitt III wrote his prize-winning dissertation "Tijuana: History of a Mexican Municipio" (1988).³⁶ A much expanded follow-up to Reich's *Statistical Abstract* is *United States-Mexico Border Statistics Since 1900* (1990), edited by David E. Lorey and published by UCLA Latin American Center Publications. At present, Norris C. Hundley is readying for publication the *Historical Atlas of the United States-Mexico Borderlands*, edited under a grant from the U.S. National Endowment for the Humanities.

Other important aspects of the border are examined in César Sepúlveda and Albert E. Utton, eds., *The U.S.-Mexico Border Region: Anticipating Resource Needs and Issues to the Year 2000* (1984); Jesús Tamayo and José Luis Fernández, *Zonas Fronterizas México-Estados Unidos* (1983); Ellwyn R. Stoddard, *Maquila: Assembly Plants in Northern Mexico* (1987); and Arturo García Espinosa, ed., *Maquiladoras: Primera Reunión Nacional Sobre Asuntos Fronterizos* (1988).³⁷

THREE

RECENT HISTORY OF U.S. POLICY TOWARD MEXICO: SIMPLE AND COMPLEX IMAGES

Let us turn to a review of the development of U.S. Policy toward Mexico and the context in which images have become simple and complex. Images have become more important to the world of propaganda as developed by persons who wish to influence the way in which U.S.-Mexican problems are defined.

Interpretation is complicated by the fact that foreign relations are formulated and conducted in complex ways between countries and between actors within each country's policy-making apparatus. With regard to the latter, policy is often made in "distrust" of factors which theoretically should be taken into account. For example, Washington (read President and his Secretary of State) has always

tended to view border interests as forming part of its larger foreign policy (just as has Mexico City treated its border in the same way). Thus both capitals too often have not seen it necessary to consult border officials and residents about laws and decrees that may deeply affect them.

To further complicate matters, Washington has often disregarded its embassy in Mexico City (just as foreign ministries everywhere often disregard their embassies) for the reason that ambassadors and resident staff, not knowing the "global picture," are thought to become "overly sympathetic" to their host country's unique positions. Thus in Washington's view, the recommendations of its officials in Mexico City often must be subordinated to larger U.S. concerns.

EARLY CONTRADICTIONS IN U.S. POLICY

Trouble between Washington and its embassy in Mexico City began early in this century when Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson (no relation to Woodrow Wilson) assisted in the overthrow in February 1913 of President Francisco I. Madero, whose anti-electionist campaign touched off the Mexican Revolution of 1910. President William Howard Taft refused to believe his ambassador's reports that the overthrow and murder of Madero was justified and left the matter to his successor, President Woodrow Wilson, who took office in March and removed Ambassador Wilson in July, 1913.

In a later example of trouble between Washington and its embassy in Mexico, Ambassador James R. Sheffield (1924-1927) personally took it upon himself to reprimand the Mexican government for its support of Sandino in Nicaragua and its rhetoric about the rights of Mexican workers to strike and peasants to receive land. Acting upon his racist beliefs, he brought Mexico and the United States to the brink of war. Sheffield in 1925 saw himself as a man besieged by Mexicans of inferior blood:

There is little white blood in the [Mexican] cabinet . . . Calles is Armenian and Indian; León almost wholly Indian and an amateur bullfighter; Sáenz, the Foreign Minister is Jew and Indian; Morones more white blood but not the better for it; Amaro, Secretary of War, a pure-blooded Indian and very cruel.³⁸

Once President Calvin Coolidge realized his mistake in sending Sheffield to Mexico and replaced him with Ambassador Dwight Morrow (1927-1930), relations warmed considerably with Morrow, who is seen to this day as a friend of Mexico by Mexicans. The image of Morrow and President Plutarco Elías Calles sharing "ham and eggs" breakfasts became famous in the U.S. press, which ignored the fact that Calles ate popcorn balls lightly powdered with chocolate.

But one can ask if Morrow can be thought to have been good for either

Mexico or the United States. For Mexico's leftists who sought land reform and nationalization of foreign-owned industry, Morrow may have been "bad" for the Mexican Revolution because in the short term his quiet voice and kind words were influential in helping to stop such "radical" processes. In the long term, however, Morrow could be considered to have been "good" for the Revolution because, having put a lid on steam escaping from the "revolutionary pot," explosion would come under President Lázaro Cárdenas. Thus Cárdenas could allow more worker strikes, grant more land to peasants, and nationalize more industries (including oil) than all presidents in Mexico's previous history. For Washington (for Mexico's rightists), Cárdenas's programs could hardly be what was desired for Mexico.

During that Cárdenas upheaval during the 1930s, President Franklin D. Roosevelt personally sent Josephus Daniels as U.S. ambassador to Mexico City, 1933-1941. That special role enabled Daniels to report to the White House rather than to the Department of State, which (along with the Departments of Treasury and Commerce) often opposed his backing of the Cárdenas programs.

Based upon the good will established by Daniels and the desire of Mexico to cooperate against the Axis threat to the Western world during the period from 1941 to 1945, struggle between Washington and its embassy in Mexico City was minimized as U.S.-Mexican relations entered into an "Era of Good Feeling." This era lasted for the next thirty years.³⁹

ERA OF GOOD FEELING, 1940-1970

The Era of U.S.-Mexican Good Feelings was made possible in large measure also because the Mexican government turned from a dynamic phase in its "Permanent Revolution" to a phase emphasizing economic rather than social change. Cárdenas had argued that to justify the continued rule of one political party (established in 1929), the ongoing implementation under state aegis of "revolutionary goals" outlined in the Constitution of 1917 required a high level of state activity for his period in the presidency beginning in 1934. By 1940 Cárdenas had succeeded to such an extent that he realized the dynamic pace he had set would have to change or else the official party of the revolution would fall.

U.S. presidents, engaged in a Cold War against the Soviet Union and Communist China, were pleased to see that between 1940 and 1970 Mexican presidents were content mainly to digest, carry out, and modify the Cárdenas programs. With regard to modifications, President Miguel Alemán (1946-1952) favored "trickle-down" development rather than the immediate social benefits emphasized by Cárdenas. Alemán favored state support of the private sector, in contrast to Cárdenas proclivity to establish state operated enterprises and to fund worker-run industries. Although the Mexican state did not give up any of

its power after 1940, the way in which it used it did not pose major new threats to U.S. interests,⁴⁰ and U.S. presidents were grateful.

Indeed it seemed to observers that Mexico and the United States had finally revolved their problems. Thus Professor Howard F. Cline painted the following image in 1950:

An exchange of ceremonial visits [in 1947 by Truman in March and Alemán in April], each unprecedented, gave conclusive evidence that officially at least the boundary-sharing nations . . . were closer in mind than at almost any time in earlier history . . . The high point of the trip, for both nations, was President Alemán's address to a special joint session of the United States Congress. Alemán's address was a polite, firm, and successful reaffirmation of Mexican and Latin American views of the Good Neighbor policy. That their president had personally and successfully enunciated to the United States Congress so clearly, forcibly, yet unprovocatively the basic feeling of most Mexicans gave Alemán hold over his people that eased all his subsequent domestic problems. On his return from Washington the greatest demonstration ever given a Mexican president greeted him . . .

[One prominent Mexican critic], who had not long before published a controversial essay on the "failures of the Revolution," publicly retracted most of his statements in face of the "miracle" represented by Alemán's address to the American Congress. Of greater import was a group visitation that the living ex-presidents of Mexico made to Alemán on May 14, 1947, to give their collective backing to the new administration.⁴¹

Further, in 1960 Cline saw these 1947 ceremonial successes (including the earlier meeting of Presidents Roosevelt and Manuel Avila Camacho to discuss mutual cooperation for the Second World War) as establishing an institutionalized ritual. Incoming presidents are invited to visit each other, partly as a symbolic affirmation of continuing cordiality and willingness to let bygones be bygones, partly to clear up any potential difficulties before they become serious. In Cline's words:

From these visits have often come unexpected small gestures that reveal the sincere attempts by leaders of each country to remove barriers to understanding and bury the past: President Truman's spontaneous placing of a wreath on the monument to the Boy Heroes (Cadets in the War of 1848 who wrapped themselves in Mexican flags and leaped to their deaths rather than surrender Mexico City) evoked an almost hysterical wave of favorable public emotion in Mexico; mutual return of captured battle flags, and the Mexican government's generous offer

of fellowships to North American students have all come as by-products of the presidential conferences . . . Mexico and the United States are [by 1960] long-standing friends.

Divergencies between the policies of each... do not affect this basic circumstance.⁴²

During the Era of Good Feeling it seemed that nearly all outstanding U.S.-Mexican diplomatic problems were solved, beginning with the General Agreement of November 19, 1941. Land claims dating back to the nineteenth century were cleared with Mexico's promise to pay 34 million dollars in addition to the 6 million already paid. A reciprocal trade treaty was authorized, which was implemented as a war measure in 1942. The United States agreed to stabilize its purchase of silver, buy directly from the Mexican government and pay world prices; it agreed to help stabilize the value of the peso; and it pledged to make available long-term, low-interest U.S. Export-Import Bank loans.

A significant part of the General Agreement provided a mechanism for both countries to resolve the claims of U.S. oil companies. The claims were settled in 1942 when two special commissioners (one from Mexico and one from the United States) reduced by over 95% the value of U.S. expropriated properties, from the 450 million dollars claimed by the companies to 24 million, which Mexico agreed to pay.⁴³

Sinclair Oil had already settled in 1940 by reducing its claim from 32 to 13.5 million dollars,⁴⁴ 3.2 million more than experts of the U.S. Department of the Interior estimated as being fair;⁴⁵ Mexico's agreement to pay this extra 3.2 million in absolute terms had been well calculated to bring pressure on the other oil companies to settle and for less a percentage demand than the 42% won by Sinclair. The Mexican government had learned to become an agile player in the chess-game of international relations.

RESULTS OF THE ERA OF GOOD FEELING

Capitalizing on the Era of Good Feeling, the Mexican government was able to protect and advance its national interests through successful negotiations with its much more powerful northern neighbor. Operating in the hostile and often violent atmosphere of the mid-twentieth century world, policymakers in Washington had found a friendly neighbor and a secure southern border.

Amid the signing of many arrangements between the two countries (including cooperative programs in hydroelectric and irrigation projects as well as scientific cooperation in public health, malaria control, sanitation, narcotics controls, and migrant labor), Mexico was able to win a number of conditions that tested the ability of the United States to be a "good neighbor." Major agreements focusing on cross-border issues included:⁴⁶

1. Bracero Labor Agreements of 1942-1951, whereby the United States agreed to serve as the primary contractor for farm labor until 1947 after which the Mexican government took over supervision of contracts.⁴⁷
2. Treaty of 1944 On Utilization of Waters of the Colorado and Tijuana Rivers and of the Río Grande, which provided for dividing the waters and jointly constructing, operating, and maintaining dams and channels.⁴⁸
3. Cloven-Footed Animal Foot-and Mouth Disease Agreement of 1947, in which the United States provided assistance to eliminate the disease in Mexico so that the U.S. border could be reopened (in 1954) to import of Mexican animals.
4. Bilateral Cultural Convention of 1948, which provided for extensive educational and cultural exchanges.
5. Migrant Labor Agreements of 1951-1964, in which the United States acceded to contract for bracero labor and guarantee fulfillment of contract terms by employers.
6. Chamizal Convention of 1963, which resolved the boundary dispute caused by the nineteenth-century shift of the Río Grande. (In 1967 a net amount of 437 acres was legally transferred from the north to the south side of the border.)⁴⁹
7. Water Salinity Agreements of 1965, which provided for jointly funding resolve the high salt content of the Colorado River (affecting the Mexicali Valley of Baja California) and the Río Grande (affecting mainly U.S. land in Texas's Lower Río Grande Valley). The former case was not finally settled until 1973 when the International and Boundary Commission Minute 242 ("Permanent and Definitive Solution to the International Problem of the Salinity of the Colorado River") was adopted under which the United States guaranteed that U.S. water flowing into Mexico would be suitable for irrigation.
8. Screwworm Fly Eradication Agreement of 1966 (delayed in implementation until 1972), in which the United States offered to share in costs to establish a fly barrier in southern Mexico.⁵⁰
(Mexico wanted to pay only 20% of costs while Washington claimed that each country should pay half; in 1972 a new agreement was signed setting the U.S. share at 80% of costs plus the providing of ships, planes, and travel and per diem of the U.S. personnel involved).
9. Coastal Fisheries Agreement of 1967, in which the United States accepted Mexico's claim to exclusive control over fishing rights in a 9-mile coastal zone (12 miles after 1973).

After thirty years of U.S.-Mexican stability in policy relations, the government of Mexico had proved its ability to negotiate concessions which tended to favor its positions.

Perhaps these successes helped to encourage a new generation to take power of Mexico's official party in 1970, but in any case the new leaders took office with a call for undertaking another phase of dynamic statist activity. This dynamic activity was to be reflected in Mexico's expansion of foreign policy into the world arena, much to the discomfiture of the United States.

YEARS OF TENSION IN U.S.-MEXICAN RELATIONS, 1970-1988

The seeds of a new Mexican foreign policy had taken firm root during the 1960s. Mexico City had objected to Washington's interventions in the Dominican Republic (1965) and Vietnam (especially with escalation after 1965). Further, Mexico City had never agreed with Washington's policy that the countries of Latin America should break relations with Cuba; and Mexico had successfully offered an air/sea bridge to that Caribbean island during its time of adapting to life under economic embargo by the United States. Then, as President Luis Echeverría was preparing to be inaugurated for the period 1970-1976, the U.S. interfered in Chile (if unsuccessfully) to try to turn voters against the leftist presidential candidate Salvador Allende. Many influential Mexicans were appalled at such U.S. actions.

If in foreign policy the times seemed to require fresh outlooks, the times also demanded changes in Mexico's domestic policy. Newly inaugurated President Echeverría, faced unprecedented mass resentment over the way he, as minister of the interior, had brutally quashed student protesters in 1968. To live down his tarnished reputation, Echeverría sought to mold himself in the Cárdenas image by undertaking renewed social programs and expanded state involvement in the economy.

Under pressure to redeem his reputation, Echeverría recognized that between 1940 and 1970 Mexico had become in major ways a very different country. The real size of the Mexican economy had more than trebled while its population had more than doubled. During the same period, the enrollment of students in Mexico's two major universities had grown nearly seventeen times.

Discovery of these realities led Echeverría to appoint to important government posts some of the very students he had crushed in 1968. And with his approval, they began a legal revolution to bring myriad aspects of national life under government control. Laws filled the press concerning such diverse topics as auto usage (autos being subjected to "luxury taxes"), population control (including birth control and population settlements), reorganization of government, foreign investment, and international transfer of patents and technology

(even including a ridiculous requirement that English trademarks be translated into Spanish).⁵¹

The reaction of the Mexican and U.S. private sectors in Mexico was predictable. Mexicans began withdrawing money from the economy to invest abroad, and many U.S. and Mexican investors were concerned by the fact that Echeverría's programs could not win over the left, which tended to back the guerrilla activity that had emerged to try to topple the political system.⁵²

Frustrated in Mexican politics and stung by increasingly vocal criticism from important sectors in the United States (including some newspapers and congressmen),⁵³ Echeverría realized that in only one area could he easily use his influence to immediately advance his goals: foreign relations. By taking as his own major aspects of the Club of Rome platform (except for "no-growth" theory),⁵⁴ Echeverría found an effective way to show leadership in the Third World.

To strengthen his claim on Third World leadership as well as to support a "just" cause, Echeverría accused the United States of engineering the fall of Salvador Allende in Chile in 1973, admitted as exiles hundreds of Allende's supporters who had to flee Chile in fear of their life, and broke relations with the new government of Augusto Pinochet. This last act violated the venerable Estrada Doctrine, Mexico's contribution to international legal concepts. The doctrine had been named after Foreign Minister Genaro Estrada who stated in 1930 that Mexico would not follow the interventionist U.S. practice of non-recognition of countries with which it does not agree but instead would simply recall its envoy, without pronouncing on the legitimacy of other governments.⁵⁵

Echeverría was bitterly disappointed by the United States 1974 vote in the United Nations General Assembly against his Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of Nations, which called for billions of dollars to be turned over to the developing countries by the developed countries. In this matter Secretary of State Henry Kissinger (who supported Mexico) lost out to Secretary of the Treasury William Simon, and the United States did not even compromise with Mexico by abstaining in the vote.⁵⁶

Regarding Mexico's official relations with the United States, Echeverría apparently wanted to sign a new bracero or guest-worker treaty with Washington, and may have arranged to do so during his 1974 meeting with President Ford. But nine days before that meeting word was leaked through the *Washington Post* of October 12 about Mexico's rich oil discovery in its southeastern Gulf coast region. Echeverría did not seek to resolve the bracero issue because he did not want to engage in negotiations that might inevitably lead to a figurative exchange of oil (which in Echeverría's view should be retained for Mexico's own development and should not be exported solely to the United States) in exchange for a farm labor agreement (that would fairly protect Mexican citizens while working in the United States). In any case, Echeverría did not want to help the

United States break the OPEC oil cartel, as those who leaked the information in Mexico may have hoped.⁵⁷

When President José López Portillo took office for the period from 1976 to 1982, he focused on the foreign-policy arena where the country could flex the power of its new oil wealth and soon found himself at odds with Washington. Given his activist ideas about Mexico's foreign role and statist ideas about Mexico's development, López Portillo may have been destined to run afoul of Washington, but trouble arose immediately because of the embarrassment suffered in 1977 at the hands of the Carter administration over the sale of Mexico's national gas to the United States.

López Portillo had entered office as the "savior" of the official party from the political disaster wrought by Echeverría (who had marked the end to twenty-two years of economic growth and exchange-rate stability by devaluing the currency before leaving office). To restabilize the economy as well as obtain new development funds, López Portillo negotiated an 800 mile, 45 inch natural gas pipeline to the U.S. border, in the face of near violent opposition from Mexico's radical left. The proposed energy agreement involved the sale of two billion cubic feet of gas to the United States at a price of \$ 2.60 per 1,000 cubic feet, which would have yielded to Mexico an estimated 1 billion in the first year of operation and up to 5.2 billion when the pipeline reached capacity, thus providing significant amounts to help cover continuing balance of payments deficits with the United States. However, U.S. Secretary of Energy James Schlesinger rejected as inflationary the \$ 2.60 price because it was 44 cents more than the Canadian price. He also noted that the price was to be pegged to the value of a fuel oil (No. 2) subject to price manipulation by OPEC.⁵⁸

When two top Mexican officials (Foreign Secretary Santiago Roel and State Oil Company Director Jorge Díaz Serrano) appeared in Washington in late 1977 to discuss the price with Schlesinger, each side apparently thought the other to be pompous and arrogant. The meeting turned out to be a disaster for U.S.-Mexican relations, as is revealed in the following account by a senior Mexican official in the Foreign Secretariat:⁵⁹

[Roel and Díaz Serrano] went to Washington prepared to explain President Echeverría's predicament, that he had made a promise [to Mexico to sell the gas for \$ 2.60] and had to deliver.

There was a great sense of urgency. It was only a few days before the expiration of the letter of intent [signed between Mexico and the U.S. oil companies],⁶⁰ but the Mexicans met absolute haughtiness and arrogance.

Here were two foreign ministers of state with an appointment in a country where punctuality is highly valued. Yet they had to wait. How long? Ten minutes? Fifteen?

No. More. Much more. They didn't time it, but it was more than enough to make them hungry.

Was Schlesinger busy? They don't know. When they went in, he had his feet up on his desk and was puffing his pipe.

What shocked the two Mexican officials was his total lack of comprehension of Mexico's position and the predicament of the president of Mexico. There was no understanding that in making this offer López Portillo had boxed himself in politically in Mexico.

When Schlesinger coldly rejected this offer he left the Mexicans no dignified way out . . .

The Mexicans [then] talked prices, terms, length of contract, you know, something that would have allowed the Mexicans to say, 'We got \$ 2.60,' but would allow the North American to say, 'Yes, but we got a guaranteed supply for X years.'

Schlesinger said no to it all.

Subsequently natural gas negotiations were shelved for sixteen months and when they finally came to fruition in 1979 Mexico agreed to make only 300 million cubic feet available to the United States, at a cost of \$ 3.625 per 1,000 cubic feet, 30 percent lower than the price announced in 1979 after accounting for inflation.⁶¹

Having failed in the 1977 natural gas negotiations with the Carter administration, López Portillo bitterly turned away from the United States and sought to diversify Mexico's trade, as had Echeverría after President Nixon's 1971 imposition of a 10% surcharge on dutiable U.S. imports. Further, López Portillo moved to assume full leadership in the emerging North-South dialogues which pitted the poor countries of the southern hemisphere against the rich countries of the north.

For the Carter administration's part, some officials took the occasion of Carter's March 1978 trip to Venezuela and Brazil to circulate a plan that would make those two countries (rather than Mexico) the linchpin in U.S. hemispheric politics. Such a scheme came to naught, however, because it ignored some crucial realities: Venezuela not only founded of OPEC and thus was already compromised but also the Venezuelan government has been highly critical of the U.S. amendments to the Panama Canal treaties; the Brazilian economy was weakened seriously in 1973-1974 and again in 1979-1980 by its needs to import expensive oil dominated by OPEC prices; and Brazilian relations with the United States were strained over U.S. criticism of human-rights violations.⁶²

By 1979 the Carter administration had decided that Mexico's importance to the United States in terms of immigration, petroleum, and trade would make Mexico the linchpin in U.S. hemispheric affairs. Unfortunately this conclusion was reached in a confidential Presidential Review Memorandum (PRM 41), leakage to the press in November 1978⁶³ revealed that an interagency group

implicitly recommended the granting to Mexico of the status of a special relationship. Once the document became public, however, President Carter was forced to distance himself from what seemed to be "secret planning" with regard to Mexico.

In reassessing U.S.-Mexican relations during late 1978, Carter officials focused Washington's full attention on the border. They argued that the ten-year period from 1978 to 1988 would see serious problems of transboundary air and water pollution as well as crime leading to much tighter U.S. border controls, unless the Mexican government could slow the growth of border cities.

The problem of fishing rights off Mexico's coasts fully faced the United States in its relations with Mexico during the late 1970s. In 1976 legislation, López Portillo established Mexico's claim as of 1977 to a 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zone and control of fishing within it.⁶⁴ He set out to use oil revenues to build one of the largest and most modern fishing fleets in the Western Hemisphere, thus assuring Mexico's position as the world's leading tuna exporter. These actions led to Mexico's seizure of U.S. tuna boats fishing in the Exclusive Economic Zone, development of the tuna canning industry in Ensenada, and a campaign by the Mexican Fisheries Department to encourage the migration of San Diego's tuna fishing fleet south of the border. The United States responded in 1980 with an embargo on import of Mexican tuna that lasted August 1986.⁶⁵

In the Gulf of Mexico, the Mexican government's inability to control the 1976 Ixtoc I oil spill strained U.S.-Mexican relations.⁶⁶ The new U.S. special coordinator of Mexican affairs, Robert Krueger, demanded that Mexico assume financial responsibility for damage to the Texas and Louisiana coasts, thereby causing López Portillo to remind the United States that it had never been compensated for salinity damages from river water flowing into Mexico at the border. This incident crippled Krueger's diplomatic role from the outset, effectively ending the idea that the United States should have a special office to coordinate Mexican relations.

In 1980 Robert H. McBride, who had served as U.S. Ambassador to Mexico from 1969 to 1974, decided to examine problems generating friction in U.S.-Mexican relations.⁶⁷ Although he took up such themes as Mexican irritation at the 1976 U.S. Tax Reform Act (which limited tax exemption privileges for conventions held abroad by U.S. groups), U.S. grievances over Mexico's 1980 decision not to join GATT—the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (a joining that did not take place until 1986), and U.S. anger over Mexico's 1980 refusal to permit the exiled Shah of Iran to return to his home in Cuernavaca after he had received medical treatment in New York, McBride saw the most serious problems between the two countries as being diplomatic in nature.

For McBride, the main problem between the two countries is Mexico's historical image of the U.S. diplomat as a complicating factor. For McBride this is a long term problem and not easily solved. U.S. ambassadors, then, face a "no-win" situation with the Mexican press, which criticizes the role of each in

a framework that links every new U.S. representative to the role of only a few overbearing predecessors.

According to McBride the second problem complicating U.S.-Mexican relations often involves personalities, and he cites the case of the apparent incompatibility from 1977 through 1980 of Presidents Carter and López Portillo:

Those who saw the two together are convinced [that there was] a lack of understanding that became near phobia. This is unfortunate . . . [because presidential meetings normally have been] a positive element in the bilateral relation . . . The thesis that the immigration issue, for instance, cannot be settled by negotiators seems correct. Nor can trade problems be amicably terminated to everyone's satisfaction. Nevertheless it does seem necessary to flag the incompatibility on a personal level of the two Presidents as an unnecessary added handicap.⁶⁸

In light of John Gavin's controversial ambassadorship to Mexico (1981-1986), however, perhaps Mexico's press is justified at least in its initial suspicions. Clearly each new U.S. ambassador must overcome an unfortunate past that seems to have extended into quite recent times. Also, McBride's insights need to be supplemented by the development of an understanding of the complicated internal workings of U.S. policy.

REAGAN'S WASHINGTON AND HIS AMBASSADOR TO MEXICO VERSUS THE U.S. EMBASSY IN MEXICO CITY

With rising tensions between Washington and Mexico City over such matters as Mexico's opposition to President Reagan's intervention in Central America from 1981 through 1988, it was perhaps inevitable that friction develop, on the one hand, between Washington and the U.S. Embassy in Mexico, and, on the other hand, between the U.S. Embassy and the ambassador in charge of it. Embassy officials were too often not telling Reagan and Ambassador Gavin what they wanted to hear, namely the simplistic ideas that:

1. "Passage of U.S. legislation intended to bar work in the United States by illegal aliens would not harm Mexico, nor would implementation of the 1983 CBI—Caribbean Basin Initiative (which allows one-way, duty-free import of certain goods into the United States from the whole Caribbean and Central American regions)."⁶⁹
2. "Mexico has never understood the true nature of the Communist menace to the free world."
3. "Central America falls in Washington's sphere of influence."

4. "Mexico could be pressured into supporting U.S. intervention in Central America."
5. "Mexico could be an unstable domino ready to fall to the Communist onslaught should the vulnerable countries of El Salvador and Guatemala fall to the Havana-Managua axis."

In arguing that these Washington clichés were inaccurate, the U.S. Embassy in Mexico city became suspect in its loyalty and efficiency. To counter this distrust, embassy political officer Perry Shankle went to Washington to argue against the idea espoused by the CIA that Mexico was an unstable political domino. His mission carried risk to his career, but his arguments were successful and he was eventually promoted to become the Mexico Desk Officer in Washington, a vantage point from which he could argue as a voice of reason within the unreason of the Reaganites who sought to politicize so many foreign-policy decisions.

For U.S. embassy officials, then, life became more complicated than it had been during the Era of Good Feeling. Let us take two examples to contrast the spirit of issues facing the embassy staff in the 1960s compared to the 1980s. In the early 1960s, one U.S. political officer at the embassy told me how easy it was for him to get along with Washington:

Without many troublesome U.S.-Mexican issues to worry about, all I have to do is, first, read the books Washington sends (such as Robert J. Alexander's *Communism in Latin America*, 1957) and use the ideas therein when writing cables back to Washington—that way Washington officials think that I am on their wave-length.

My second 'important' activity is to read and clip the Mexico City daily press and then stamp the clippings 'secret.' So Washington wants us to identify communist activities, so we will overwhelm Washington with useless detail, all marked 'secret.'

In the 1980s, however, life for U.S. Embassy officials involved foiling the simplistic ideological bent of Washington seen in such a document as President Reagan's National Security Decision Directive 124. About that Directive, an investigative journalist wrote in 1984:

President Reagan already has signed National Security Decision Directive 124 ordering the State Department to draw up a master plan to pressure Mexico into shifting its political position in the [Central American] region . . .

The directive instructs the CIA to arrange for Central American leaders supportive of the United States to call on Mexican officials. It also requests our ambassador to Mexico, John Gavin, to assemble

a list of those aides to [President Miguel] de la Madrid who could be influenced.

National Security Council members also advocate using economic leverage to force cooperation from Mexico, though State Department officials say such moves would not be in our self interest, according to a source at the department . . .

[The Reagan administration]—even during de la Madrid's [1984 visit to Washington]—has made no secret that it is unhappy with Mexico's refusal to support U.S. policies, warning that "responsible governments of this hemisphere cannot afford to close their eyes to what is happening."

In reply, de la Madrid said he rejects "interventionist solutions" and argued the right of "people to decide their own destiny."⁷⁰

Meanwhile, U.S. Embassy officials in Mexico City focused their efforts on the day-to-day needs of real life and the increasingly intricate nature of relations with Mexico. To keep serious relations on an even keel, for example, the U.S. Embassy strengthened its U.S.-Mexican Border Affairs Office and signed a Bilateral Cultural Convention updated to specifically include for the first time the border as a focus for cultural activity.⁷¹

In contrast to the late 1930s when there was division between the U.S. Department of State and its embassy in Mexico City and when the President sided with the latter, in the early 1980s the President feuded to make his own policy which was at odds with the embassy and to a lesser extent with the State Department. Such changing duality also is reflective of much of Washington's "world view."

WASHINGTON'S WORLD VIEW

The contradictions of Washington's world view are seen in two statements by Henry Kissinger. In 1973, as President Nixon's newly appointed Secretary of State, Kissinger flew to Mexico City to attend a wedding anniversary party for Mexican Foreign Secretary Emilio O. Rabasa. According to Rabasa, when Kissinger asked him for advice on Latin America, as Foreign Secretary he answered: "We want you to love and understand us." Kissinger's response was: "The former you have, the latter we shall work hard to develop."⁷²

But in 1969, as Nixon's National Security Council Director, Kissinger made a now famous statement to Chilean Foreign Minister Gabriel Valdés which helps to reveal a major strand of thinking that has governed so much U.S. policy since the late 1940s. According to Valdés, Kissinger said to him:

Mr. Minister . . . you come here speaking of Latin America, but this is

not important. Nothing important can come from the South. History has never been produced in the South. The axis of history starts in Moscow, goes to Bonn, crosses over to Washington, and then goes to Tokyo. What happens in the South is of no importance! ⁷³

Fourteen years later Kissinger was appointed in 1983 as the Chair of President Reagan's Commission on Central America partly to counter Mexico's emerging leadership in the region as well as to subtly undercut the mediating role there of the Contadora Group (Mexico, Panama, Colombia, and Venezuela).

Apparently what so much of Washington does not fully comprehend is that Mexico, now the world's eleventh largest country in terms of population, one of the five largest producers of petroleum, and one of the three most important U.S. trading partners, is no longer a small, unimportant country that is incapable of playing a primary role in hemispheric and world affairs.

This is not to say that Mexico need become a hostile neighbor, rather if it is treated with deference that is its due and not insulted., as with U.S. National Security Decision Directive 124, it will remain a friend seeking to solve mutual problems. If it was unrealistic to think that the United States and Mexico could always live in an Era of Good Feeling, it is not necessary that the two countries live under continued serious tension.



Los Angeles Times, January 7, 1981

As the perceptive Mexican foreign secretary Antonio Carrillo Flores noted even before the end of the Era of Good Feeling:

There will always be problems between Mexico and the United States—they arise from living together. ⁷⁴

President Reagan could not understand how Mexico could disagree with his policies of trying to overthrow the Sandinista government in Nicaragua and sending arms to El Salvador. Reagan was furious that so many Mexicans saw his "anti-communist heroes" in Central America as murderous military thugs and leaders of right-wing death squads. Reagan and his advisors failed to remember Mexico's consistent stand against U.S. intervention dating back to the United States invasions of Mexico in 1846, 1914, and 1916.

That Reagan would always misunderstand the Mexican position on foreign policy is caught in the accompanying political cartoon by Paul Conrad, ⁷⁵ which depicts irony in the exchange of gifts at the 1979 meeting of the U.S. and Mexican presidents. presidential advisor Richard Allen seemed unaware of that irony.

FOUR REALITIES VERSUS IMAGES

Despite many highly visible misunderstandings and tensions in U.S.-Mexican relations, and in spite of divisions between U.S. officials in Washington and U.S. representatives in Mexico City, at least twelve major openings have been achieved to enhance relations since the mid-1980s. ⁷⁶

First, developments in the dimension and structure of trade have gone far to advance relations between the two countries. Relations had soured in 1980 when Mexico decided not to join the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), membership in which had been encouraged by the U.S. government to preclude complaints by U.S. industry about Mexico's unfair competition. The U.S. government was especially annoyed by Mexico's decision not to join GATT because the United States had in 1974 unilaterally eliminated tariffs on some imports from Latin America by establishing a Generalized System of Tariff Preferences (GSP). Despite Mexican export subsidies to industry and prohibition on U.S. imports, the United States put GSP into place for Mexico in order help Mexico's economic development, and from 1976 to 1985 Mexico saved 300.2 million dollars under the GSP program. ⁷⁷

Trade tension was eased in 1985 when the United States and Mexico signed a bilateral trade agreement on subsidies, the first commercial document since cancellation of the Accord on Reciprocal Commerce in 1950. In return for implicit protection against potentially restrictive U.S. tariff legislation, Mexico agreed to negotiate with the United States about complaints by U.S. companies

that Mexican government subsidies constituted unfair trade practices. Further, Mexico agreed to eliminate in stages its subsidies on goods exported to U.S. markets. Thus, Mexico was able to lay the basis for expanding its non-petroleum exports to the United States.

In 1986 Mexico joined GATT and began in 1987 to dismantle its system of import licenses and high tariffs that had effectively barred U.S. imports. In 1987 the two countries signed a U.S.-Mexican Framework Agreement to provide for routine procedures for consultation and improved access to the U.S. market. Hence, Mexico's weighted-average tariffs would fall from 100 percent in 1986 to below 10 percent by 1989. (The weighted-average U.S. tariff is 3.1 percent).⁷⁸

With regard to tension over U.S. prohibition on import of Mexican meat, in 1988 the United States ended its 1984 ban. Mexican meat had been banned until Mexico developed the capacity to test its exports for toxic residues.

Second, concerning tourism, Mexico finally agreed in 1988 to add 74 new civil aviation routes between the two countries. As long as Mexico's two international carriers (Aeroméxico and Mexicana) were government-owned, they had resisted revision of the U.S.-Mexican Accord on Air Transportation not only to limit competition with U.S. carriers but to fight expansion of routes. Their resistance lay in the fact that they lacked the equipment to match U.S. flight capabilities.⁷⁹ With privatization of Mexican airlines, however, they could no longer in effect selfishly sacrifice the expansion of Mexico's tourism industry in order to maintain for themselves their so-called "national control of Mexico's skies."

Third, with regard to customs and border-crossings, the United States and Mexico agreed in 1987 and 1988 to standardize forms and computer programs, coordinate procedures and hours, and expand U.S. border-crossing points and personnel. Further, Mexico agreed to permit without reinspection transfer of in-bond materials between U.S. plants in Mexico and gave U.S. Customs authorities permission to inspect U.S. in-bond plants in Mexico as part of the U.S. interdiction of drugs from Mexico.⁸⁰

Fourth, the two countries agreed in 1988 to coordinate the regulation of television and radiotelephone broadcasting within 72 kilometers of the frontier to minimize interference.

Fifth, with regard to border environmental problems, the governments agreed in 1983 and 1986 to cooperate in the monitoring and control of air, land, and water contamination. Because of limited funding made available by Mexico City and Washington, D.C., real gains have yet to be made in preventing, for example, Tijuana sewage spills which continue to plague the San Diego region.

Sixth, realizing the limits of national policymakers to understand and implement change along the border, the four U.S. border governors and the six Mexican border governors organized since the 1980s to meet and exchange views in order to develop regional policies as well as to influence national policies. The U.S. border states have commissioned the detailed research that provides the basis for new policy. For example, the San Diego State University

Institute for Regional Studies of the Californias and the UCLA Program on Mexico prepared for the Governor's California a report on California-Mexico Trade and Commercial, Agricultural, and Environmental Relations: Recent Developments, Problems to Solve, and Options." Following recommendations in this and other reports, California opened in 1989 an office in Mexico City to facilitate its relations with Mexico's national, state, and local governments. Although in 1986 California imported 2 billion dollars from Mexico and exported 1.8 billion,⁸¹ it hopes during the 1990s to capitalize on Mexico's liberalized trade and investment laws to increase its economic relations with Mexico.

Further, the governors of the ten border states have invited ANUIES and PROFMEX to brief the border governor's meetings. For example with funds provided by the Ford Foundation in Mexico City, ANUIES and PROFMEX were hosted by Governor Garrey Carruthers at the border governor's briefing in Las Cruces, New Mexico, December 1987, and by Governor Eliseo Mendoza Berrueto at the border governor's briefing in Saltillo, Coahuila, February 1989.

Seventh, in May 1989 the Mexican government modified its foreign investment rules to attract the capital desperately needed to restart the country's economic engine.⁸² Although U.S., Japanese, and European investors had long requested change in Mexico's highly restrictive 1973 foreign investment law (which effectively had set a 49 percent limit on foreign ownership of companies established in Mexico), the government delayed its post-1987 plan to revise the law until it had to reinterpret rather than change it. Because the Official Party unexpectedly lost sole control of the Chamber of Deputies in the July 1988 elections to a strong-leftist bloc that swept into office with the capability to limit the government's previous maneuverability, by 1989 the government chose to "jury-rig" the existing foreign investment law's regulations rather than to request that congress change the law.

The new regulations permit foreigners to buy up to 49 percent of ownership in secondary petrochemicals, autoparts (40 percent), fishing, explosives and fire arms, financial leasing, and mining not shielded by the National Reserve Status. Yet to be defined are terms of investment foreign investment in *Teléfonos de México* (probably permitting a controlling interest in voting shares) and banking (probably)—no single foreign company being allowed to hold then 30 percent of shares in any bank.

In the areas not specified above, foreigners may invest up to 100 percent, including the automobile and capital goods industries, textiles, agriculture and agroindustry. They may also now invest in sectors previously excluded to foreigners, including: iron, steel, cement, glass, and cellulose.

Under the new regulations, foreign investments in permissible activities are approved automatically under the main conditions that the amount invested in fixed assets not exceed a maximum of 100 million dollars and not be invested in Mexico City, Guadalajara, or Monterrey.⁸³ Although the National Foreign

Investment Commission had the authority to permit ownership up to 100 percent in nonprohibited activities, it was locked into bureaucratic inaction that could seldom be overcome and then only arbitrarily.

Mexico's investment regulations also create new trust-fund approaches to attract capital. One eases access to the Mexican stock market through trusts that give access to profits but not administration; one gives temporary 20-year trusts to allow foreigners to own 100 percent ownership in some sectors that had been closed to non-Mexican investors; and yet another sets liberal rules for acquiring 30-year trusts (and renewing them for 30 years) for lands leased in coastal and border areas where investors are constitutionally prohibited from land ownership.

The new regulations prohibit private investment (be it domestic or foreign) only in petroleum and hydrocarbons, primary petrochemicals, mining of uranium, mining of shielded minerals (now sulphur, phosphorus, and potassium), nuclear energy, electricity, railroads, and telegraphy. Further, only Mexicans may invest in radio, television, motor transport, national air and maritime transport, logging, distribution of gas, credit organizations, exchange and investment businesses, fishing cooperatives, and storehousing of goods.

Eighth, in 1990 the U.S. Treasury Department facilitated renegotiation of Mexico's public sector debt to some 450 commercial banks around the world. Under the March 1989 Brady Plan (developed by U.S. Treasury Secretary Nicholas F. Brady), Mexico finally reached accord after ten months with private banks on 48 billion dollars (rather than the 54 billion proposed for negotiation) as follows: Banks holding 49 percent (24 billion of the 48 billion dollars) opted to take bonds at interest reduced to 6.25 percent; banks holding 41 percent (19 billion) took bonds worth 65 percent of their nominal value or 12.4 billion; and banks holding 10 percent (4.8 billion) agreed to increase by 25 percent or 1.2 billion their loans at higher interest rates.⁸⁴

The results of the Mexican debt agreement have been interpreted differently by U.S. and Mexican financial observers. A major U.S. view holds that the 48 billion negotiated will not be much reduced because new loans to Mexico are required.⁸⁵ If the figures in this view are correct, the result would be a net reduction of only 3 or 4 billion against the 48 billion total. Although Mexico will make a substantial saving in reduction of interest and gain 1.2 billion in fresh loans, then, it will also have to borrow 3 billion in international-agency and Japanese loans to buy U.S.-backed zero coupon bonds as well acquire the 1.2 billion in new private bank debt.

In a major Mexican view, however, Mexico will cut its interest payments by 1.7 billion dollars and effectively gain a reduction of 18 billion dollars, 7 billion being immediately available to acquire U.S. bonds.⁸⁶ (The zero coupon 30-year bonds are to be used as collateral for reduction of principal on the debt).

That the Brady Plan results can be interpreted so differently north and south of the border has been its chief advantage since it was proposed in 1988. The

United States can claim to have negotiated with toughness but compassion. Mexico can claim a favorable settlement that yields a windfall of funds that gives time to privatize industry and stabilize the economy.

Although images are being used to make both countries "winners," one reality is clear: Mexico has gained more time than money. Mexico will also have to renegotiate its debt sooner than it wants—unless oil prices and/or the Mexican economy make a dramatic rise. Other realities have yet to be determined.⁸⁷

Ninth, the United States and Mexico have begun to overcome the numerous obstacles that have hindered relations to interdict drug trafficking. By 1989 the Bush government admitted that Mexico cannot be blamed for the high consumption of drugs in the United States; and the Salinas government began to arrest and discharge corrupt police officials.

Cooperation between the two countries finally began to overcome the sluggish Mexican prosecution of the persons involved in the 1985 kidnap-murder of U.S. Drug Enforcement agent Enrique Camarena, tortured to death by Guadalajara drug dealers in 1985. An NBC miniseries entitled "Drug Wars: The Camarena Story," broadcast January 7-9, 1990, caused some momentary concern Mexico that was unfairly portrayed, but U.S. Ambassador John D. Negroponete and other officials spoke out to remind viewers in both countries that the Camarena case was an event that no longer reflected reality. Moreover, an important number of Mexicans did not rally to nationalist criticism of the NBC miniseries,⁸⁸ perhaps because they wanted to help bring pressure on their government to step up pressure against corruption.

In the meantime, during 1989 the Mexican government escalated its war on drug dealers by cooperating with U.S. authorities to make two major arrests in one week. First came the arrest October 26 in San Diego of Luis Fernando Mejía Paláez.⁸⁹ Then came the capture October 31 in Ciudad Juárez of Rafael Muñoz Talavera, alleged head of the Mexican drug smuggling ring hired by Colombian drug cartels to ship three tons of cocaine each week into the United States. According to U.S. officials, Muñoz's 21.4 tons of cocaine was the largest cache ever seized in a single location, and the finding of such a cache means that the extent of U.S. cocaine trade has been vastly underestimated.⁹⁰

Tenth, six U.S. cabinet level officials—the largest such U.S. delegation ever—met with their counterparts in Mexico City to develop agreements to crack down on drug money laundering, build new bridges across the Río Grande, and speed plans to build a joint sewage treatment for the San Diego-Tijuana region.⁹¹

Eleventh, the legal situation of Mexicans in the United States has made major gains despite some losses. Although many undocumented Mexicans in the United States have seen their possibilities restricted generally by the unilaterally adopted U.S. Immigration and Reform Control Act of 1986 (and specifically in one California place by the Costa Mesa City Council effort to block funds being used to benefit illegal aliens),⁹² Mexican citizens have made advances in other spheres. For example, the new chief of the Immigration and Naturalization

Service, Gene McNary, announced in October 1989 that he opposed the building of the proposed ditch along the border,⁹³ and the Service effectively stopped raiding certain street corners in Los Angeles where undocumented workers gather to solicit day work from employers seeking temporary laborers. Further, the following headlines in the *Los Angeles Times* suggested that the courts will provide new remedies to injustice:

“Five Latinos Settle Poll Suit for \$ 400,000” (This article of December 28, 1989, reported on the settlement of a major lawsuit against Republican Party officials who posted uniformed guards at predominantly Latino polling places in Santa Ana, California);

“Mexican Official Hails Jury Verdict” (This article of January 20, 1990, quoted the Mexican Consul General in Los Angeles, José Angel Pescador, as hailing the \$ 1-million award to three men in Victorville as a victory for all Mexican citizens abused by U.S. law enforcement officials.

Twelfth, Mexico has made windfall gains in public relations with the United States. For example, in 1987 its beers clearly won in the *Los Angeles Times Magazine* beer-tasting competition among the 25 best-selling domestic beers and top ten imports—Mexico won five out of the top ten places as follows:⁹⁴

1. Bohemia;
3. Dos Equis;
7. Chihuahua;
8. Hussong's;
9. Tecate.

Beyond the public relation success brought by beer, the U.S. Navy implicitly gave Mexico a prize of sorts when it announced that none of 357 Tijuana prostitutes tested were infected with the AIDS virus. A previous bilateral AIDS test of Tijuana prostitutes had found only two cases out of 415 women tested.⁹⁵ The U.S. Navy concluded there was a low-risk factor for U.S. sailors who go from San Diego to Tijuana seeking sex. Because such a conclusion may be fleeting, U.S. and Mexican health authorities have agreed to continue monitoring the situation.

Table I
U. S. and Mexican Public Perceptions of Bilateral Relations, 1986
(Percent)

	Evaluation by	
	U. S. Citizens ¹	Mexicans ²
Very Friendly/Close	20	7
Friendly	55	59
Not Friendly/Unfriendly	17	30
Very Unfriendly	1	3
Not Sure	7	[1]
Total	100	100

¹ Harris Survey Press Release 44 (August 1, 1986).

² *New York Times*, November 17, 1986.

Source: Adapted from table 1-1 assembled in the 1988 Report of the Bilateral Commission on the Future of United States-Mexican Relations, *The Challenge of Interdependence* (New York: University Press of America, 1989), pp 32 and 176.

With regard to U.S. and Mexican public perceptions of relations between the two countries, table I suggests highly positive views. Despite the many negative statements by "influential" U.S. citizens questioned at the onset of this study, 75 percent surveyed in 1986 thought U.S.-Mexican relations to be friendly or very friendly. The score for Mexicans questioned in a similar survey was 66 percent, which may have been even higher had it included Mexicans living in the United States.

By the late 1980s, then, the status of official and unofficial U.S.-Mexican relations was quite good. To citizens in both countries the 1988 full-page advertisement in U.S. newspapers by the so-called Committee for Improved U.S.-Mexican relations was hysterically ridiculous:

The United States cannot afford a civil war in Mexico by means of a Communist Insurrection. A Soviet-dominated Mexico will force the United States government to mobilize the necessary troops to defend over, 2,000 miles of border and to re-deploy personnel from other threats. ⁹⁶

The Committee did not seem to stand for "Improved Relations," but rather the opposite.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Although problems have seemed to dominate U.S.-Mexican relations, the context of resolving real issues has begun to cumulatively and quietly overcome stereotypes. This is not to say that many problems will not always remain, but as Ambassador John D. Negroponte stated in his visit to UCLA in January of 1990:

To address the many serious issues that face U.S.-Mexican relations, officials in both countries recognize that we must not let small irritants deflect us from our task of focusing on major issues. Rather than react to irritants after they arise, we now seek to anticipate problems and begin negotiations from active rather than passive positions.

Some major issues that the two countries face in the future include the possible development of a U.S.-Mexican Free Trade Agreement to match the 1989 inauguration of the Canada-United States Free Trade Agreement, not to mention the possible formation of a North American Free Trade Area encompassing the United States, Mexico, and Canada. While such plans may not come to fruition in the immediate future, it is now possible to speculate that they might someday become a reality.

These and other issues will generate much controversy but hopefully the dissection of images by scholars and policymakers, who cooperate at meetings such as the ANUIES-PROFMEX Symposia, will contribute to analyses that facilitate effective U.S.-Mexican relations.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ J. Edgar Hoover is quoted in *Los Angeles Times*, December 12, 1970.
- ² Seventy-six U.S. congressmen, quoted in full-page ad, *New York Times*, August 16, 1976.
- ³ Colby quoted in interview with Robert Scheer, *Los Angeles Times*, June 6, 1978.
- ⁴ Carter is quoted in *New York Times*, February 16, 1979. Carter was responding indelicately to López Portillo's toast of questionable etiquette in which the Mexican leader had said: "Among permanent, not casual, neighbors, surprise moves and sudden deceit or abuse are poisonous fruits that sooner or later have a reverse effect."
- ⁵ Twenty-One U.S. congressmen quoted in full-page ad sponsored by the Committee for Freedom and Justice, *New York Times*, October 1, 1982.
- ⁶ Brzenzinski is paraphrased in the introduction to an interview with Cipriano Rangel by Rose Arrieta, *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*, May 12, 1983.
- ⁷ Gorman is quoted and paraphrased by Richard Sayre, "Mexico: No Death Squads, No Sandinistas," *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*, April 20, 1984.
- ⁸ Paraphrase based upon article by Don Shannon, "U.S. Aide Links Mexico Governor to Drug

Crops: Customs Chief Calls Nation's Graft so Pervasive That He Presumes Any Official to be Dishonest," *Los Angeles Times*, May 14, 1986.

⁹ Acosta quoted by Donn Walker, "Latinos Call Use of Term 'Mex' by Santa Ana Police Degrading," *Los Angeles Times*, August 25, 1988.

¹⁰ Full-page and in *Wall Street Journal*, October 7, 1988.

¹¹ Jim Mann, "A Ditch by Any Other Name? Oh Yes, Please!" *Los Angeles Times*, January 28, 1989.

¹² Ovid Demaris, *Pozo del Mundo [Hole of the World]* (New York: Pocket Books, 1971), p. 12.

¹³ Quoted and paraphrased from Robert Kistler, "No Effort to Block KKK 'patrol' of Border Planned," *Los Angeles Times*, October 20, 1977.

¹⁴ Vans-Pritchard, "Who Can we Trust to Tell us the Truth About Central America? Mexico is Playing a Duplicitous Game," *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*, June 7, 1984.

¹⁵ Quoted by H.G. Reza, "Disc Jockey's Parody of Illegals Hits a Sour Note; Latinos Complain to FCC," *Los Angeles Times*, July 3, 1986.

¹⁶ Quoted and paraphrased from George Putnam radio program, July 24, 1986.

¹⁷ Jack Anderson and Dale Van Atta, "The Mexican Time Bomb," *Penthouse*, May 1987, p. 41ff. Quote is from 42.

¹⁸ Quoted in *California Magazine*, December 1985, p. 64.

¹⁹ Moody advertisement in *Los Angeles Times*, October 5, 1989.

²⁰ Paraphrase developed from information in Jonathan Peterson, "Loose Lips Can Sink Sales; Rumormongers Damage Company Images," *Los Angeles Times*, August 16, 1987.

²¹ Demaris, *Pozo del Mundo*, p. 2.

²² The parent plant (or shipping point on the U.S. border for the parent plant anywhere in the United States) brings together the raw materials, ships them to its plant in Mexico for assembly by workers (who earn about one-fifth less than their U.S. counterparts), and receives the finished goods back in the United States for distribution to the U.S. market. Mexican law allows duty-free importation, under bond, of parts, components, raw materials, machinery, and other tools of production for items that are exported; the United States charges duties only on the value added to raw materials of U.S. origin through processing and assembly abroad. Of the Mexican *maquila* (in-bond) plants, 85 percent are located on the border.

²³ Overstreet quote is from her edited booklet *An "Offshore" Manufacturing Opportunity; Production Sharing and the In-Bond Industry From an Arizona-Sonora Perspective* (Nogales, Arizona: U.S.-Mexico Business Information Service, 1981), p. 3. (Publisher: P.O. Box 804, Nogales, Arizona, 85621)

²⁴ On this point, see James W. Wilkie, "Problems and Processes of Developing Research on a 'New' Area: The United States-Mexico Border," in Stanley R. Ross, ed., *Ecology and Development of the Border Region II Symposium of Mexican and United States Universities* (Mexico, D.F.: Asociación Nacional de Universidades e Institutos de Enseñanza Superior and PROFMEX, 1983), pp. 301-308.

²⁵ For this discussion of the emergence of border studies, I rely on unpublished notes provided graciously by Jorge Bustamante. See also Bustamante's bibliography edited with Francisco Malagamba, *México-Estados Unidos: Bibliografía General sobre Estudios Fronterizos* (Mexico, D.F.: El Colegio de México, 1980). For Ellwyn R. Stoddard's published view, see "Border Studies as an Emergent Field of Scientific Inquiry: Scholarly Contributions of U.S.-Mexico Borderland Studies," *Journal of Borderlands Studies* 1:1 (1986), pp. 1-33; and Stoddard, ed., *Borderlands Sourcebook: A Guide to the Literature on Northern Mexico and the American Southwest* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1983).

²⁶ *Rural Sociology* 7:4, pp. 384-395.

²⁷ Charles P. Loomis, "History and Results of the Michigan State University Cooperative Border Project," paper presented to the Southwest Sociology Association, Dallas, 1974.

²⁸ *American Sociological Review*, 24:6, pp. 804-814.

- ²⁹ *Social Forces* 37:4, pp. 334-339.
- ³⁰ *Rural Sociology* 25:2, Supplement.
- ³¹ (East Lansing: Ph.D. dissertation in sociology).
- ³² (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1971).
- ³³ (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1978).
- ³⁴ (Austin: University of Texas Press); (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press); and (PROFMEX Monograph Series; Tucson: University of Arizona Press); respectively. See also, Oscar J. Martínez, ed., *Across Boundaries: Transborder Interaction in Comparative Perspective* (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1986).
- ³⁵ (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press) and (Austin: University of Texas Press), respectively.
- ³⁶ (Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Center Publications) and (Los Angeles: Ph.D. dissertation in history, 1988, winner of the Herring Prize for 1989), respectively.
- ³⁷ (El Paso: Texas Western Press); (México, D.F.: CIDE-Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas); (El Paso: Texas Western Press); and (Monterrey, Nuevo León: Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León and ANUIES); respectively. See also *U.S.-Mexico Transborder Resource Issues*, a volume published as *Natural Resources Journal* 26:4 (1986).
- ³⁸ Sheffield to Nicholas Murray Butler, November 17, 1975, quoted in James J. Horn, "Diplomacy by Ultimatum: Ambassador Sheffield and Mexican-American Relations, 1924-1927" (Buffalo: Ph.D. dissertation in history, State University of New York, 1969), p. 89.
- ³⁹ The term "Era of Good Feeling" was popularized by Howard F. Cline in his *The United States and Mexico* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1953), chapter 15.
- ⁴⁰ Although the Mexican government nationalized a number of foreign-owned industries during the Era of Good Feeling (for example, in 1960 the electric power industry), the compensation was negotiated in such a way that it generally amounted to a "buy-out" of the foreign investment.
- ⁴¹ Cline, *The United States and Mexico*, pp. 313-315.
- ⁴² Cline, *Mexico: Revolution to Evolution: 1940-1960* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), pp. 304-305, 307.
- ⁴³ E. David Cronon, *Josephus Daniels in Mexico* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1960), pp. 261-270; and Cline, *The United States and Mexico*, pp. 248-249.
- ⁴⁴ Lorenzo Meyer, *México y Estados Unidos en el Conflicto Petrolero (1917-1942)* (México, D.F.: El Colegio de México, 1968), p. 245.
- ⁴⁵ Cronon, *Daniels in Mexico*, p. 261.
- ⁴⁶ On these agreements, see Lyle C. Brown and James W. Wilkie, "Recent United States-Mexican Relations: Problems Old and New," in John Braeman et al., *Twentieth-Century American Foreign Policy* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1971), pp. 378-419; and *Joint Projects of the United States and Mexico Through the International Boundary and Water Commission* (El Paso: United States Section, International Boundary and Water Commission, 1981).
- ⁴⁷ On the rise of the U.S.-Mexican Bracero agreements, see L. Manuel García y Griego, "The Bracero Policy Experiment: U.S. and Mexican Responses to Mexican Labor Migration, 1942-1955" (Los Angeles: Ph.D. in history, 1988). On the whole problem of migration, see García y Griego and James W. Wilkie, "Mexican Migration to the United States and the Possibilities of Bilateral Cooperation: Four Conceptual Frameworks," in Daniel G. Aldrich, Jr. and Lorenzo Meyer, eds., *Neighbors in Crisis: Joint Solutions* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1991).
- ⁴⁸ See Norris C. Hundley, Jr., *Dividing the Waters: A Century of Controversy Between the United States and Mexico* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1966).
- ⁴⁹ With disposal of the Chamizal problem so favorably for Mexico, the Mexican government could settle in 1967 the Pious Fund dispute, which was favorable to the United States position. Dating from the eighteenth century, the Pious Fund issue concerned Jesuit funds entrusted for missionary work in the Californias. When the Spanish Crown expelled the Jesuits from Mexico in 1767, it took

over the funds until 1821, after which they were administered by the Mexican government. The United States became involved after 1848, when under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Upper California became part of the Union and when, on behalf of two California prelates, it sought a settlement before the United States-Mexican Claims Commission asking that the Upper California share of the Fund and its accumulated interest be transferred to the Church in California. (See Brown and Wilkie, "Recent United States-Mexican Relations," pp. 393-394.)

⁵⁰ The screwworm fly lays her eggs at the edges of wounds of warmblooded animals or people. When the eggs hatch, tiny white worms enter the wound and feed on the flesh, usually causing death. On the history of the U.S.-Mexican campaign against the screwworm fly, see Jaime Baldovinos, "Flies and Screwworm," *Caminos del Aire; Revista Oficial de Mexicana*, January 1989, pp. 45-53, who notes that by the end of 1988 some 26 of Mexico's 32 political divisions were free of the screwworm parasite.

⁵¹ But Coca Cola Bottling Company, for example, did not laugh when it was legally required to manufacture two entire new sets of millions of bottles, the first to carry the Mexican translation in equal size to the U.S. name, the second to eliminate the U.S. name. In the end, this legal provision was not implemented.

⁵² On the legal revolution, see James W. Wilkie, *La Revolución Mexicana (1910-1976): Gasto Federal y Cambio Social* (México, D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1978), pp. 331-332.

⁵³ For examples of negative U.S. press coverage, see *ibid.* Indeed on August 16, 1976, seventy-six U.S. congressmen organized their complaints against Echeverría in a full-page ad published in the *New York Times*—see quote in the text above at note 2.

⁵⁴ Echeverría told the Club of Rome in 1973 that the Third World would never "catch up" economically to the First and Second Worlds if it adopted a strategy of "no growth"; and in 1976 the Club changed its position to favor "selective growth." See Wilkie, *La Revolución Mexicana*, pp. 426-427.

⁵⁵ On the illogic of the Estrada Doctrine, the famous Mexican historian Daniel Cosío Villegas made the following statement in his oral history interviews with the Wilkies: "I suppose that the Estrada Doctrine was justified when it was proposed for the first time by Genaro Estrada, and it had a very clear meaning: that is, it was a possible defense against the interventionist inclinations of the United States. But . . . it is an unsupportable doctrine which Mexico has not been able to defend with any congruency . . . No matter how much Mexico insists upon saying that if it maintains its diplomatic agents this does not represent approval, and that if it recalls them it does not represent disapproval, these actions, of course, represent approval in one case and disapproval in the other." Cosío's oral history with James W. Wilkie and Edna Monzón de Wilkie is quoted in translation here from the interview of January 26, 1965. The Estrada Doctrine had been violated notably by President Cárdenas with his nonrecognition policy toward Franco's Spain. The text of the Estrada Doctrine is given in Brown and Wilkie, "Recent United States-Mexican Relations," p. 407. The Estrada Doctrine stands in contrast to the Tobar Doctrine (after Carlos R. Tobar of Ecuador) which hold that no government should be recognized which comes to power through revolution.

⁵⁶ For an inside insight, see Robert H. McBride, ed., *Mexico and the United States* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1981), p. 4. McBride, U.S. Ambassador to Mexico from 1969 to 1974, believed that controversy over the Charter started the deterioration in Mexico's relations with the United States: The U.S. voted against the Charter in principle but was especially annoyed because Echeverría chose Santiago de Chile (where Allende was in power) as the place to announce in 1971 that Charter.

⁵⁷ John Stone, "Heat and Fuel: Cutting our Mexican Connection," *New West*, November 8, 1976, p. 15.

⁵⁸ George W. Grayson, "The Mexican Oil Boom," in Susan Kaufman Purcell, ed., *Mexico-United States Relations* (New York: Praeger, 1981), p. 148.

⁵⁹ Quoted in Leonard Greenwood and Frank del Olmo, "The Gas Fiasco: U.S. Hardnoses and Mexican Honor," in *Mexico: Crisis of Poverty/Crisis of Wealth*, supplement to *Los Angeles Times*, July 15, 1979, p. 5.

⁶⁰ The letter of intent involved conditional U.S. Export-Import Bank financing of the Mexican pipeline (to be constructed within 24 months) and special permission from the International Monetary Fund to exceed a borrowing limit of three billion dollars imposed by the Fund as part

of Mexico's plan to restabilize the economy. Schlesinger argued that there was no urgency about the pipeline because a U.S. natural gas shortage was still several years away. Although Robert Pastor argues that it was not in Schlesinger's purview to control the price natural gas, Schlesinger's voice was critical in the negotiations; for a defense of Schlesinger by the then Director of Latin American Affairs on the U.S. National Security Council, see Pastor's discussion in Robert A. Pastor and Jorge G. Castañeda, *Limits To Friendship: The United States and Mexico* (New York: Knopf, 1988), pp. 100-102. In any case, according to Grayson, "The Mexican Oil Boom," pp. 148-149, U.S. officials had sent repeated warning signals to Mexico about the potential pricing problems.

⁶¹ The price was later increased to \$4.47. For further discussion of these matters, see George W. Grayson, "The Mexican Oil Boom," p. 150, and Jesús Puente Leyva, "The Natural Gas Controversy," p. 166 in Purcell, ed., *Mexico-United States Relations*. See also, Grayson, *The Politics of Mexican Oil* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1980); Richard B. Mancke, *Mexican Oil and Natural Gas: Political, Strategic, and Economic Implications* (New York: Praeger, 1979); and Judith A. Teichman, *Policymaking in Mexico* (Boston: Allyn and Unwin, 1988).

⁶² For discussion of problems facing Carter on his 1978 trips to Venezuela and Brazil, see James Nelson Goodsell, "Carter Toughness Begins to Take Hold," *Christian Science Monitor*, March 27, 1978.

⁶³ David Binder, "U.S., Alarmed at Decline in Ties with Mexico, Drafts New Policy," *New York Times*, November 20, 1978. For Robert Pastor's explanation and defense of the process in which PRM 41 was developed, see Pastor and Castañeda, *Limits to Friendship*, pp. 102-107.

⁶⁴ See Patrick H. Heffernan, "Conflict Over Marine Resources," in Purcell, ed., *Mexico-United States Relations* pp. 168-180; and Thomas Wolf, *In Pursuit of Tuna: The Expansion of a Fishing Industry and Its International Ramifications* (Tempe: Center for Latin American Studies, Arizona State University, 1980).

⁶⁵ See B. Timothy Bennett, "Cooperación y Resultados en las Relaciones Entre México y Estados Unidos," pp. 205-217 en William [P.] Glade and Cassio Luiselli, eds., *La Economía de la Interdependencia: México y Estados Unidos* (México, D.F.: publicado por la Comisión sobre el Futuro de las Relaciones México-Estados Unidos por el Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1989). See also, Diana María Konepek, "[Mexico] Tuna Industry Troubled Despite High Exports," *Mexico City News*, April 20, 1988.

⁶⁶ Puente Leyva, "The Natural Gas Controversy," p. 164. On Carter administration policy, see Donald Lyman, "U.S.-Mexican Relations: Time for Change," in Susan K. Purcell, ed., *Mexico in Transition: Implications for U.S. Policy* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1988), pp. 134-146.

⁶⁷ Robert H. McBride, ed., *Mexico and the United States* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1981), pp. 23-24. To develop his analysis, McBride brought together a conference in October 1980 under the auspices of the American Assembly, held at the Arden House, Harriman, New York. Since the early 1980s a number of important edited volumes have developed interesting studies of U.S.-Mexican relations, among the first being: Clark W. Reynolds and Carlos Tello, ed., *U.S.-Mexico Relations: Economic and Social Aspects* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1981); and Richard D. Erb and Stanley R. Ross, eds., *United States Relations with Mexico: Context and Content* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1981). The Erb-Ross volume is especially noteworthy for the essay by Leopoldo Solís on "Integral Development" (pp. 276-291). In suggesting that the focus on classical economic development is "wicked," Solís made perhaps the final call for expanded statist policy before Mexico would have to turn away from statism beginning in 1982. Not only did Solís still believe that Mexico could afford to reallocate Mexican government expenditure to balance social and economic needs, but he also called, ironically, for Mexico to follow the Chinese Model of development wherein investment is made in people not industry.

⁶⁸ McBride, ed., *Mexico and the United States*, pp. 23-24.

⁶⁹ Ambassador Gavin may have stood against the Reagan administration on legislation to penalize U.S. employers of undocumented aliens.

⁷⁰ Marlene Nadle, "Mexican Foreign Policy [of the United States is] Result of Complex Balancing Act," *Fresno Bee*, May 27, 1984.

⁷¹ On these border activities, see *UC MEXUS News*, #5 (Spring 1983, p. 16) and #10 (Summer 1984, p. 1).

⁷² *Los Angeles Times*, August 26, 1973.

⁷³ Kissinger's statement is reported in Seymour M. Hirsch, *The Price of Power: Kissinger in the Nixon White House* (New York: Summit Books, 1983), excerpted in *The Atlantic*, December 1982, p. 35.

⁷⁴ *El Día*, January 9, 1969. For discussion of problems built into the relationship, see James W. Wilkie, "Conflicting 'National Interest' Between and Within Mexico and the United States," in Vásquez and García y Griego, eds., *Mexican-U.S. Relations*, chapter 1.

⁷⁵ Conrad in the *Los Angeles Times*, January 7, 1981, quoting Richard Allen.

⁷⁶ For a most insightful later summary, and refreshing approach which complements my view, see B. Tim Bennett, "Cooperación y Resultados en las Relaciones Entre México y Estados Unidos."

⁷⁷ U.S. International Trade Commission, Report, November 1986, p. 57, cited in Pastor and Castañeda, eds., *Limits to Friendship: The United States and Mexico*, p. 206. On the trade agreement of 1985, see *ibid.*, pp. 207-209. For background discussion, see also Sydney Weintraub, *A Marriage of Convenience: Relations Between Mexico and the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

⁷⁸ According to Bennett, "Cooperación y Resultados en las Relaciones Entre México y Estados Unidos," p. 207; also Mexican licenses to import fell from 50 percent of tariff-schedule entries in 1985 to 3 percent in 1989. In 1987 Mexico abolished its policy of artificially over-valuing import products.

⁷⁹ On U.S.-Mexican civil air transport agreements, see James H. Qualls, "Aspects of Recent U.S.-Mexican Relations: A Study of Civil Air Transport, Technological Assistance, and Scientific Cooperation Agreements" (Waco: M.A. in political science, Baylor University, 1968), chapter 2. Qualls examines struggles between U.S. carriers for routes to Mexico in the 1950s as well as resistance by the Mexican carriers to expansion of routes during the 1960s.

⁸⁰ Bennett, "Cooperación y Resultados en las Relaciones Entre México y Estados Unidos," pp. 210-211.

⁸¹ The importance and diversity of this trade is seen in the following figures for 1986 when California's principal imports (over 100 million dollars) from Mexico were: television sets (196 million), electrical transformers and switches (188 million), rubber and plastic goods (123 million), television picture tubes and electronic chips (120 million), vegetables and fruits (111 million). Mexico's principal imports from California were: electrical transformers, relays, printed circuit boards, television tubes (323 million), petroleum products (132 million), metal foundry machinery, pumps, power operated hand tools, valves (108 million). See Jeffrey Bortz and Edur Velasco, "Briefing Paper on California-Mexico Economic and Business Relations," in San Diego State University Institute for Regional Studies of the Californias and the UCLA Program on Mexico, Report Prepared for the Governor's Office of California-Mexico Affairs, *California-Mexico Trade and Commercial, Agricultural, and Environmental Relations: Recent Developments, Problems to Solve, and Options*, November 1987, Appendix A-1. With regard to California's ability to attract tourism from Mexico, 36 percent of all Mexico's tourists went to California, where Mexicans made up 35 percent of all of the state's foreign tourists. See Aída Mostkoff, "California-Mexico Tourism Trade Relations," in *ibid.*, Appendix G-1.

⁸² This discussion of Mexico's 1973 foreign investment law and 1989 redefined regulations is drawn from Alfredo Márquez and Noé Cruz, "Autorizan Inversiones 100% Extranjeras en México," *El Financiero*, May 16, 1989; Daniel Alder, "SECOFI Announces Modified Foreign Investment Rules," *Mexico City News*, May 16, 1989; Vic Riley, "Not a Panacea," *Mexico Journal*, May 29, 1989, p. 11; and Matt Moffett, "Japanese Investors Tread Warily in Mexico," *Wall Street Journal*, November 1, 1989.

⁸³ Other conditions for up to 100 percent automatically approved foreign investment are that (a) funding be entirely external and come through intermediation by Mexican financial institutions; (b) export and import of foreign exchange be kept in balance during the first three years; (c) the investment provide permanent jobs and training; (d) the investment provide adequate technologies that satisfy existing environmental requirements.

⁸⁴ See Peter Truell, "Mexico, Creditor Banks Complete Talks Covering \$ 48 Billion of Debt," *Wall Street Journal*, January 11, 1990.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ See León García Soler, "A la Mitad del Foro," *Excelsior*, January 14, 1990.

⁸⁷ On interpretations which attempt to put the debt settlement into realistic perspectives, see a Mexican view in Jorge G. Castañeda, "Mexico Counts on Image, Not Reality, of Debt Rescue," *Los Angeles Times*, June 30, 1989; and a *Wall Street Journal* editorial view (January 23, 1990) which suggests that the settlement may be complicated by the interest rate authorized at an inflated rate by the U.S. Treasury Department in order to save Mexico 350 million in up-front money needed to buy the U.S. zero-coupon 30-year bonds, the rate constituting an illegal subsidy by U.S. taxpayers because it is not based on the market rate. (This *Wall Street Journal* editorial calls for President Bush to issue a specific finding that the rate is necessary to the national interest because of Mexico's importance in U.S. international relations.)

⁸⁸ See Jorge G. Castañeda, "The 'Mature' Relationship Takes a Bruising," *Los Angeles Times*, January 24, 1990.

⁸⁹ See H. G. Reza, "U.S., Mexico Quash Money-Laundering Ring Linked to Colombian Drug Lords," *Los Angeles Times*, November 2, 1989.

Authorities alleged that Mejía laundered as much as 70 million dollars in drug profits and shipped a ton of cocaine to Southern California each month.

⁹⁰ Louis Sahagun and Stephen Braun, "Arrest Called Key Break in Sylmar Drug Bust Inquiry," *Los Angeles Times*, November 6, 1989. The *Los Angeles Times* of October 7, 1989, reported that Muñoz may have transported an astounding 60 tons of cocaine and 80 million dollars in cash through the San Fernando Valley during 1988, ledgers seized there suggesting that official U.S. estimates of the volume of drug trade have been vastly understated.

⁹¹ See Doyle McManus and Marjorie Müller, "U.S., Mexico Basking in New Era of Warmer Ties," *Los Angeles Times*, August 8, 1989.

⁹² Only health clinics were exempted from the Costa Mesa law; see *Los Angeles Times*, August 9, 1989.

⁹³ *Idem*, October 26, 1989.

⁹⁴ See the full-page Bohemia advertisement in *Los Angeles Weekly*, December, 3, 1987. Mexico also placed two other beers among the total of 35 places: Corona (21) and Carta Blanca (24).

⁹⁵ Patrick McDonnell, "357 Tijuana Prostitutes Test for AIDS Not Infected, Navy Says," *Los Angeles Times*, February 12, 1990.

⁹⁶ For example, see the *Wall Street Journal*, October 7, 1988, for the advertisement by the Committee for Improved U.S.-Mexican Relations entitled "State of Insurrection in Mexico: A Major Threat to the United States."

Adventures into Mexico

American Tourism beyond the Border

Nicholas Dagen Bloom

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“Dangerous Journeys: Mexico City College Students and the Mexican Landscape, 1954–1962”

Richard W. Wilkie

Driving over the crest of a low rolling hill as the first sunlight of the morning began to break across the highest points of the landscape, I could see a valley ahead at a lower elevation that was filled with early morning fog. Only a far distant church steeple and the tops of a few other rolling hills with scattered trees stood out above the mist. As the car dipped down into the fog, reminiscent of an airplane diving into a cloud, everything turned dark again. After a few kilometers, dark shadows of what turned out to be men, women, children, and an occasional horseman appeared as gray ghosts along the roadside, all heading in the same direction that I was driving. I could now see that the sun was beginning to burn its way through the ground fog that was slowly beginning to rise as it was warmed by the sun. The number of walking figures began to increase and then to merge with two other streams of people and animals moving toward an intersection, where a cobbled road turned left and disappeared back into the mist. My traveling companions were still asleep, as I instinctively turned left to join the slow stream of people with loads on their backs, horseback riders, and a few heavily loaded horse- and cattle-drawn carts. Our open car—idling along at the speed of the walkers—was the only nontraditional means of transportation in this expanding flow of travelers, and it seemed as though we were invisible to everyone else, since no one looked at us or made any attempt to move over to let us pass. Not that I wanted to pass. It was exhilarating being part of this extraordinary procession in the mist.

Within minutes I also began to hear a church bell ringing in the distance. With the sun rising in the direction we were headed, the fog began

to break up rapidly with rays of sunlight penetrating through and falling onto the travelers and the still damp roadway. The rounded shapes of the cobblestones glistened as the light rays bounced off them and into my vision. Looking directly toward the sun through the mist created a perspective of penetrating light rays that was very powerful. This scene with rural Tarascan Indians wearing broad-brimmed sombreros, ponchos of muted natural colors over white outfits, and huaraches on their feet as they slowly walked toward those rays of light, accompanied by the sounds of a distant bell and the clatter of horseshoes and metal cart wheels on that cobbled roadway, is a picture that will be etched forever into my memory. As I glided almost silently through this scene, I felt the magnetic pull on my soul of the Mexican landscape, its people, and its history, and that pull has never left. I vividly remember to this day my feelings of awe and appreciation of the scene I was witnessing.

Five of us were driving from northern California on our way to Mexico City College in September 1956, and this was my first real encounter with a Mexican village. We had entered Mexico at Nogales in a yellow 1940s convertible pulling a small trailer. It had taken three days to drive the west coast highway to Guadalajara, where my brother and I and three companions had an evening of celebratory carousing in a mariachi-filled nightspot. I had decided not to drink and to watch over our group. Since we were behind schedule, we set out in the middle of the night after closing time on old Route 15 heading toward Morelia and Mexico City. Somewhere in the state of Jalisco, south of Lake Chapala near Tuxcuenca, or perhaps across the border in the state of Michoacán, I first experienced “Village Mexico.”

Village Mexico was still a strong reality in the 1950s. At that time there were very few cars and trucks on the roads, and nearly three out of every five of all Mexicans lived either in rural villages with populations under 2,500 inhabitants (51 percent) or dispersed across the rural landscape in isolated homesteads (7 percent). Throughout most of southern “Mesoamerican” Mexico, close to 80 percent of the people lived rural lives in the 1950s—not greatly changed from the 90 percent who were rural in the entire country when the revolution began in 1910.

Time and Place in Mexico in the 1950s

I have thought about that initial event many times over the past half century, wondering if I could return and find that place. But I never traveled that particular road again, and I never returned to that village. I do not even

know its name. Thus one of my earliest and most powerful memories of Mexico is also one of my most elusive, in that I was never to repeat that first dream-like experience with Village Mexico in the same way.

But of course, that village scene at present is exceedingly rare in Mexico, although I still know a few remote places that represent an earlier landscape and time. Today, villages that had two thousand people in the 1950s are mostly urban centers of twenty thousand or more. The population of Mexico rose fourfold between 1950 and 2000 to nearly 100 million, with nearly half the population of the country living in the twenty-six largest metropolitan areas. Mexico City's current extended metropolitan population of nearly 25 million equals that of all of Mexico in 1950, while the proportion of those dwelling in rural villages has dropped to only 15 percent—fewer than one person out of every six.

The appreciation of a "sense of time and place" in Mexico has both personal and intellectual aspects. My brother and I had an apartment in Mexico City on the Paseo de la Reforma near the corner of Río Neva from 1956 to 1957. That first fall term I spent a lot of time in the afternoon studying outside on the old stone benches along the Reforma. Traffic along the Reforma in September 1956 was virtually nonexistent compared to the present, and the greenery and trees on the broad islands along either side of that great boulevard were ideal places to read, study, and people-watch at the same time. In those days well-dressed horsemen wearing large Mexican sombreros would still pass by occasionally on the hard-packed earth pathways that today are tilled and covered. When I had time to break from my studies, I read books about the historical events that occurred in Mexico City, many of which turned out to have taken place along the Reforma. While reading Prescott's book on the conquest of Mexico, I envisioned how Cortez and his men fought their way out of Tenochtitlán, the island Aztec capital on what is now called Lake Texcoco, along the southern causeway very close to where I sat reading. I also read books on the U.S. invasion of Mexico under General Scott in 1848—only a century before—and how his men fought up the Reforma to capture Chapultepec Castle from the *Niños Heroes*. I remember how extraordinary it felt to be reading at the precise place where history had been made in the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. Little did I know then that two blocks away from where I sat thinking about those earlier events, Che Guevara was living with his Peruvian-born wife, Hilda Gadea Acosta. Their apartment was at 40 Calle Nápoles, Apt. 5, near the corner of the block with Calle Hamburgo in the Pink Zone. Between September and late November, Fidel Castro and his lieutenants came to Guevara's apartment from time to time to plan the invasion of Cuba. On many occasions during

that fall, I played pool with my friend Murray in a second-story pool hall on the corner of that block, not knowing what was happening in the building next door in Che Guevara's apartment.

History seems to remember those events of the past that involve conquest, invasion, revolution, death, and destruction. Clearly those are turning points in history when societies are going through dynamic periods of upheaval and change. In my case, I do not think that I was drawn to the violence of those events, but more to the drama in the clashing worlds of ideas, ideologies, and often completely different worldviews of the combatants. My point in telling the previous story is that I was caught up with being at the place where two major turning points in Mexican history had occurred—the conquest of the Aztec by Cortez and his men and the U.S. invasion and conquest of Mexico City and Chapultepec Castle that I could see just down the Reforma from where I sat reading. But I was completely oblivious to the history that was going on figuratively under my feet with regard to the Cuban Revolution.

The juxtaposition of those events helps to point out what I feel is one major element of life in Mexico: that one is surrounded at all times by a sense that the unexpected can occur at any moment, that often there is a sharp contrast between the surface appearance and the reality, and that sometimes very different events happen in the same place at the same time—each unrelated to the other. This concept might be called the "unexpected juxtaposition of events"—historically, as in the above case, but also when viewing life in the city. Some of these daily events would be considered once-in-a-lifetime occurrences in the United States. Surviving the volatility of unexpected events was a skill that Mexico City College students were forced to hone and bring into play, if not daily, then quite frequently. Even though danger and the possibility of death were in the air at all times, I do not remember my friends worrying about it. It was just a fact of life, as were the reality of the potential for natural disasters such as earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.

Regarding the latter, I always felt that the title of Malcolm Lowry's book *Under the Volcano* (1947) best captured the feeling for me of my time in Mexico. In the late 1950s it was still possible to see clearly Popocatepetl and Ixtacihuatl virtually every day, and we even climbed them along with other mountains and volcanoes. But the concept of the "volcano" was also a metaphor for life in Mexico City and the countryside, where the most peaceful scene could suddenly explode into fast and furious action and sometimes violence and death. A number of my friends and acquaintances died or nearly died in Mexico at that time. There was a saying then that "half of the students will probably go on to get PhD degrees and something bad will probably happen to the other half."

A Brief History of Mexico City College

The life of American students at Mexico City College (MCC) in the mid-1950s to the early 1960s was one of constant excitement in a multidimensional world of cultural diversity, an ambience of sights, sounds, color, and most of all, opportunities for adventure. The orderly, linear expectations of one's family, friends, and community that often directed one's life path at home—school, girlfriend, marriage, children, car, home, job for life, grandchildren—were dramatically altered in a number of ways once one entered Mexico. One of those ways was that in Mexico people were most often respected and honored for what made them different and unique—in contrast with life in the States during the 1950s when people were most often respected and judged by how much they conformed to a common ideal and how well they fit in as a member of the group.

Another important factor in the lives of MCC students was the fact that nearly half the students were military veterans of World War II, the Korean War, or of occupation duty in Japan or Europe. These ex-GIs were sophisticated and somewhat jaded, and they desperately wanted to avoid the bland college experience in the States, which was often dominated by the fraternities and sororities that were so appealing to younger students directly out of high school. Most ex-GIs were between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-five, and most had experienced the world in times of turmoil. These veterans thrived in the diversity and excitement of the Mexican cultural environment that they found at MCC, and in the international lifestyle of one of the world's oldest and grandest cities. Some of these veteran GI expatriates were developing skills as writers, artists, and critics, and since Paris of the 1920s no longer existed, they were searching for that kind of ambience and lifestyle. In many ways Mexico in the 1950s felt frozen somewhere in time between the two world wars. The Mexican Revolution (1910–1925), with sporadic conflicts up to 1940 or so, had put modernization into a holding pattern throughout the country. Parts of Mexico City located between Chapultepec Castle and the Central Zocalo had recognizable elements of Paris in the 1920s—more so than any other Latin America city except Buenos Aires. For many of the intellectually oriented veterans and students at MCC, this was potentially the new Paris where ideas, art, literature, and revolution could be discussed in cafes, taverns, and at numerous and risqué parties where inexpensive liquor and "Acapulco gold" could be found.

Though GI veterans made up between 40 and 50 percent of the student body at MCC, they were far from a homogeneous group. Aside from being mostly male and ten to fifteen years older than the other students, they were as diverse in their aspirations and lifestyles as the rest of the student body. In

attempting to assess the different subcultural groups at the college, I want first to define the group in which my brother Jim and I fit most closely. We were among a group of students who came to explore new worlds, to discover new ways of seeing and thinking, to help open new roads to remote places, to climb snow-capped volcanoes and explore all of southern Mexico, to feel the historical and artistic heartbeat of Mexico, and to do it with companions who thrived in the extraordinary milieu that existed there at that time (see fig. 5.1). Having the chance to live and study in Mexico City was adventure enough, but when all the natural and human landscapes of southern and central Mexico became part of the experiential classroom, the education that each of us received went far beyond anything most of us had anticipated.

Mexico City College was unique because it was the only American liberal arts college south of the Rio Grande, and one of only several in the world in the 1950s. Students at MCC frequently discussed the only other options, Sofia University in Tokyo, Japan, and the American University in Beirut, Lebanon, but because of distance and cost, those academic institutions were



Figure 5.1. Four Mexico City College students and future professors at a roadside cantina, March 1958. From left: James Wilkie, Colin MacLachlan, James Harmon, and Richard Wilkie. Photo courtesy of Richard W. Wilkie.

something for most of us to only fantasize about. MCC had it all: proximity to the United States, moderate costs, membership in the Association of Southern Universities (so that credits transferred easily to the States), and most of all, location in a country that was a fascinating and inspiring place to be. Mexico added a dangerous and volatile element to our daily lives, but there was also a sense of "power of place" in a landscape and people that could not be matched anywhere else at that time.

Mexico City College was quite young, even younger than I was as an eighteen-year-old freshman in fall quarter 1956. Henry L. Cain and Paul V. Murray had founded the college in 1940 in downtown Mexico City with a nucleus of five teachers, six students, and no books. The college grew beyond its earlier scattered buildings in downtown Mexico City, and in 1954 it moved to a new campus with room to expand on the site of an old country club located west of downtown Mexico City on the road to Toluca at km 16 on Highway 15. By the late 1950s its most well-known departments were anthropology, archeological field studies, art, creative writing, international relations, business administration, and Latin American Studies. Alumni records for the eleven years from 1947 through 1957 show that MCC conferred 1,113 bachelor's degrees, 273 master's degrees, and had a yearly average of 126 degrees—101 BAs and 25 MAs (*Journal of Collegiate Registrars* 33, no. 3, Spring 1958). It should also be noted that in 1957 the college opened a branch campus student center for field studies in Oaxaca City in the state of Oaxaca, which was called the *Centro de Estudios Regionales*.

For those of us who look back on our MCC experiences, the mid- to late-1950s and early 1960s were a "golden age" for American students. The decline of MCC began in early 1961, when it was discovered that the business manager had absconded with large sums of money from the college, throwing the future of MCC into sudden disarray. At that time MCC had more than a hundred faculty members, a regular student body of nearly six hundred (it used to reach nearly one thousand as a result of college exchange programs during the winter and summer quarters, with students arriving from such academic institutions in the United States as Ohio State University, Michigan State University, and the University of Washington), and a library with nearly thirty thousand volumes. But with the loss of its operating funds, MCC never really recovered from this major financial crisis that threw the administration, faculty, and students into turmoil.

In 1963, as part of the resolution of MCC's unstable financial situation, the name of the college was changed to the University of the Americas, and later, in 1970, the campus made a third move, this time east of Mexico City to Cholula in the state of Puebla. But students of the old MCC had had the good

fortune to be there at a time in the 1950s when an international student body from more than twenty countries, nearly all the U.S. states (California was frequently represented by more than one hundred students), and from throughout Mexico could get a full four-year undergraduate or graduate education in the humanities, social sciences, or fine arts. That dream faded and then virtually disappeared after *La Universidad de las Americas* (UDLA) moved to Puebla. Only a decade and a half after the glory years of MCC in the 1950s, the new president of the UDLA, Macías Rendón, moved quickly to transform the university into a technocratic institution designed more to provide job training for future engineers than a true liberal arts education. During Rendón's first year (1975–1976), the new president openly indicated that the new policy of UDLA would be to replace its former faculty, who held PhDs and did research, with holders of BA degrees who would only teach. In mid-March 1976, Rendón fired 24 of the 110 member faculty without due process, including distinguished Professor of Biology Dr. Paulino Rojas, who was replaced by a young man who had failed to earn his BS degree at the university. At the same time, Rendón announced the elimination of or deep cuts in many of the undergraduate and graduate studies programs in the arts, humanities, anthropology, and Mexican history portions of the academic curriculum so that the institution could focus on a more technocratic approach to higher education. The final death of the ideas behind the old MCC, and the academic battles that went on over the next decade or more in an attempt to resurrect those ideas, will not be covered in this study. What will be noted is that the old MCC—as it existed between 1954 and 1963 as a liberal arts college at km 16 on the Toluca highway—had completely disappeared by the end of 1976.

Impressions of Mexico City College

Most students living downtown in Mexico City caught the MCC school bus behind the fountain of Diana, the Huntress, that was located in the center of the circular *glorieta* where the broad avenue Paseo de la Reforma angles west and Chapultepec Park begins. The bus was parked between two enormous black-colored lions on pedestals, each lion the size of a Volkswagen. These lions sat on either side of the road that continued up a short distance to Chapultepec Castle and had a commanding view looking straight back down the Reforma toward the center of the city. The MCC bus departed every half hour from the *liones*, passing through a corner of the park, past a massive monument to the 1938 nationalization of foreign oil companies by President Lázaro Cárdenas, and then through the palatial Lomas de Chapultepec district. Following a curving and slowly rising roadway with trees and greenery

in the median and on both sides of the road, the bus rode the highway up a ridgeline, flanked by *barrancas* on both sides, and ultimately to the college at km 16. Those ten-mile trips every school day gave the students time to shake the late-night cobwebs from their minds and to make the transition to an entirely different world up above the teeming city.

From the college there were magnificent views of the city to the east, the wooded *barranca* below the college, and on most days, the volcanoes Popocatepetl and Ixtacihuatl to the far south, both of which stood out against the horizon at elevations just under eighteen thousand feet. The campus had taken over a former country club, so a number of buildings were already in place, including the two-story building housing the cafeteria, theater, and art department (see fig. 5.2). The cafeteria opened onto a large, open patio that projected out into the upper branches of old spreading eucalyptus trees growing from the slope below, with a lovely view south. On campus, the tiled mosaic murals on the walls of many of the open-air classrooms, along with the green, finely-groomed grounds with open patios and clusters of stone seating for outdoor seminars, gave the campus a strong aesthetic sense of belonging in that location. It fit with everything else around it along a beautiful wooded ridgeline rising to the west toward Desierto de los Liones (Desert of the Lions National Park). Beyond the campus was the pass to Toluca and its glorious Friday market. Everything about the place felt right (see fig. 5.3).



Figure 5.2. Mexico City College campus at km 16 on the Toluca highway; walkway to Spanish and economics, postcard circa 1955. Photo courtesy of Richard W. Wilkie.



Figure 5.3. Mexico City College students on the terrace outside the cafeteria; campus at km 16 on the Toluca highway, postcard circa 1955. Photo courtesy of Richard W. Wilkie.

Some Classroom Experiences at Mexico City College: 1956–1958

What stands out when I think about the courses offered at MCC is the range of unusual, and sometimes bizarre, professors who taught there. Most of them were extraordinary individuals whose life experiences went far beyond that of the faculty one might find in institutions of higher learning in the States. I later had excellent professors at the University of Washington, Seattle, but they generally did not add that layer of worldly-wise experience to their courses in the ways that the MCC faculty did. Teaching in Mexico was chosen for the lifestyle it offered, for love of the country, and for the research possibilities available rather than for financial gain. A number of MCC faculty members had other jobs in the city and taught almost for the joy of doing it; some were ambassadors from other countries who liked the idea of teaching. One faculty member who stood out for me was Dr. Pablo Martínez del Río, from the Mexican National Institute of Anthropology and History, a famous anthropologist in his seventies with sweeping gray hair who typically wore a baggy black suit with tie, a black felt hat, and white spats over his shoes. I still keep and cherish my lecture notes from his course on the Indian tribes of Mexico. He must have known more about the topic than anyone alive.

alpine climbing axe, and Trotsky died the next day, August 21, 1940. Mercados was thought for a time to be a Canadian named Frank Jacson Mornard, but his true identity ultimately came out. Mercados had been in prison for nearly eighteen years at the time we talked with him. The longest sentence in Mexico for murder is twenty-five years, and with only a few years to go in his term, Mercados was cheerful and friendly. He had a corner cell by himself during the daytime, barred on two sides, and he seemed to be friends with a number of the passing guards, prisoners, and visitors. At night he had a more private cell.

Our group of about ten stood next to his cell and talked with him as he stood on the other side of the bars, holding them with both hands. He seemed to enjoy this interaction and the discussion in Spanish that was led by Professor Sloane. I later read that he was released two years later in 1960 and was seen boarding a flight to Prague from Paris. Mercados lived in Moscow for a number of years, where he received the Order of Lenin. Many years later in the 1980s he was living in Havana, Cuba, where he died of cancer.

The Mexico City College Student Body

Of the nearly one thousand or so students enrolled at MCC in the 1956–1957 academic year, about four hundred were U.S. military veterans studying on the GI Bill. On the fifteenth day of each month, Salvador López Tello from the Visa Department at the U.S. Embassy arrived at the college to give out checks of \$115 to the ex-GIs—what they referred to as “life blood.” Three major groups stood out among the ex-GIs, the largest group being that of the adventurers and drinkers who after a number of years in Europe or Asia could not face the stifling uniformity of life back in the States. The second largest contingent of veterans was made up of the more serious business-school-bound veterans who, after learning Spanish and graduating from MCC, often went on for graduate degrees at Thunderbird Business School in Phoenix, Arizona, and then dispersed into Latin America with companies like Pan American Airlines, Coca-Cola, and United Fruit. A third but smaller group encompassed those veterans who were later to become teachers or college professors, thus building on their international experiences in several regions of the world.

The exchange students who came for the winter or summer quarter constituted another important group. Spanish teachers and students also studied at MCC for a year or more to improve their Spanish communications skills. Another large cluster of students, and one that was career and creative arts oriented, included the artists (people called them “the painters and the potters”),

archeologists, creative writers, journalists, historians, and social scientists, and there were also those students who were training for business or foreign service careers in Latin America.

Finally, there were many American and some European students at MCC who were there primarily for the outside activities that were available to them within a rich and varied array of natural settings and for the cultural diversity that existed in Mexico City and its hinterland. It seemed that we all felt the power of place in Mexico's landscape and its people, and at the time it was a place where physical and human landscapes blended harmoniously together.

The largest subgroup among these students who came to Mexico for opportunities outside the classroom centered on the Mexico City College Explorer's Club, but included many independent adventurers as well. Oriol Pi-Sunyer, a Spanish Civil War refugee via France, England, and Venezuela, captured a number of the elements that this group shared:

It is possible that I learned as much outside academic contexts as in the classroom. Travel in Mexico was cheap, particularly for those ready to patronize country buses and third class carriages. Few of my friends owned cars, but we were certainly mobile, making numerous trips through much of central Mexico and beyond. We trekked mountain trails and went on indigenous pilgrimages, often following routes dating back to Aztec times. A good deal of this activity would now be classified as “adventure tourism,” but it formed part of a venerable travel tradition premised on the assumption that knowledge of people and places was gained through personal experience. (“El mosaic de la memoria,” *Revista d'etnologia de Catalunya* 25 [November 2004]: 117–18)

Also within this subgroup of students who came primarily for the available outside activities were students who came to MCC to become the “new American expatriates” by creating or finding a 1920s Hemingway-like Paris or Pamplona; to play team sports; to use the campus as a base for commuting back and forth to Acapulco as surfers and beach bums; and to thrive in the active bar culture.

The latter group, who came to enjoy the bar culture, included students who can be classified as “big city drinkers, brawlers, and thinkers.” These students were often older, experienced urbanites from Manhattan, Brooklyn, the Bronx, Chicago, and other major cities where drinking was considered a major activity. Occasionally these students ended up in jail for a time, after getting into fights and conflicts. Pete Hamill (MCC, 1956–1957) wrote about this drinking subculture at the college in his book *A Drinking Life*:

There was drinking everywhere, and Tim and I were part of it. We went drinking in the small hut across the highway from the school, in the *cantinas* near

Two years later (1957–1958), tuition with medical included was up to only \$130 per quarter. Since the ex-GIs were receiving \$115 a month on the GI Bill during that period, they could easily afford an education at MCC.

Even so, surviving economically was a topic that MCC students talked about much of the time. Veterans had to wait for the fifteenth of the month for their GI Bill checks to arrive, and others of us had to constantly check the mail from home to know whether we would have to borrow money from friends or whether we would be the ones who could be tapped for a loan. There was an unwritten code about borrowing, repaying, borrowing again, and asking, "Who has the money this week?" There was a vast network of connections, the major requirement of which being that records needed to be maintained. The overwhelming majority of loans among MCC students were repaid, but there were a few students who thought it was okay to ask others for loans, though if others, when they themselves were then broke, asked them to repay those loans, the response was, "Stop dunning me, I pay my bills!" Since these deadbeats never volunteered to repay the money they owed, and then objected when the situation was reversed, they were soon cut out of the large "friendly aid" network that had been constructed among students who sometimes felt stranded and with nowhere else to turn.

Working in Mexico on student visas or tourist visas was illegal, but there was an accepted gray area within which everybody operated. Students at the college often needed to supplement their finances. Several of us were paid between fifty and sixty dollars a game to play American football for two Mexican universities. The league officials were seeking to expand the top league from four teams to six, so they hired a handful of imported players from Texas, as well as a few MCC students, to strengthen the two new teams and to improve the quality of play in the league in general. Officially this was illegal, but it appeared to be out in the open. I played for the Mexican Military Academy (*Academia Militarizada Mexico*) with three other MCC students. The league also brought in an American coach from El Paso, Texas, with eight west Texas players to add to our team, so considerable tension developed between the Mexican players and the Texans on the issue of who would start the games. The solution was to rotate the starting teams from week to week. The four MCC players, however, were in the strange position of being wanted desperately by both teams, so in the first game, and before eighty thousand fans, I found myself starting at tackle after only five days of practice with the Mexican team, and then staying in to play for the American team when they entered the game. By the end of the game I could barely crawl off the field.

Other students found odd jobs when they could. One of my friends was hired by a hotel chain to test their security systems by entering the premises

and stealing things. Several times he was nearly killed when caught, since the guards did not know ahead of time that the hotel had hired him. It finally became too dangerous, so he quit. In that case, personal survival took precedence over economic survival.

The following excerpts from a letter written in March 1960 by an unnamed graduate of MCC (1959) best illustrate how some jobs (and sometimes life after MCC) played out:

I left Mexico in September. Last year there I really had a good time. While finishing at the college, I lived with Freddie W. for awhile and then the police kicked me out of the apartment because of a wild party. I then moved in with some girl who left me (the bitch) in June with \$8 in my pocket, and I wasn't getting any money from my folks. So—I went to Acapulco and the "Snake Pit" and the old lady owner, who always kind of liked me informally, adopted me and gave me free room and board all summer. . . . I was of course broke, so I got a job managing the nightclub in the Aloha Hotel, which was a ball. It was really going for a while, but then the tourist season ended and I went broke trying to keep the place going. When it was really strong, though, I had a seven-piece cha-cha band and floor show.

I went [back] to Mexico City then and ran into the girl who was entitled "Miss Universal Beatnik" and was in *Life* magazine because of it. She was down there with a bunch of beatnik friends and since none of them had a place to stay, I got a room in the Hotel Rey with her and her girl friends. This sounds like a good deal, but you ought to try and live with a bunch of beatniks. Man, in a little while they would have driven me crazy. Besides they were always taking dope and I was afraid the cops would raid us, so I moved out and came up to the states and here I am at present . . .

[After realizing that his economic situation was in shambles, he joined the Army.]

When I got to Massachusetts I went down to New York City and Greenwich Village and ran into the same beatniks again, so I'm sharing an apartment with four girls now on weekends, including "Miss Universal Beatnik."

Well I sure wish I was back in Mexico. I hate this cold weather up here. I'm in the Army Security Agency, which is a pretty good deal as far as the Army goes. They are sending me to school for 6 months and then overseas to the Orient or Europe, which will be all right with me.

Other Special Places for Americans in Southern Mexico

Americans in Mexico in the 1950s were attracted to a number of places in the greater hinterland around Mexico City and the southern part of Mexico. Greater Mexico City, with fewer than three million people in 1950, was the

places, but they would have held little appeal for most MCC students. Better a place like Acapulco, set in a Mexican city, where Mexican tourists and families had vacationed since before the 1920s. Acapulco in the 1950s was an ideal place for our vagabond group of poor students. On the main beaches of the harbor there were no grand hotels, and hardly any hotels of any size. Across the palm-lined boulevard, Avenida Costanera Miguel Alemán, that was named after Mexico's president from 1946 to 1952 and that bordered the long harbor, there were some low-rise hotels, but for the most part, views from the Avenida of the main beaches remained sweeping and unhindered. Locals and visiting Mexicans used the beaches for soccer games, sunning, swimming, and fishing. In the late afternoon, chefs and housewives waited while crews of eight or ten oarsmen rowed their boats up to the beach. Behind the boats trailed long nets teeming with live red snappers and other fish. Once the boats reached the beach, the rowers jumped into the surf to begin pulling in the nets full of fish. After some heated bargaining, the chefs carried their newly purchased fish directly to their open-air restaurants throughout the downtown and along the *costanera*, while the housewives shuffled toward home carrying straw baskets with the fish half hanging out.

The peninsula and areas around Caleta Beach and Caletilla Beach had one grand hotel, the Hotel Caleta, that perched on the point above the beach. A little farther up the hill to the west was the famous Hotel Flamingo that John Wayne had owned since 1950 and where he hosted his Hollywood friends, including actor Johnnie Weismuller (Tarzan) who lived there until he died in the 1980s. Our band of poor college students and ex-GIs, however, never frequented either of those places but hung out around the other low-rise and small hotels and their pools or beaches that were easily accessible. Our favorite place to stay was the Hotel del Pacifico at the far end of Caleta Beach. The hotel was shaped something like a battleship but with a large, covered, open-air restaurant on the second floor. We stayed there for only a few dollars a day.

Most of the hotel managers seemed to like the presence of gringo students, so we had the run of virtually every place in Acapulco. They seemed pleased when our group arrived to use their swimming pools, bars, restaurants, bath-rooms, or lobbies. It was especially true when members of our group brought guitars for impromptu parties after the *cuba libres*, or local beers, as the sun set and the hotel guests returned from the beaches. All the small places wanted to create a certain *ambiente* for their clients, and for some reason a rough and tumble group of relatively benign gringos seemed to please nearly everyone. If the party got too lively for the hosts, as it sometimes did, we just moved to the next hotel, or perhaps back to the Bum-Bum Club on Caleta Beach, or even to someone's suite for a jam session of raunchy and rowdy songs.

During spring break of my freshman year, late March 1957, six of us drove to Acapulco for a ten-day break from our studies: my brother Jim, Ted Turner (a GI veteran from Nashville), Murray Pilkington (a southern Californian), Elvis look-alike Mike Johnson (a northern Californian), and a friend with a car—an ex-GI named Gil from New York City. The second night in town, we ran into a weird and wonderful social group that drew us into their parties and scene for the rest of our stay. One of the leaders of the group was Lady Sanchez, an older woman who had spent so much time in the sun her skin had the texture of a brown leather mummy. She claimed to be the daughter of the Duke of Buckinghamshire, and that her first husband had been the actor Rex Harrison. Another leader of the group was Tony Clark, who wrote *The Hucksters*, which later became a movie. Tony, who was also English, was in Mexico writing an article for a magazine. Since he was on an expense account, he kept our glasses full of rum, and our plates filled with grilled *huachinango* (red snapper), *cerviche* (raw fish in lime juice), and fresh shrimp at every restaurant and nightclub where we spent time. As poor, struggling students, we were certain that we had arrived in paradise. (At the end of the week, Tony Clark asked six of our MCC group to accompany him as "armed guards" on a ten-day pack trip into the mountains of Guerrero in search of material for his article. Reluctantly we had to return to classes, and we never heard whether he took the trip or not, or whether his article was ever published.)

Members of the Lady Sanchez/Tony Clark group included Lucy, a lovely ballet dancer from New York City who kept Tony company; Pearl, a music teacher from St. Louis; a secretary from Oakland named Marge (one of the most beautiful women in Acapulco); and Peter, a book publisher from New York. Other college friends joined us from time to time, including the ex-GIs Sherm (from California) who disappeared frequently for an affair with a married woman; "Phantom" (an Alaskan fisherman) who was staying with his pregnant Mexican girlfriend; and Bill (from Houston) who managed to get in a fight with some prostitutes at one of the sidewalk restaurants on the Central Zocalo where we were spending the evening, with the police being called in to end the fracas. Others individuals were involved as well during this stay, but this group made up the core of the revolving whirlwind of our letting off steam from our studies back at MCC.

Driving to Zihuatanejo

Most of our school breaks were not spent leisurely in Acapulco, however, but instead were spent hiking or traveling to out-of-the-way places. During spring break in March 1958, after reading that a new "all weather"

The beach near this two-street village was not a good place for swimming, so we hired a boat to go to the other side of the bay to perhaps the most beautiful beach we had seen in Mexico—*Las gatas* (She-Cats). It was there that lush jungle foliage swept down to meet white sands, which bordered the softly tinted green waters of a sheltered nook on the bay side of the palm-tree covered shoal that arched out from the shore. Ocean waves crashed one hundred yards off the point over a coral reef that protected this magic location. Not all of our adventures ended on such a high note, or in such a dramatic setting, but hopefully my companions then, Jim Wilkie, Mike Johnson, Tom Held, Bill Jagoda, and John Freeman, still remember the feeling of discovery that we all felt at the time.

Unfortunately, even paradise has problems, and before leaving the beach that afternoon, while looking for colored blowfish, John Freeman stepped on an underwater spine plant. A half dozen quills pierced the skin in the soft bottom of one of his feet, and their toxic poison caused a fever for a day and real discomfort for a week or more. Removing the quills took the expertise of an old Indian couple living near the beach on a site that is now probably occupied by a giant beach hotel. But having never returned to Zihuatanejo, I have the luxury of dreaming that dramatic changes have not taken place there and that the beach at *Las gatas* remains as it was in 1958.

Mexico: Learning to See the Details

Experiencing the Mexican landscape in those years helped me to see more clearly the everyday world, something that life back home with its tranquility and blandness would not have provided. Vistas in Mexico in their natural and built environments were so full of rich details of color, pattern, and variety that I realized even more strongly the importance of seeing things on three different levels: the overview level or wide-angle perspective, the medium-level for observation of one's immediate surroundings, and the more focused low-level for examination of up-close details in what could be called "still-life scenes." This helped me to gain a taste for wanting to understand the complexity and diversity of my surroundings—something that helped me begin to understand life in Mexico more completely—so that what might seem chaotic to some became commonplace to me and other MCC students.

Reading the landscape and grasping what I was seeing was something I had learned to do instinctively through a wilderness upbringing in the Salmon River country of central Idaho. I learned, as did my brother Jim, that survival could depend on remembering details in the landscape and how they varied at different times of the day. We had to construct very accurate mental maps

if we were to find our way back home or find the safest and best route up or down a mountain face. My high-school art classes in Idaho also had been an important setting for learning to focus on details. Now in Mexico, it was possible to hone those skills as the landscapes and the human activity that filled them came together in a honeycomb of action and excitement.

Take, for example, a periodic Mexican market, where a multitude of visually exciting elements is jammed into a handful of street blocks. The density of the mix would be the same if these people and their activities had been thrown into a bowl and stirred with a giant wooden spoon. Add the sounds, smells, and tastes of the market, and for some it can be a nearly overwhelming experience.

The Toluca Market on Fridays, for example, was so rich in actions, sights, sounds, and smells, and all of it flooding one's senses, that most non-Mexicans reacted in one of two ways. Either they jumped into the scene and reveled in it, or they looked around for a bit before fleeing to a bar or café where it was possible for them to focus their senses on a less dizzying scene. I often had another strategy that helped me give structure to the apparent chaos and disorder. I first looked for a high place from which to get an overview of the basic layout of the market, and where I could best gain a perspective on the activities that were clustered in each part of the market below. Getting a feeling for the whole gave me a solid understanding of the parts and even of those places that it might be best to visit early and of the others that were just beginning to evolve. Every market has a rhythm, and it is imperative to feel that ebb and flow of events and activities. Arriving at dawn along with the market vendors is the best time to get in sync with that rhythm, but that is not always possible. From above one can feel the pulse of a market in the myriad of sights below, and one can discern which areas of the market are building toward some kind of a crescendo. Some people shy away from climactic events, but I am drawn toward them. Thus, the overview-level or wide-angle perspective is a time to get in touch with these feelings and to form a flexible plan of action.

After coming down from our overview perch, it is time to explore the intermediate-level perspectives within the market area. This is a phase of observation and exploration in which it is important to screen out the chaos and look much more closely at clusters of activities: the actions of one or two vendors surrounded by their array of colorful produce or handicraft; the people who bargain or talk with them; the young child pulling on its mother's dress or father's pant leg to get their attention as the parent is handing change to a customer; the dogs under foot that are searching for and finding scraps—all of these events and more are taking place in micro-settings, of

which there are thousands of versions, each occurring simultaneously in the big weekly Mexican markets. Exploring them, framing them in the mind's eye—even sketching them or photographing them—is all part of experiencing the intermediate level of observation. During this phase I generally spend time in every section of the market, pausing at times near central points—perhaps near a fountain or a smaller mini-plaza, where I can sit for a while and people-watch. The endlessly passing array of human characters of all ages and backgrounds, as well as animals, can keep an observer entertained for long periods of time. Where else other than in periodic markets do the worlds of rural peasants and urban dwellers come together so completely?

Finally, there is the level that is often overlooked by market goers and travelers: the focused, low-level perspective used for close-up details. For a final trip through the market, walk slowly as you try screening out the jumble of organized chaos, just thinking and framing your vision into small detailed spaces. Perhaps it is noticing the wrinkles on the back of an old vendor's hand; spotting a military medal on the lapel of someone's jacket; appreciating aesthetically the light angles and shadows on a small pile of yellow lemons or on the rounded shapes of small bread rolls; catching visually the meeting of two hands as money is exchanged between vendor and buyer; or spotting such things as the sparkling gold tooth of the flower lady or the textured look of a well-used sombrero. Details in the built environment are just as important, such as an old manhole cover in a cobblestone street or the grillwork over a window that opens to the market. These visual treats are like a dessert at the end of the day.

These markets touched my soul in ways that make them live on. Clearly they were vital elements in my search to capture a "sense or spirit of place" in Mexico, a spirit and a place that included natural and built environments and the spaces of human activity, and that involved people of all ages, socioeconomic levels, and rural or urban backgrounds. It was understanding something about that combination that helped me appreciate the complexity of Mexican diversity.

Conclusion

Mexico City College was an important institution of learning for American students who wanted to experience life outside the United States during an important period in the 1950s and early 1960s, a time when those kinds of educational experiences were not freely available elsewhere. On a personal level, where else but Mexico could I, a college student directly out of high school in the States, have had the range of experiences that I had at that

time? During only my first year and a half in Mexico, I climbed peaks higher than anything in the forty-eight contiguous states (18,887 and 14,969 feet); played an American Olympic diver in a Mexican movie; played football games before crowds of 80,000 to 100,000; explored much of southern Mexico and Central America—often pushing a car through rivers or riding with it on the flatcar of a train; listened to countless stories of the adventures of ex-GIs who had fought in Europe and Asia in World War II and the Korean War; and experienced the everyday life and intrigues of Mexico City.

On a broader level, Mexico City College provided me and its other students with a dynamic setting for intellectual and personal growth, and it was a place that offered unimaginable opportunities for exploration, discovery, adventure, and creativity. The intellectual, artistic, and emotional pull of Mexico was strongly felt, and the years each of us spent there changed us for the better. Following the McCarthy era at home during the early 1950s, the image of a colder, sterner Uncle Sam contrasted sharply with the image of a warm and nurturing Mother Mexico. And for those of us who gave Mexico a little time, the pull of Mother Mexico would be with us for a lifetime.

My experiences in Mexico helped expose me—and I think others—to new ways of viewing our own countries. Life in Mexico helped all of us to develop a feeling for diversity and a belief that because of it life can be richer and more meaningful. Living in a place where everyone has to think and act the same way generally becomes stifling, and creativity then suffers. In every direction I looked in Mexico at that time, I was stimulated and inspired by art, the grandeur of the landscape, and the warmth of the average Mexican. From this visual excitement came the realization that in Mexico during those years the physical and human landscapes were in harmony and balance. There are many advantages to living in the modern world, but a major cost is that the kind of balance and harmony I found in Mexico is often thrown out of sync by the modernization process. Urbanization, suburbanization, and the resulting sameness of place can change a landscape and its people in ways that tear the life out of the spirit of place that existed there previously. Many different regions and places in Mexico still maintain a strong self-identity and sense of place, but unfortunately, many other places in Mexico have lost it completely.

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Central Americans Enter the Mexican Valley of Death on their way to the U.S.

Natalia Cote-Muñoz

September 11th 2011

<http://www.thecuttingedgenews.com/index.php?article=52720&pageid=44&pagename=Slices>

Every year, 500,000 Central Americans pass through Mexico on an invariably dangerous journey to the United States in search of better opportunities, but it is unknown how many reach their intended destination. Migrants are regularly treated as second-class citizens during their journey; many fall victim to the violence of criminal gangs, resulting in assaults, sexual slavery, kidnapping, or murder. Civil society organizations often advocate the protection of migrant rights; however, in response to a wave of migrant-associated murders, the Mexican government chosen to take action. In light of the recent explosion of migrant killings, on May 25, 2011, a reform of Mexico's Immigration Law was forced upon the government. Nevertheless, it is debatable whether or not this law reform will be enough to protect migrants.

Criminal gangs take advantage of migrants' vulnerability

Local authorities have not only proven unable to adequately treat migrants with respect, but have themselves, on some occasions, also been linked to criminal activities that have added to the woes of those who are desperate to enter the U.S. The Mexican weekly *Proceso* reported that members of the National Immigration Institute (INM) kidnapped over 120 migrants on a bus in Tamaulipas going to the U.S. Migrants of Mexican, Central American, and Chinese origin are delivered to criminal gangs who exploit them for months before selling them into some form of servitude. It is no surprise then that migrants feel trapped in a situation where they are prevented from having an adequate outlet to hold human rights abuses accountable.

Because of the vulnerable status of migrants, as well as the lack of accountability of authorities, gangs regularly abuse Central American migrants. Moreover, coyotes, bus drivers, and state authorities have been allegedly involved in organized crime, resulting in further migrant mistreatment. Central Americans traveling through Mexico tend to use migratory agents, but many of those in charge of transportation systems are accomplices of human trafficking gangs. Some of these agents purportedly sell migrants' travel information to gangs, indirectly assisting in mass kidnappings. The Mexican National Commission for Human Rights (CNDH) estimated 210 cases of mass migrant kidnappings between April and September 2010, with over 11,000 victims. The gang members force migrants' families to pay a large ransom, while they continue to beat and rape their captives. If they do not pay in time or are not able to pay at all, the migrants are routinely murdered, and the women often sold to prostitution networks.

Women and children are arguably those most vulnerable to Mexican drug cartels. These groups have historically been subject to human trafficking, enslavement, and prostitution rings, regularly being beaten and raped by gang members. Drug cartels, such as the Zetas, buy Central American women from coyotes or corrupt officials.

Washington Post reporter Anne-Marie O'Connor notes that, "as organized crime and globalization have increased, Mexico has become a major destination for sex traffic, as well as a transit point and supplier of victims to the U.S." Also, many young sons of migrants are kidnapped or go missing, and only contact their families months after their disappearance to inform them that they are working for one of the cartels.

Additionally, gangs force migrants to do the dirty work of the cartels. According to migrant rights activist and Roman Catholic priest, Father Alejandro Solalinde, migrants have been used as a "reserve army" by the cartels. Solalinde, who has dedicated his life to defending migrants in the Brothers and Sisters on the Road (*Hermanos en el Camino*) shelter, noted that the hit men first train migrants and then make them work within their own countries, or in other parts of Latin America, as they would be killed if they refuse to cooperate. Even more shocking, the cartels force the migrants to partake in sadistic forms of entertainment once the captives cease to be of use or are training to be part of the reserve armies. Migrants have been forced to fight to the death like gladiators during their "training," bludgeoning each other with rudimentary tools such as hammers. With violence expanding so gratuitously, it is clear that the situation has gotten out of control.

Mexico Tackles Migrant Safety

The status of Central American migrants in Mexico has become increasingly worrisome to Mexican and Central American governments. Most shocking to Mexican authorities was the mass grave found in August 2010, containing 72 Central American bus passengers who were on their way to the U. S. This past May, Mexican authorities discovered and freed 513 migrants in a truck heading north. All the migrants were found in subhuman conditions, and the majority were repatriated, with 410 sent back to Guatemala. Each of the migrants had paid the coyotes \$7,000 to lead them to the U.S. There has also been increased scrutiny regarding the conduct of corrupt

authorities. Shortly afterwards, two officers from Tapachula, accused of forcing Central American women into prostitution, were apprehended by Mexican authorities.

Grave events, notably the mass burial sites found in Tamaulipas, motivated the INM to draft a reform of Mexico's Immigration Law on May 25. It opens up the possibility for undocumented migrants to travel through Mexico on their journey to the U.S. by creating a visitor's status for migrants in Mexico. This visitor's status permits migrants to stay in the country legally for a defined period of time during their travel to the north. However, while recognizing this new law as a positive step forward, political analysts have questioned its effectiveness. Rodolfo Casillas, from the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences in Mexico (Flacso-Mexico), told BBC Mundo that "we have not been able to determine whether the efforts have been sufficient or not. I would say that not even 20 percent of what was agreed upon has been put in practice." Furthermore, Salvadoran political scientist Kirio Salgado added: "Mexico needs to control these hell-sent demons who mistreat cruelly Central American migrants." The current situation has alarmed Central American presidents as well. Mexican President Felipe Calderón and Salvadoran President Mauricio Funes met in June, at a meeting that largely focused on the migration agenda for migrant security. Calderón also met with Guatemalan President Álvaro Colom, and their meeting followed a similar agenda. The main subject was clear: the need for immigration reform and control organized crime is urgent. Organized crime is becoming an increasingly borderless problem, and cooperation is needed to combat it and make the lives of migrants easier.

The government's current approach to migrants is demeaning at best. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) points out some alarming facts. First, migrants do not have any legal representation in Mexico. Secondly, 69,903 illegal migrants were detained by the National Migration Institute (INM) in 2010, and then jailed in precarious conditions where there is no distinction in treatment of minors and adults. Finally, these migrants are detained for long periods of time, sometimes for up to a year. However, Father Solalinde notes that even if the government's treatment of migrants is terrible, the best thing that could happen to migrants caught in the midst of cartel violence is to be sent to jail.

Defense of Migrants' Rights Taken Up by Non-Governmental Agents

In the absence of an effective governmental response, human rights activists such as Father Solalinde and civil societies are the only powerful force working on behalf of these vulnerable migrants. Completely devoted to his cause, Solalinde states that not even death will stop his work at the Brothers and Sisters on the Road shelter. Drowned in death threats, Solalinde fearlessly works to inform the authorities and the media of the terrors migrants face on a day-to-day basis, and has uncovered many human rights abuses facing migrants, such as kidnappings and murders.

In recent weeks, Solalinde joined the Movimiento Migrante Mesoamericano (Mesoamerican Migrant Movement) in the Paso a Paso hacia la Paz (Step by Step towards Peace) caravan. The caravan traveled from Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and El Salvador simultaneously on July 23 with a few hundred people, eventually reaching Mexico City on August 1 with hundreds more Mexican activists who joined on the way. Once the caravan reached Mexico City, poet and activist Javier Sicilia—who led his own caravan for peace this year against Calderón's drug war strategy—joined Solalinde. Solalinde and Sicilia presented demands to the Mexican Senate, including propositions giving all Central American migrants a transit permit. They also asked for the amelioration of the approved Immigration Law drafted by Calderón, strengthening the protection of basic human rights available to migrants.

However, according to IACHR, these individuals, as well as civil societies who protect the voice of migrants, are being excluded from policymaking. These civil societies have been able to witness migrant abuse and advocate reform more than any other entity. Their first-hand experience permits them to remain in touch with migrants' needs and the protection of their rights. Migrants' rights and security cannot improve unless civil society becomes more involved in enacting legislation.

There needs not only to be a transitory status for migrants, but also a viable legislative outlet for migrants to communicate abuse to authorities. Meanwhile, as long as authorities remain corrupt and linked to criminal gangs, it will be impossible to see any notable upgrading in migrants' rights. Any change has to first tackle corruption above all.

Natalia Cote-Muñoz writes for the Council on Hemispheric Affairs.

Mexico Lauded for New Law Protecting Refugees

Fri, Jan. 28, 2011 Posted: 03:19 PM EDT

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/mexico-lauded-for-new-law-protecting-refugees-48719/>

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees lauded Mexico on Friday for its new law protecting refugees and asylum-seekers.

The representative for Mexico and Central America to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Fernando Protti Alvarado, described the legislation as one of the most advanced and best in Latin America. Mexico President Felipe Calderon signed on Wednesday the Law on Refugees and Complementary Protection, which includes protection for those who cite a fear of being "persecuted for his or her religion."

The law was drafted "taking into account the model legislation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees," Calderon said during the signing ceremony in Mexico City. Previous laws dealing with refugees did not comply with international standards. The new law, which was approved by the Congress of Mexico last year, does. Under the legislation, refugees are granted permission to work, access to health services and health insurance, access to education and recognition of educational qualifications. It also considers gender as grounds for persecution and grants complementary protection for people not considered as refugees, but whose life has been threatened or could be at risk of torture, ill treatment or other forms of cruel inhuman treatment.

These include those who cite a fear of being persecuted for his or her race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinions.

The president remembered that in the world, there are 10 million refugees living under the protection of generous nations. He also pointed out that Mexico gave asylum to people fleeing the Spanish Civil War, World War II, Latin American military regimes, civil conflicts in Central America and, most recently, survivors of the January 2010 earthquake in Haiti.

Other countries, including Spain, are discussing initiatives on receiving refugees, especially with many Christians seeking refuge in the wake of increasing persecution.

France recently received refugees from Iraq after Christians were attacked in October by Islamic extremists.

Dozens at Our Lady of Salvation Church in Baghdad died in what was considered the deadliest attack against the Christian minority since the U.S.-led invasion.

Mexico's new law includes principles such as no forced returns, non-discrimination, no penalty for irregular entry, family unity, best interests of the child, and confidentiality.

Juan Carlos Angeles

In Mexico, extortion is a booming offshoot of drug war

MEXICO UNDER SIEGE

Almost every segment of the economy and society, including businesses, teachers and priests, has been subjected to extortionists who exploit fear of cartels.

By Tracy Wilkinson,

Los Angeles Times, March 18, 2012

<http://articles.latimes.com/2012/mar/18/world/la-fg-mexico-extortion-20120319>

Reporting from Mexico City — No taco stand was too small for Juan Arturo Vargas, alias "The Rat." Every week, Vargas would shake down the businesses in Nicolas Romero, a working-class town an hour outside the Mexican capital. His take: anywhere from \$25 to several hundred dollars. His leverage: Pay up, or your kids will get hurt.

The Rat, police and prosecutors say, worked at the low end of a vast spectrum of the fastest-growing nonlethal criminal enterprise in Mexico: extortion.

From mom-and-pop businesses to mid-size construction projects to some of Mexico's wealthiest citizens, almost every segment of the economy and society has been subjected to extortion schemes, authorities and records indicate. Even priests aren't safe.

Extortionists have shut entire school systems, crippled real estate developments, driven legions of entrepreneurs into hiding or out of the country.

And although it is not considered a violent crime, violence readily engulfs victims: When a casino in the industrial city of Monterrey failed to pay off extortionists last year, the place was firebombed, killing 52 people, primarily middle-aged women playing bingo.

Extortion has grown as the largest drug-trafficking cartels consolidate power, leaving many of the smaller groups searching for new sources of revenue.

And it is a crime that feeds on the climate of fear that the drug war has created across wide swaths of Mexico. Anyone can pretend to be a member of the notorious Zeta criminal gang, for example, and easily make money off the target's panic. There is no overhead and little risk for the extortionist.

Mexico's soaring drug-war violence (more than 50,000 people killed in a little more than five years) and incidents such as the casino arson "make the threats seem very credible; that's its success," said Edna Jaime, head of Mexico Evalua, a Mexico City think tank.

"This is a very pernicious crime," she said. "It is underreported and does terrible damage" to society and the economy.

Genaro Garcia Luna, the nation's public safety secretary and head of the federal police, said his officers have investigated 283,000 extortion complaints since the drug war was launched in December 2006. But that's not the full extent of the problem. Experts say probably two-thirds of extortion cases aren't reported to authorities.

Bribe-paying has always been a part of Mexican society. But it is only within the context of the drug war that outright extortion has exploded, in part because perpetrators could emulate ruthless traffickers.

Security experts trace the sudden surge in extortion to 2008, when a crime until then largely limited to Mexico City spread across the nation.

"That's when it grew brutally," said Carlos Seoane, general director in Mexico of the private security firm Pinkerton. "Like a swine flu epidemic."

Although complete figures are hard to come by because of the underreporting, the National Citizens' Observatory, a group that compiles crime statistics, estimates that extortion has soared by 180% in the last decade.

The crime generally falls into two categories. The majority of shakedowns are by telephone — as many as 2 million a year — and many of those are made by inmates using throwaway cellphones. In a call or text message, the extortionist pretends to have kidnapped a relative, or threatens to do so, or claims to be outside a business or home fire.

"The bad guy controls the victim like a puppet," said Seoane, who has handled hundreds of extortion cases. "You don't know who's talking, and it generates terror."

In these scams, the extortionist actually has little or no real information about the target and could easily be calling from hundreds of miles away. He counts on fear and in fact poses little real danger. Still, people pay.

"We can do this the peaceful way, or we can go the way of the machine gun," one extortionist told his victim, according to a call recorded by security personnel and made available to The Times.

The more ominous scheme involves gangs who have control over a territory and make their threats in person. They show up at a store, business, factory or construction site to demand "quotas," or *derecho de piso*, a kind of protection money. You can't operate if you don't pay.

These territory-based extortionists enjoy the advantage of having done enough reconnaissance to know key details about the victims and thus can enhance the threat. The Rat, for example, who is awaiting sentencing, watched his targets long enough to know how many kids they had and where they went to school; he then allegedly used that information to terrorize his victims.

The owners of a very hot nightclub in Cancun decided it was worth the price when goons showed up expecting to be paid about \$800 a week. That went on for a few months. Then the extortionists doubled their demand. And now, said a security consultant involved in the case, the price tag is nearly \$4,000 a week.

"Now they realize it will never end," the consultant said. "They feel like prisoners."

(Government and private security experts discussed several cases with The Times on condition that the victims not be identified.)

At the Ciudad Juarez store of a big international hardware chain, extortionists called the manager and demanded \$50,000. He quickly left the store, only to be intercepted by the callers and held in the trunk of their car for three hours before being released.

"Next time, we kill you," they told him.

Instead of paying, he did what many entrepreneurs are doing: He closed the store and left the country.

The number of Mexican businessmen transplanting themselves, and often their businesses, to the United States has grown enormously in the last five years, as measured by so-called investment visas issued by the U.S. government to wealthy Mexicans, and by the millions of dollars those Mexicans are investing in new enterprises north of the border.

Businesses' flight represents a serious blow to Mexico's struggling economy, in terms of lost investment, lost tax revenue and lost jobs.

A study last year by the Bank of Mexico found that more than 60% of Mexican businesses said they had been hurt by the national climate of lawlessness, with extortion counting as one of the prime factors.

Production losses totaled 1.2% of gross domestic product, the study found.

The construction industry is also suffering.

At a shopping mall under construction on the outskirts of Mexico City, the extortionists knew to hit their target on a Saturday: pay day.

With the masons, electricians and plumbers cowering at the back of the site, the extortionists, claiming to be members of the notorious La Familia cartel, said they would open fire on anyone who tried to leave unless they were paid. In that case, according to people involved, the police arrived and arrested the assailants, a rarity. More often, construction foremen routinely make payments to a bag man who arrives weekly or monthly.

Jose Eduardo Correa Abreu, president of the Mexican Chamber of Construction Industry, said the problem has become so bad that in some states, such as violent Guerrero, builders have stopped taking on certain projects.

It's not just the business sector.

Last month, priests from 19 Roman Catholic parishes in the state of Mexico, which surrounds this capital, went to authorities to beg for protection from gunmen who appeared at their churches and demanded monthly payments.

"They were terrified," said David Castañeda, mayor of Atizapan. Threatening priests "is a sensitive point for society."

The priests, from the area where The Rat was working, had reason to be terrified: A couple of weeks earlier, Father Genaro Aviña was found beaten and shot to death in the sanctuary of his Immaculate Conception Church. The extortionists warned that Aviña was the example.

Local authorities installed "panic buttons" in the churches for the priests to call for help next time the gunmen showed up.

A year earlier, priests and evangelical preachers in Michoacan, President Felipe Calderon's home state, reported that they were forced to pay extortionists in order to hold religious holiday festivals.

In Acapulco, thousands of schoolteachers refused to report to their classrooms last fall after extortionists demanded that they fork over part of their salaries. The threats came in letters delivered to the teachers, on signs hung outside the schools and, in a few cases, from men who burst into schools. Much of the school system was paralyzed for months, until the federal government sent troops into the region.

"As a crime, extortion has become totally indiscriminate," Seoane, of Pinkerton, said. "In a country like Mexico, it's easy to trade on fear."

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MEXICO UNDER SIEGE

Mexico's drug war disappearances leave families in anguish

Thousands of people have vanished without a trace – some caught up in violence, others for no reason anyone can fathom. Relatives remain in agonized limbo.

March 07, 2011 | By Tracy Wilkinson, Los Angeles Times

Reporting from Mexico City — They had scraped together money for a vacation in the port city of Veracruz. Four couples, owners of small fruit and taco shops, from the quiet state of Guanajuato.

After checking in to their hotel and spending the day by the pool with their children, the husbands wandered off, still in their shorts, to buy ice at a nearby 7-Eleven. Maybe they decided to pop into a bar, one the hotel guard recommended.

At first, the wives weren't too worried when the men didn't come back. Even the next morning, the women figured they had tied one on and slept it off somewhere. They took their children on a tour of the city. But by nightfall, the wives became nervous, and as cellphone calls went unanswered, they became terrified.

Where were their husbands?

That was nearly a year ago. The four men have not been seen since. Their families have received no ransom demand, no information, no clues whatsoever. Their bodies have not turned up.

"It was as if the earth swallowed them," one of the wives said in an interview.

In a chilling byproduct of the drug war raging in Mexico, thousands of people have disappeared. Not killed, as far as is known; not taken for ransom. Simply vanished, leaving families desperate and broken, and a society confused and frightened.

Some are low-level drug gangsters "lifted," to use the local vernacular, by rivals, then killed and dumped in secret mass graves. Some are last seen in the hands of the military or police, picked up for questioning, fates unknown. Thousands of others are immigrants who can't pay their smugglers.

And some, in the most unsettling instances, disappear for reasons no one can fathom.

Families tell themselves their loved ones were taken by traffickers and forced into slave labor in marijuana fields and methamphetamine labs. It may be true in some cases, but more often it is a form of self-deluding comfort.

The disappearances are a disturbing echo of a tactic employed by dictatorships in the so-called dirty wars that plagued parts of Latin America in the last half of the 20th century.

Whether practiced by governments or by criminals, it is a form of control and intimidation that in some ways has an even more profound effect on society because it is an "ambiguous loss," said psychologist Carlos Beristain, a Spaniard who has counseled families of the missing throughout the region.

Few cases are ever resolved, with authorities overwhelmed by record-high killings. Senseless brutality engulfs families in uncertainty, leaving them unable to mourn, unable to move on. It is a wound, as many put it, that does not stop bleeding.

A state of limbo

The couples who traveled to Veracruz were on a long-anticipated vacation last May, with 10 children among them, staying at the Howard Johnson hotel in the lively port city and popular tourist destination. The men were in their late 30s, early 40s. They were wearing shorts, sandals and the red wristbands that showed they were hotel guests when they ventured out that last night.

"We never imagined it would be dangerous," one of the wives said. She asked her name not be published out of reluctance to antagonize authorities who initially showed interest in the case but have since moved on to other crimes, including more than 300 other disappearances in Veracruz.

Their wives frantically searched for them in the days that followed, driving all over the city, reporting to every police station, the Red Cross, hospitals, the military and the local television station. They dialed their husbands' cellphones, but there were no answers. Weeks turned to months. Nothing.

The only clue came when one of the men's ATM cards was used two days after the disappearance. And someone told them the bar that the men might have gone to, New Fantasy, was a den of danger, full of "narcos."

Reyna Estrada's husband vanished with 11 others two years ago when they were on a trip to the northern border state of Coahuila to sell paint.

She says the families have been left in a state of limbo.

"You aren't a widow. You aren't a wife. My husband simply is not here," she said. "You cannot mourn."

Estrada's husband, Jaime Ramirez, traveled with the 11 other men from their homes in the state of Mexico, a couple of hours outside Mexico City, to a small Coahuila town called Piedras Negras. Vendors of house paint and other construction supplies, they were on a sales trip, traveling in two vans. Ramirez was 48; the eldest was 50 and the youngest 16, helping out his uncle.

They were last seen late one night at a gasoline station, not far from a military checkpoint. Coahuila has been quietly seething with drug violence for some time, especially as the paramilitary drug gang known as the Zetas takes over part of the state.

Relatives have repeatedly traveled to the area in an attempt to find out more, but to no avail. No witnesses have come forward, and one human rights activist warned they risked being killed if they pried too far.

"How can 12 people go missing, get rounded up, whatever happened, and no one notices?" Estrada said. "At least when your loved one dies, you know where they are, what happened, you can eventually get used to it. We do not know what monster we are fighting."

Little help from police

Authorities frequently try to stigmatize the victim, said Blanca Martinez, a human rights activist who has helped organize families of more than 100 missing people in Coahuila. They suggest the victim ran off with a girlfriend, went to work illegally in the United States or hooked up with the lucrative drug business.

Some Mexicans may have "disappeared" as matters of mistaken identity. A group of 10 hunters from the Guanajuato city of Leon went on a seasonal hunting trip Dec. 4 in Zacatecas, in search of rabbits, deer and wild boar. They had a few rifles and a red SUV and one wore camouflage. According to the testimony of one member of the hunting party who managed to escape, the group was intercepted by local police who handed them over to about 15 masked gunmen dressed in black.

With the exception of the man who escaped, the hunters remain missing.

Two months earlier, 20 young men from Michoacan went on what their families described as a vacation to Acapulco. They were seized by gunmen and remained missing for weeks. Their bodies were eventually discovered in a mass grave, and their purported killers confessed that the men had been mistaken for a rival gang from Michoacan.

Several drug-gang gunmen captured by authorities have recounted how they disposed of bodies en masse in remote, hidden graves. And in one particularly grisly case, a benchmark for the Sinaloa cartel in Tijuana said he dissolved about 300 bodies using acid. Police searching his property found traces of human remains last month.

More than 11,000 migrants, primarily from Central America, went missing last year crossing Mexico on their way to the United States, according to the Mexican National Human Rights Commission. Most were captured by drug gangs demanding payoffs. Many remain missing. In the single largest massacre in Mexico's four-year conflict, 73 immigrants who refused to work for their captors were slain last summer.

In early 2009, Pablo Esparza was dragged from his mother's home in the Durango city of Cuencame. A few weeks later, his brother and sister were seized by gunmen armed with cattle prods. Then the police commander investigating the disappearances vanished. They were among about 60 people who went missing in 2009 just in Cuencame, a town of fewer than 10,000 people along a Zeta infiltration route.

Another Esparza brother, Jose de Jesus, is a U.S. citizen from Texas. He has pressed both U.S. and Mexican governments to investigate the case. But, nearly two years later, there is no trace of his absent family. One theory is they may have fallen prey to drug traffickers avenging actions by other, distant relatives.

"I live for the day they will reappear," Jose de Jesus Esparza said in a telephone interview from San Francisco, where he works for an airline. The uncertainty has taken its toll: What remains of his family is falling apart. Their mother has attempted suicide, the children fall ill, family members have sunk into deep depression, and Jose de Jesus is going bankrupt in his attempts to find his missing relatives.

"A lot of time has passed, but I haven't stopped looking a single day," he said. Hope, he says, is the last thing that dies.

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NarcoPetro Dollars *RS*

NarcoGuerra Times, July 31, 2009

<http://narcoguerratimes.wordpress.com/2009/07/31/narcopetro-dollars-zetas-inside-pemex/>

Another page opens in the ever-amazing book of Zetas. They have managed to penetrate and compromise the third largest crude oil producer in the world—Pemex.

On Wednesday a federal joint task force raided Pemex security offices on the sixth and seventh floors of the \$100 billion state-controlled company, seizing all computers and racks of documents as part of its investigation into the theft of some \$70 to \$90 million of oil and fuel from Pemex pipelines over the past few year according to *La Jornada*. Thirty Pemex officials were detained for questioning.

Investigators say that the multimillion dollar operation was run by Los Zetas in collusion with Pemex security.

No mention of this element in Pemex security:

After taking office in 2006, Calderon, an ardent privatizer in the Bush mold, had Pemex contract SY Coleman in Arlington, Virginia to provide security for the pipelines and fields in Veracruz. Since then the Zetas have been draining the lines with impunity. According to Pemex, illegal extraction of fuel tripled between 2006 and 2008, going from 136 incidents in 2006 to 396 three years later.

Coleman, a subsidiary of big dog defense contractor L3

Communications, was headed by Rumsfeld crony Jay Garner until he took a leave-of-absence in 2003 to run the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Aid in Iraq. The Texas-based tech provider L3 also happens to have the contract for the high-tech fence going up along the US/Mexican border.

For more see **Los Zetas Raise Their Game** posted back in May.

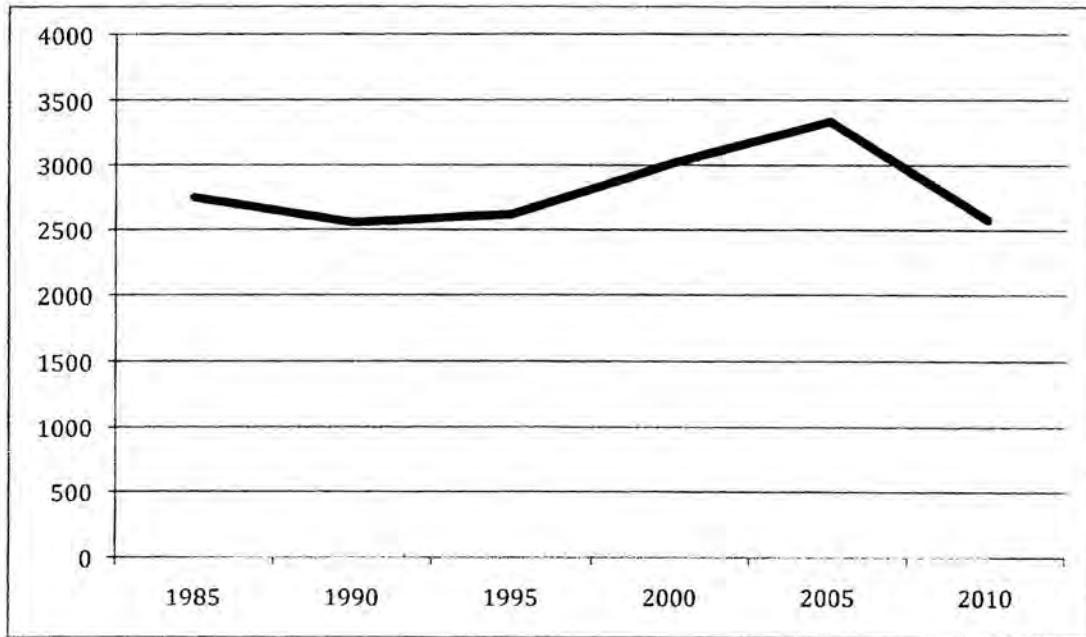
So far \$98 million has been frozen in bank accounts related to the operation.

The oil-giant's security division is headed by retired army general Miguel Estrada Martinez who has several other retired military under his wing at Pemex. It's difficult to ignore the linkage there with ex-GAFE Herbierto Lazcano and his fellow army vets in Los Zetas.

This should get more interesting as the investigation moseys along—especially if it takes an *El Norte* turn toward Houston.

Chart 64

Crude Oil Production, Barrels Per Year 1985-2010



Compiled by: Art E. Lomas
Source: Indexmundi
Date; 3/6/12

Mexico Finds Huge Oil Deposits

The deep-water discoveries could double the country's reserves, Pemex says. But extraction will be costly.

Los Angeles Times, August 31, 2004 | From Reuters

<http://articles.latimes.com/2004/aug/31/business/fi-mexoil31>

<http://articles.latimes.com/2004/aug/31/business/fi-mexoil31>

MEXICO CITY — Pemex, Mexico's state oil monopoly, said Monday that it had detected vast oil deposits in the Gulf of Mexico that could double the country's total reserves and boost its oil output to rival levels produced by Saudi Arabia.

The deposits of oil and natural gas could equal the equivalent of about 54 billion barrels of crude, which would boost Mexico's reserves to 102 billion barrels. But the deposits are mainly in deep waters, and Pemex will need hefty investments and technology-sharing agreements to access them.

"This is what exploration and prospecting studies have found," Pemex communications head Sergio Uzeta said. "It's important to be clear that we are talking about the probability of finding large quantities of oil and gas. The existence of this oil wealth is very probable, but we have to confirm it so that it will be a proven matter."

Luis Ramirez, head of exploration and production at Pemex, was quoted in the newspaper *El Universal* on Monday as saying that after three years of exploration at a cost of \$4.55 billion, Pemex had mapped seven new offshore blocks where it hopes to extract oil and natural gas.

"This will put us on a par with reserves levels of the big players like Iraq, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait or Iran," Ramirez said.

"What's more, we would be in a position to reach production levels like those of Saudi Arabia, which produces 7.5 million barrels per day, or Russia, which produces 7.4 million."

Mexico's hydrocarbon reserves currently total 48 billion barrels of oil equivalent, including possible, probable and proven reserves. Proven reserves are 18.9 billion barrels, and proven plus probable reserves are 34.9 billion barrels.

Mexico's crude oil production averaged 3.36 million barrels a day in July. Exports averaged 1.81 million barrels per day.

The potential new reserves were detected using three-dimensional seismic studies. Further studies to confirm the reserves will require technology that Pemex lacks.

Mexico is one of the top three suppliers of oil to the United States and is dependent on oil exports for a third of government revenue. It is counting on deep-water production to keep oil reserves from dwindling in the years ahead.

But analysts worry about how Pemex, which hands over 61% of its revenue to the state in taxes, will afford the investment needed to drill wells 1.3 miles deep.

Oil from deep-water reserves could cost \$4 a barrel to extract, nearly double the cost of oil from shallow water.

Pemex is in talks to secure joint ventures with foreign oil companies with deep-water know-how, but it could face problems from lawmakers who oppose letting foreign groups into Mexico's energy

sector on constitutional grounds.

Uzeta said Pemex was hopeful that the government could adopt legal changes to enable the technology alliances. The opposition-dominated Congress has blocked any attempts to let more foreign investment into the energy sector.

"The next step is to be able to determine with more certainty the existence of these resources," Uzeta said.

"To extract this oil, Mexico needs to establish a technology alliance with countries that have experience. First we need to determine and quantify what we have, and then we can begin the process of installing the first deep-sea wells."

Ramirez said the planned contracts would make Pemex the owner of any oil extracted, in line with Mexican law, while ensuring an attractive return on investment for any partner.

Pemex expects output from its biggest oil field, Cantarell, to start falling 14% a year in 2006.

January 25, 2012

12

Polarization and Sustained Violence in Mexico's Cartel War

January 24, 2012 | 1212 GMT

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Editor's Note: *In this annual report on Mexico's drug cartels, we assess the most significant developments of 2011 and provide updated profiles of the country's powerful criminal cartels as well as a forecast for 2012. The report is a product of the coverage we maintain through our Mexico Security Memo, quarterly updates and other analyses we produce throughout the year.*

As we noted in last year's annual cartel report, Mexico in 2010 bore witness to some 15,273 deaths in connection with the drug trade. The death toll for 2010 surpassed that of any previous year, and in doing so became the deadliest year ever in the country's fight against the cartels. But in the bloody chronology that is Mexico's cartel war, 2010's time at the top may

have been short-lived. Despite the Mexican government's efforts to curb cartel-related violence, the death toll for 2011 may have exceeded what had been an unprecedented number.

According to the Mexican government, cartel-related homicides claimed around 12,900 lives from January to September -- about 1,400 deaths per month. While this figure is lower than that of 2010, it does not account for the final quarter of 2011. The Mexican government has not yet released official statistics for the entire year, but if the monthly average held until year's end, the overall death toll for 2011 would reach 17,000. Though most estimates put the total below that, the actual number of homicides in Mexico is likely higher than what is officially reported. At the very least, although we do not have a final, official number -- and despite media reports to the contrary -- we can conclude that violence in Mexico did not decline substantially in 2011.

Indeed, rather than receding to levels acceptable to the Mexican government, violence in Mexico has persisted, though it seems to have shifted geographically, abating in some cities and worsening in others. For example, while Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua state, was once again Mexico's deadliest city in terms of gross numbers, the city's annual death toll reportedly dropped substantially from 3,111 in 2010 to 1,955 in 2011. However, such reductions appear to have been offset by increases elsewhere, including Veracruz, Veracruz state; Monterrey, Nuevo Leon state; Matamoros, Tamaulipas state; and Durango, Durango state.

Over the past year it has also become evident that a polarization is under way among the country's cartels. Most smaller groups (or remnants of groups) have been subsumed by the Sinaloa Federation, which controls much of western Mexico, and Los Zetas, who control much

of eastern Mexico. While a great deal has been said about the fluidity of the Mexican cartel landscape, these two groups have solidified themselves as the country's predominant forces. Of course, the battle lines in Mexico have not been drawn absolutely, and not every entity calling itself a cartel swears allegiance to one side or the other, but a polarization clearly is occurring.

Geography does not encapsulate this polarization. It reflects two very different modes of operation practiced by the two cartel hegemony, delineated by a common expression in Mexican vernacular: "Plata o plomo." The expression, which translates to "silver or lead" in English, means that a cartel will force one's cooperation with either a bribe or a bullet. The Sinaloa Federation leadership more often employs the former, preferring to buy off and corrupt to achieve its objectives. It also frequently provides intelligence to authorities, and in doing so uses the authorities as a weapon against rival cartels. Sinaloa certainly can and does resort to ruthless violence, but the violence it employs is merely one of many tools at its disposal, not its preferred tactic.

On the other hand, Los Zetas prefer brutality. They can and do resort to bribery, but they lean toward intimidation and violence. Their mode of operation tends to be far less subtle than that of their Sinaloa counterparts, and with a leadership composed of former special operations soldiers, they are quite effective in employing force and fear to achieve their objectives. Because ex-military personnel formed Los Zetas, members tend to move up in the group's hierarchy through merit rather than through familial connections. This contrasts starkly with the culture of other cartels, including Sinaloa.

Status of Mexico's Major Cartels

Sinaloa Federation

The Sinaloa Federation lost at least 10 major plaza bosses or top lieutenants in 2011, including its security chief and its alleged main weapons supplier. It is unclear how much those losses have affected the group's operations overall.

One Sinaloa operation that appears to have been affected is the group's methamphetamine production. After the disintegration of La Familia Michoacana (LFM) in early 2011, the Sinaloa Federation clearly emerged as the country's foremost producer of methamphetamine. Most of the tons of precursor chemicals seized by Mexican authorities in Manzanillo, Colima state; Puerto Vallarta, Jalisco state; Lazaro Cardenas, Michoacan state; and Los Mochis and Mazatlan, Sinaloa state, likely belonged to the Sinaloa Federation. Because of these government operations -- and other operations to disassemble methamphetamine labs -- the group apparently began to divert at least some of its methamphetamine production to Guatemala in late 2011.

In addition to maintaining its anti-Zetas alliance with the Gulf cartel, Sinaloa in 2011 affiliated itself with the Knights Templar (KT) in Michoacan, and to counter Los Zetas in Jalisco state, Sinaloa affiliated itself with the Cartel de Jalisco Nueva Generacion (CJNG). Sinaloa also has tightened its encirclement of the Vicente Carrillo Fuentes (VCF) organization in the latter's long-held plaza of Ciudad Juarez. There are even signs that it continues to expand its control over parts of Juarez itself.

Los Zetas

By the end of 2011, Los Zetas eclipsed the Sinaloa Federation as the largest cartel operating in Mexico in terms of geographic presence. According to a report from the Assistant Attorney General's Office of Special Investigations into Organized Crime, Los Zetas now operate in 17 states. (The same report said the Sinaloa Federation operates in 16 states, down from 23 in 2005.) While Los Zetas continue to fight off a CJNG incursion into Veracruz state, they did not sustain any significant territorial losses in 2011.

Los Zetas moved into Zacatecas and Durango states, achieving a degree of control of the former and challenging the Sinaloa Federation in the latter. Both states are mountainous and conducive to the harvesting of poppy and marijuana. They also contain major north-south transportation corridors. By mid-November, reports indicated that Los Zetas had begun to assert control over Colima state and its crucial port of Manzanillo. In some cases, Los Zetas are sharing territories with cartels they reportedly have relationships with, including the Cartel Pacifico Sur (CPS), La Resistencia and the remnants of LFM. But Los Zetas have a long history of working as hired enforcers for other organizations throughout the country. Therefore, having an alliance or business relationship with Los Zetas is not necessarily the equivalent of being a Sinaloa vassal. A relationship with Los Zetas may be perceived as more fleeting than Sinaloa subjugation.

On the whole, Los Zetas remained strong in 2011 despite losing 17 cell leaders and plaza bosses to death and arrest. Los Zetas also remain the dominant force in the Yucatan Peninsula.

However, the CJNG's mass killings of alleged Zetas members or supporters in Veracruz have called into question the group's unchallenged control of that state.

In response to the mass killings in Veracruz, Los Zetas killed dozens of CJNG and Sinaloa members in Guadalajara, Jalisco state, and Culiacan, Sinaloa state. Aided by La Resistencia, these operations were well-executed, and the groups clearly invested a great deal of time and effort into surveillance and planning.

The Gulf Cartel

The Gulf cartel (CDG) was strong at the beginning of 2011, holding off several Zetas incursions into its territory. However, as the year progressed, internal divisions led to intra-cartel battles in Matamoros and Reynosa, Tamaulipas state. The infighting resulted in several deaths and arrests in Mexico and in the United States. The CDG has since broken apart, and it appears that one faction, known as Los Metros, has overpowered its rival Los Rojos faction and is now asserting its control over CDG operations. The infighting has weakened the CDG, but the group seems to have maintained control of its primary plazas, or smuggling corridors, into the United States. (CDG infighting is detailed further in another section of this report.)

La Familia Michoacana

LFM disintegrated at the beginning of 2011, giving rise to and becoming eclipsed by one of its factions, the Knights Templar (KT). Indeed, by July it was clear the KT had become more powerful than LFM in Mexico. The media and the police continue to report that LFM maintains extensive networks in the United States, but it is unclear how many of the U.S.-based networks

are actually working with LFM rather than the KT, which is far more capable of trafficking narcotics. It appears that many reports regarding LFM in the United States do not reflect the changes that have occurred in Mexico over the past year; many former LFM leaders are now members of the KT. Adding to the confusion was the alleged late-summer alliance between LFM and Los Zetas. Such an alliance would have been a final attempt by the remaining LFM leadership to keep the group from being utterly destroyed by the KT. LFM is still active, but it is very weak.

The Knights Templar

In January 2011, a month after the death of charismatic LFM leader Nazario "El Mas Loco" Moreno, two former LFM lieutenants, Servando "La Tuta" Gomez and Enrique Plancarte, formed the Knights Templar due to differences with Jose de Jesus "El Chango" Mendez, who had assumed leadership of LFM. In March they announced the formation of their new organization via narcomantas in Morelia, Zitacuaro and Apatzingan, Michoacan state.

After the emergence of the KT, sizable battles flared up during the spring and summer months between the KT and LFM. The organization has grown from a splinter group to a dominant force over LFM, and it appears to be taking over the bulk of the original LFM's operations in Mexico. At present, the Knights Templar appear to have aligned with the Sinaloa Federation in an effort to root out the remnants of LFM and to prevent Los Zetas from gaining a more substantial foothold in the region through their alliance with LFM.

Independent Cartel of Acapulco

The Independent Cartel of Acapulco (CIDA) has not been eliminated entirely, but it appears to have been severely damaged. Since the capture of CIDA leader Gilberto Castrejon Morales in early December, the group has faded from the public view. CIDA's weakness appears to have allowed its in-town rival, Sinaloa-affiliated La Barredora, to move some of its enforcers to Guadalajara to fend off the Zetas offensive there. The decreased levels of violence and public displays of dead bodies in Acapulco of late can be attributed to the group's weakening, and we are unsure if CIDA will be able to regroup and attempt to reclaim Acapulco.

Cartel de Jalisco Nueva Generacion

After the death of Ignacio "El Nacho" Coronel in July 2010, his followers suspected the Sinaloa cartel had betrayed him and broke away to form the CJNG. In spring 2011, the CJNG declared war on all other Mexican cartels and stated its intention to take control of Guadalajara.

However, by midsummer, the group appeared to have been reunited with its former partners in the Sinaloa Federation. We are unsure what precipitated the reconciliation, but it seems that the CJNG was somehow convinced that Sinaloa did not betray Coronel after all. It is also possible CJNG was convinced that Coronel needed to go. In any case, CJNG "sicarios," or assassins, in September traveled to the important Los Zetas stronghold of Veracruz, labeled themselves the "Matazetas," or Zeta killers, and began to murder alleged Zetas members and their supporters. By mid-December, the CJNG was still in Veracruz fighting Los Zetas while also helping to protect Guadalajara and other areas on Mexico's west coast from Zetas aggression.

Vicente Carrillo Fuentes Organization/Juarez Cartel

The VCF, aka the Juarez cartel, continues to weaken. A Sinaloa operative killed one of its top lieutenants, Francisco Vicente Castillo Carrillo -- a Carrillo family member -- in September 2011. The VCF reportedly still controls the three main points of entry into El Paso, Texas, but the organization appears unable to expand its operations or move narcotics en masse through its plazas because it is hemmed in by the Sinaloa Federation, which appears to have chipped away at the VCF's monopoly of the Juarez plaza. The VCF is only a shadow of the organization it was a decade ago, and its weakness and inability to effectively fight against Sinaloa's advances in Juarez contributed to the lower death toll in Juarez in 2011.

Cartel Pacifico Sur

The CPS, headed by Hector Beltran Leyva, saw a reduction in violence in the latter part of 2011 after having been very active in the first third of the year. We are unsure why the group quieted down. The CPS may be concentrating on smuggling for revenue generation to support itself and assist its Los Zetas allies, who provide military muscle for the CPS and work in their areas of operation. Because of their reputation, Los Zetas receive a great deal of media attention, so it is also possible that the media attributed violent incidents involving CPS gunmen to Los Zetas.

Arellano Felix Organization

The November arrest of Juan Francisco Sillas Rocha, the AFO's chief enforcer, was yet another sign of the organization's continued weakness. It remains an impotent and reluctant subsidiary of the Sinaloa Federation, unable to reclaim the Tijuana plaza for its own.

2011 Forecast in Review

In our forecast for 2011, we believed that the unprecedented levels of violence from 2010 would continue as long as the cartel balance of power remained in a state of flux. Indeed, cartel-related deaths appear to have at least continued apace.

Much of the cartel conflict in 2011 followed patterns set in 2010. Los Zetas continued to fight the CDG in northeast Mexico while maintaining their control of Veracruz state and the Yucatan Peninsula. The Sinaloa Federation continued to fight the VCF in Ciudad Juarez while maintaining control of much of Sonora state and Baja California state.

We forecast that government operations and cartel infighting and rivalry would expose fissures in and among the cartels. This prediction held true. The Beltran Leyva Organization no longer exists in its original form, its members dispersed among the Sinaloa Federation, the CPS, CIDA and other smaller groups. As noted above, fissures within LFM led to the creation of two groups, LFM and the KT. The CDG also now consists of two factions competing for control of the organization's operations.

We also forecast that the degree of violence in the country was politically unacceptable for Mexican President Felipe Calderon and his ruling National Action Party. Calderon knew he would have to reduce the violence to acceptable levels if his party was going to have a chance to continue to hold power after he left office in 2012 (Mexican presidents serve only one six-year term). As the 2012 presidential election approaches, Calderon is continuing his strategy of deploying the armed forces against the cartels. He has also reached out to the United States for assistance. The two countries shared signals intelligence throughout the year and

continued to cooperate through joint intelligence centers like the one in Mexico City. The U.S. military also continues to train Mexican military and law enforcement personnel, and the United States has deployed unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) in Mexican airspace at Mexico's behest. The Mexican military was in operational command of the UAV missions.

As we have noted the past few years, we also believed that Calderon's continued use of the military would perpetuate what is referred to as the three-front war in Mexico. The fronts consist of cartels against rival cartels, the military against cartels, and cartels against civilians. Indeed, in 2011 the cartels continued to vie for control of ports, plazas and markets, while deployments of military forces increased to counter Los Zetas in the states of Coahuila, Tamaulipas, Nuevo Leon and Veracruz; to combat several groups waging a bloody turf war in Acapulco, Guerrero state; and to respond to conflicts arising between the Sinaloa Federation and Los Zetas and their affiliate groups in Nayarit and Michoacan states.

While Los Zetas were hit hard in 2011, the Mexican government's offensive against the group was unable to damage it to the extent we believed it would. Despite losing several key leaders and plaza bosses, as noted previously, the group maintains its pre-eminence in the east. This is largely due to the ease with which such groups can replenish their ranks.

Resupplying Leadership

One of the ways in which Mexico's cartels, including Los Zetas, replenish their ranks is with defected military personnel. Around 27,000 men and women desert the Mexican military every year, and about 50 percent of the military's recruiting class will have left before the end of their first tour. In March 2011, the Mexican army admitted that it had "lost track of" 1,680

special forces personnel over the past decade (Los Zetas were formed by more than 30 former members of Mexico's Special Forces Airmobile Group). Some cartels even reportedly task some of their own foot soldiers to enlist in the military to gain knowledge and experience in military tactics. In any case, retention is clearly a serious problem for the Mexican armed forces, and deserting soldiers take their skills (and oftentimes their weapons) to the cartels.

In addition, the drug trade attracts ex-military personnel who did not desert but left in good standing after serving their duty. There are fewer opportunities for veterans in Mexico than in many countries, and understandably many are drawn to a lucrative practice that places value on their skill sets. But deserters or former soldiers are not the only source of recruits for the cartels. They also replenish their ranks with current and former police officers, gang members and others (to include Central American immigrants and even U.S. citizens).

2012 Forecasts by Region

Northeast Mexico

Northeast Mexico saw some of the most noteworthy cartel violence in 2011. The primary conflict in the region involved the continuing fight between CDG and Los Zetas, who were CDG enforcers before breaking away from the CDG in early 2010. Los Zetas have since eclipsed the CDG in terms of size, reach and influence. In 2011, divisions within the CDG over leadership succession came to the fore, leading to further violence in the region, and we believe these divisions will sow the group's undoing in 2012.

The CDG began to suffer another internal fracture in late 2010 when the Mexican army killed Antonio "Tony Tormenta" Cardenas Guillen, who co-lead the CDG with Eduardo "El Coss" Costilla Sanchez, in Matamoros, Tamaulipas state. After Cardenas Guillen's death in November 2010, Costilla Sanchez assumed full control of the organization, passing over Rafael "El Junior" Cardenas Vela, the Cardenas family's heir apparent, in the process. This bisected the CDG, creating two competing factions: Los Rojos, loyal to the Cardenas family, and Los Metros, loyal to Costilla Sanchez.

In late 2011, several events exacerbated tensions between the factions. On Sept. 3, authorities found the body of Samuel "El Metro 3" Flores Borrego, Costilla Sanchez's second-in-command, in Reynosa, Tamaulipas state. Then on Sept. 27, gunmen in an SUV shot and killed a man driving a vehicle on U.S. Route 83, east of McAllen, Texas. The driver, Jorge Zavala of Mission, Texas, was connected to Los Metros.

The Mexican navy reported the following month that Cesar "El Gama" Davila Garcia, the CDG's head finance officer, was found dead in Reynosa. Davila previously had served as Cardenas Guillen's accountant. Then on Oct. 20, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents arrested Cardenas Vela after a traffic stop near Port Isabel, Texas. We believe Los Metros tipped off U.S. authorities about Cardenas Vela's location. (Los Metros have every reason to kill Los Rojos leaders, including Cardenas Vela, but cartels rarely conduct assassinations on U.S. soil for fear of U.S. retribution.)

On Oct. 28, Jose Luis "Comandante Wicho" Zuniga Hernandez, believed to be Cardenas Vela's deputy and operational leader in Matamoros, reportedly turned himself in to U.S. authorities

without a fight near Santa Maria, Texas. Finally, Mexican federal authorities arrested Ezequiel "El Junior" Cardenas Rivera, Cardenas Guillen's son, in Matamoros on Nov. 25.

By December, media agencies reported that Cardenas Guillen's brother, Mario Cardenas Guillen, was the overall leader of the CDG. But Mario was never known to be very active in the family business, and his reluctance to involve himself in cartel operations appears to have continued after his brother's death. In addition, Costilla Sanchez is reclusive, choosing to run his organization from several secluded ranches. That he is not mentioned in media reports does not mean he has been removed from his position. Given his reclusiveness and Mario Cardenas Guillen's longstanding reticence to involve himself in cartel activity, it seems unlikely that Costilla Sanchez would be replaced. Because Los Metros seemingly have gained the upper hand over Los Rojos, we anticipate that they will further expand their dominance in early 2012.

However, while Los Metros may have defeated their rival for control of the CDG, the organizational infighting has left the CDG vulnerable to outside attack. Of course, any group divided is vulnerable to attack, but the CDG's ongoing feud with Los Zetas compounds its problem. Fully aware of the CDG's weakness, we believe Los Zetas will step up their attempts to assume control of CDG territory.

If Los Zetas are able to defeat the Los Metros faction -- or they engage in a truce with the faction -- they may be able to redeploy fighters to other regions or cities, particularly Veracruz and Guadalajara. Reinforcements in Veracruz would help counter the CJNG presence in the port city, and reinforcements in Guadalajara would shore up Los Zetas' operations and

presence in Jalisco state. Likewise, a reduction in cartel-on-cartel fighting in the region would free up troops the Mexican army has stationed in Tamaulipas state -- an estimated force of 13,000 soldiers -- for deployment elsewhere.

Southeast Mexico

Some notable events took place in southeast Mexico in 2011. On Dec. 4 the Mexican army dismantled a Zetas communications network that encompassed multiple cities in Veracruz, Tamaulipas, Nuevo Leon, San Luis Potosi and Coahuila states.

In addition, Veracruz state Gov. Javier Duarte on Dec. 21 fired the city's municipal police, including officers and administrative employees, and gave the Mexican navy law enforcement responsibilities. By Dec. 22, Mexican marines began patrols and law enforcement activities, effectively replacing the police much like the army replaced the police in Ciudad Juarez in 2009 and in various cities in Tamaulipas state in August 2011. We anticipate that fighting between the CJNG and Los Zetas will continue in Veracruz for at least the first quarter of 2012.

We expect security conditions on the Yucatan Peninsula to remain relatively stable in 2012 because there are no other major players in the region contesting Los Zetas' control.

Southwest Mexico

In the southern Pacific coastal states of Chiapas and Oaxaca, we expect violence to be as infrequent in 2012 as it was in 2011. Chiapas and Oaxaca have been transshipment zones for Los Zetas and the Sinaloa Federation for several years; as such, clashes and cargo hijackings occasionally take place. However, direct and sustained combat does not occur regularly

because the two groups tend to use different routes to transport their shipments. The Sinaloa Federation prefers to move its product north on roads and highways along the Pacific coast, whereas Los Zetas' transportation lines cross Mexico's interior before moving north along the Gulf coast.

Pacific Coast and Central Mexico

As many as a dozen organizations, ranging from the KT to local criminal organizations to newer groups like La Barredora and La Resistencia, continue to fight for control of the plazas in Guerrero, Michoacan and Jalisco states. Acapulco was particularly violent in 2011, and we believe it will continue to be violent through 2012 unless La Barredora is able to exert firm control over the city. Acapulco has been a traditional Beltran Leyva stronghold, and the CPS may attempt to reassert itself there. If that happens, violence will once again increase.

Security conditions worsened in Jalisco state at the end of 2011, and Stratfor anticipates violence there will continue to increase in 2012, especially in Guadalajara, a valued transportation hub. In November, Los Zetas struck the CJNG in Guadalajara in response to the mass killings of Los Zetas members in Veracruz state. The attacks are significant because they demonstrated an ability to conduct protracted cross-country operations. Should Los Zetas establish firm control over Guadalajara, the Sinaloa Federation's smuggling activities could be adversely affected, something Sinaloa obviously cannot permit. Given an increased Zetas presence in Zacatecas, Durango and Jalisco states, and Sinaloa's operational need to counter that presence, we expect to see violence increase in the region in 2012.

Unless a significant military force is somehow brought to bear, we do not expect to see any substantive improvement in the security conditions in Guerrero or Michoacan states.

Northwest Mexico

The cross-country operations performed by Los Zetas indicate that the group's growth and expansion has been more profound than we expected in the face of the government's major operations specifically targeting the organization. Such expansion will pose a direct threat not only to the Sinaloa Federation's supply lines but to its home turf, which stretches from Guadalajara to southern Sonora state.

In northwest Mexico, specifically Baja California, Baja California Sur and Chihuahua states (and most of Sonora state), the Sinaloa Federation either directly controls or regularly uses the smuggling corridors and points of entry into the United States. Security conditions in the plazas under firm Sinaloa control have been relatively stable. Indeed, as Sinaloa tightened its control over Tijuana, violence there dropped, and we expect to see the same dynamic play out in Juarez as Sinaloa consolidates its control of that city. Stability could be threatened, however, if Los Zetas attempt to push into Sinaloa-held cities.

Outside of Mexico

As we noted in the past three annual cartel reports, Mexico's cartels have been expanding their control of the cocaine supply chain all the way into South America. This eliminates middlemen and brings in more profit. They are also using their presence in South America to obtain chemical precursors and weapons.

Increased violence in northern Mexico and ramped-up law enforcement along the U.S. border has made narcotics smuggling into the United States more difficult than it has been in the past. The cartels have adapted to these challenges by becoming more involved in the trafficking of cocaine to alternative markets in Europe and Australia. The arrests of Mexican cartel members in such places as the Dominican Republic also seem to indicate that the Mexicans are becoming more involved in the Caribbean smuggling routes into the United States. In the past, Colombian smuggling groups and their Caribbean partners in places like Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic used these routes. We anticipate seeing more signs of Mexican cartel involvement in the Caribbean, Europe and Australia in 2012.

Government Strategy in 2012

There is no indication of a major shift in the Mexican government's overarching security strategy for 2012; Calderon will continue to use the military against the cartels throughout the year (a new president will be elected in July, but Calderon's term does not conclude until the end of 2012). This strategy of taking out cartel leaders has resulted in the disruption of the cartel balance of power in the past, which tends to lead to more violence as groups scramble to fill the resultant power vacuum. Mexican operations may further disrupt that balance in 2012, but while government operations have broken apart some cartel organizations, the combination of military and law enforcement resources has been unable to dislodge cartel influence from the areas it targets. They can break specific criminal organizations, but the lucrative smuggling corridors into the United States will continue to exist, even after the organizations controlling them are taken down. And as long as the smuggling corridors exist,

and provide access to so much money, other organizations will inevitably fight to assume control over them.

Some 45,000 Mexican troops are actively involved in domestic counter-cartel operations. These troops work alongside state and federal law enforcement officers and in some cases have replaced fired municipal police officers. They are spread across a large country with high levels of violence in most major cities, and their presence in these cities is essential for maintaining what security has been achieved.

While this number of troops represents only about a quarter of the overall Mexican army's manpower -- troops are often supplemented by deployments of Mexican marines -- it also represents the bulk of applicable Mexican military ground combat strength. Meager and poorly maintained reserve forces do not appear to be a meaningful supplemental resource.

In short, if the current conditions persist, it does not appear that the Mexican government can redeploy troops to conduct meaningful offensive operations in new areas of Mexico in 2012 without jeopardizing the gains it has already made. The government cannot eliminate the cartels any more than it can end the drug trade. The only way the Mexican government can bring the violence down to what would be considered an acceptable level is for it to allow one cartel group to become dominant throughout the country -- something that does not appear to be plausible in the near term -- or for some sort of truce to be reached between the country's two cartel hegemony, Los Zetas and the Sinaloa Federation.

Such scenarios are not unprecedented. At one time the Guadalajara cartel controlled virtually all of Mexico's drug trade, and it was only the dissolution of that organization that led to its

regional branches subsequently becoming what we now know as the Sinaloa Federation, AFO, VCF and CDG. There have also been periods of cartel truces in the past between the various regional cartel groups, although they tend to be short-lived.

With the current levels of violence, a government-brokered truce between Los Zetas and Sinaloa will be no easy task, given the level of animosity and mistrust that exists between the two organizations. This means that it is unlikely that such a truce will be brokered in 2012, but we expect to see more rhetoric in support of a truce as a way to reduce violence.

Link: http://www.stratfor.com/analysis/polarization-and-sustained-violence-mexicos-cartel-war?utm_source=freelist-f&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=20120125&utm_term=engage&utm_content=link4&elq=66302617291c4a6ab1315c9148c4a9df

1. Mexican "Repatriation," 1929-1939

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mexican_Repatriation

[CRITICS OF THIS WIKIPEDIA ARTICLE STATE THAT THIS ARTICLE DOES NOT HAVE A "NEUTRAL POINT OF VIEW" (NPOV) BECAUSE , E.G., THE U.S. /STATE/LOCAL GOVERNMENTS DID NOT LEAD IT AND THE YEARS AND DATES ARE IN DOUBT. YET THESE CRITICS SEEM TO IGNORE THE *PACE LAW REVIEW* ARTICLE (FALL 2005) BY KEVIN R. JOHNSON, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, School of Law, University of California, Davis, WHO WRITES:

U.S. "Federal, state, and local governments worked together to involuntarily remove many U.S. citizens of Mexican ancestry, many of whom were born in the United States. These citizens cannot be said to have been "repatriated" to their native land. Approximately 60 percent of the persons of Mexican ancestry removed to Mexico in the 1930s were U.S. citizens, many of them children who were effectively deported to Mexico when their immigrant parents were sent there. http://www.law.ucdavis.edu/faculty/Johnson/files/PaceLawReview_Johnson2006.pdf]

The **Mexican Repatriation** refers to a **forced migration** that took place between 1929 and 1939, when as many as **one million people of Mexican descent were forced or pressured to leave the US.** (The term "**Repatriation,**" though commonly used, is inaccurate, since **approximately 60% of those driven out were U.S. citizens.**)[1] The event, carried out by American authorities, took place without due process.[2] The Immigration and Naturalization Service targeted Mexicans because of "the proximity of the Mexican border, the physical distinctiveness of mestizos, and easily identifiable barrios." [3]

The Repatriation is not widely discussed in American history textbooks;[4] in a 2006 survey of the nine most commonly used American history textbooks in the United States, four did not mention the Repatriation, and only one devoted more than half a page to the topic.[4] In total, they devoted four pages to the Repatriation, compared with eighteen pages for the Japanese American internment.[4]

These actions were authorized by President Herbert Hoover and targeted areas with large Hispanic populations, mostly in California, Texas, Colorado, Illinois and Michigan.

2. Operation Wetback, 1954

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Wetback

Operation Wetback was a 1954 operation by the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service (**INS**) to remove about one million illegal immigrants from the southwestern United States, focusing on Mexican nationals[1].

Burgeoning numbers of illegal Mexican immigrants prompted President Dwight D. Eisenhower to appoint his longtime friends, John Cox and General Joseph Swing, as INS Commissioner. According to Attorney General Herbert Brownell, Jr., Eisenhower had a sense of urgency about illegal immigration upon taking office. In a letter to Sen. J. William Fulbright, Eisenhower quoted a report in *The New York Times* that said, "The rise in illegal border-crossing by Mexican "wetbacks" (rooted from the watery route taken by the Mexican immigrants across the Rio Grande) to a current rate of more than 1,000,000 cases a year has been accompanied by a curious relaxation in ethical standards extending all the way from the farmer-exploiters of this contraband labor to the highest levels of the Federal Government." [2]

The operation was modeled after a program that came to be termed the Mexican Repatriation, which put pressure on citizens of Mexico to return home during the Great Depression, due to the economic crisis in the United States.

3. DEPORTATION SINCE 2001 OF UNDOCUMENTED PERSONS ("ILLEGALS")

"Illegal immigration to the United States"

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Illegal_immigration_to_the_United_States

[This concept] refers to the act of foreign nationals violating U.S. immigration policies and national laws by entering or remaining in the United States without proper permission from the United States government.[1]

The illegal immigrant population of the United States in 2008 was estimated by the Center for Immigration Studies to be about 11 million people, down from 12.5 million people in 2007.[2] Other estimates range

from 7 to [40 million.] According to a Pew Hispanic Center report, in 2005, 56% of illegal immigrants were from Mexico; 22% were from other Latin American countries, primarily from Central America;[4] 13% were from Asia; 6% were from Europe and Canada; and 3% were from Africa and the rest of the world.

. Undocumented Persons by U.S. state in 2006 and change since 2000

State of residence	Estimated population in January	Percent of total	Percent change	
All states	11,555,000	100	37	5
California	2,930,000	25	13	5
Texas	1,640,000	14	50	9
Florida	980,000	8	23	3
Illinois	550,000	5	25	1
New York	540,000	5	-	-
Arizona	500,000	4	52	2
Georgia	490,000	4	123	4
New Jersey	430,000	4	23	1
North Carolina	370,000	3	42	1
Washington	280,000	2	65	1
Other states	2,950,000	26	69	2

For 2009: 8.5 million undocumented persons living in USA*

Country of origin	Raw number	Percent of total	Percent change 2000 to 2009
Mexico	6,650,000	62	42%
El Salvador	530,000	5	25%
Guatemala	480,000	4	65%
Honduras	320,000	3	95%
Philippines	270,000	2	33%
India	200,000	2	64%

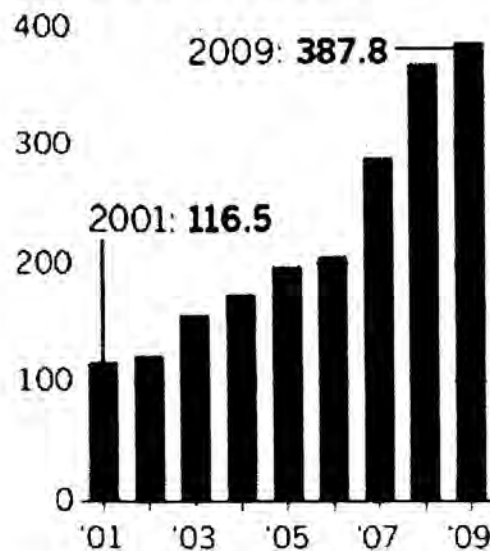
* Including up to 75,000 Canadians.

Deportations

Deportations have risen steadily since Sept. 11, 2001, including under the Obama administration.

Illegal immigrants returned to their native countries

(by fiscal year, in thousands)



Source: U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

*** DOUG STEVENS Los Angeles Times

As of end of fiscal year Sept 30th, each year.

My estimate from above is 2 million persons deported from 2001 through 2009

plus 400,000 (in 2010, not shown here) = 2.4 million total since 2001

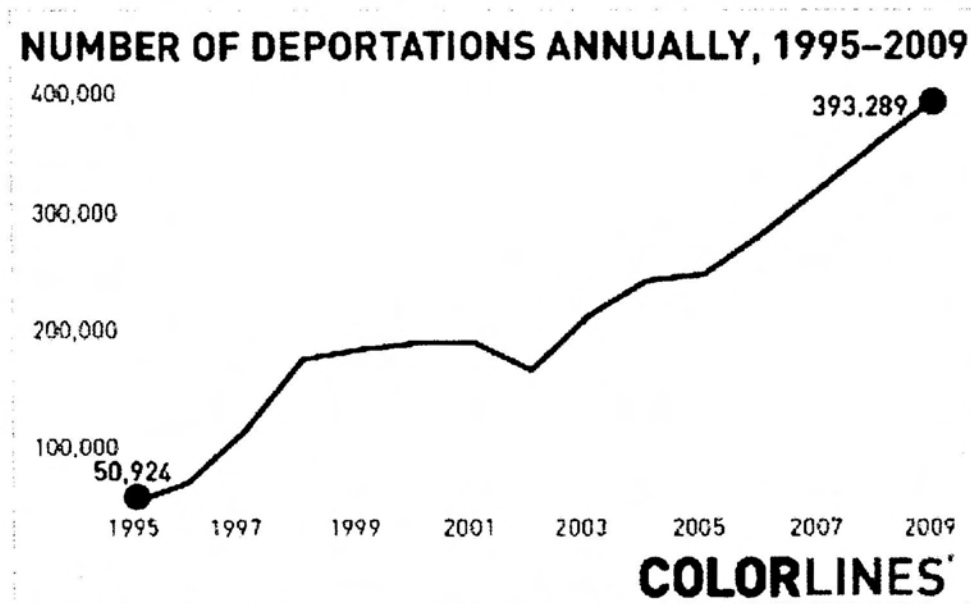
Tough enforcement against illegal immigrants is decried

Advocates say the deportation case against one Nevada couple highlights the continued harassing of many who pose no threat – despite Obama's promises to target bad actors and help legalize others.

By Ken Dilanian . April 21, 2010

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-obama-immigration-20100422,0,5792512.story>

Vets Deported & Chart Deportations



[http://colorlines.com/archives/2010/10/how immigration reform got caught in the deportation dragnet.html](http://colorlines.com/archives/2010/10/how_immigration_reform_got_caught_in_the_deportation_dragnet.html)

How Immigration Reform Got Caught in the Deportation Dragnet

by Seth Freed Wessler

Thursday, October 7 2010

See link above

When President Obama entered the White House, he promised to push a “comprehensive immigration reform” bill in his first year. Doing so, he apparently calculated, would require a compromise. To garner bi-partisan support for opening new paths to citizenship for the 11 million unauthorized immigrants in the U.S., the president, congressional Democrats and key Beltway advocates came together around a troubling political strategy: They would endorse a hawkish buildup of deportation and border security in hopes of creating space for broader reforms. In a [major speech on immigration](#) this past July, the president outlined his approach, vowing to “improve our enforcement policy without having to wait for a new law.”

Almost two years into the Obama presidency, however, no bi-partisan support for a broader bill has emerged from this hawkishness—in fact, the few Republicans who once backed immigration reform have

Huntington's "WRONGHEADED ASSAULT ON A 'BROWN PERIL'"

By Carlos Fuentes

March 14, 2004, *Los Angeles Times*

"The best Injun is a dead Injun." "The Yellow Peril." "The Red Menace."

To this colorful array of prejudices and many others past and present, Harvard professor **Samuel P. Huntington** now adds the latest object of hate and suspicion: "the Brown Menace."

[See the Huntington Article on the Course Website.]

Huntington doesn't call it that, of course, but that's what he means. And in doing so, he's drawing on a deep strain in U.S. history: the need to have an enemy; the Manichean division of the world into "good guys" and "bad guys." John Quincy Adams denounced this kind of thinking: Go not abroad "in search of monsters to destroy."

After setting Islam against the West with his "clash of civilizations" theory (forgetting that Islam's struggle is internal and vertical, liberals versus conservatives, not expansive and horizontal, Islam versus the West), Huntington now, in an article in the current issue of *Foreign Policy*, singles out the Mexican menace to the United States. Mexicans in the U.S., according to Huntington, do not live, they invade; they do not work, they exploit; and they do not create wealth, they perpetuate poverty.

Invaders? Mexican workers in the U.S. obey the laws of supply and demand. There is Mexican labor because there is a U.S. demand for workers.

Exploiters? Impoverishers? At the humblest level, Mexican workers create wealth, not poverty. John Kenneth Galbraith put it succinctly years ago: "Were all the illegals in the United States suddenly to return home, the effect on the American economy would ... be little less than disastrous.... Fruits and vegetables in Florida, Texas and California would go unharvested.... Mexicans wish to come to the United States, they are wanted, they add visibility to our well-

being." Add services, hospitals, restaurants, hotels, domestic labor and a long et cetera. A single day's strike by Mexican workers would bring the U.S. to a standstill.

Besides, Mexicans do not only provide cheap labor at the lower scales. They ascend, thanks to the work ethic that Huntington denies them. In Los Angeles County, new businesses created by Hispanics jumped from 57,000 in 1987 to 210,000 in 2000. Gregory Rodriguez, in a 1999 study for the National Immigration Forum, found that in four indexes of assimilation — homeownership, citizenship, learning English and intermarriage — modern Latino immigrants, like their predecessors, improved with each generation. And in a study released in February, USC urban planner Dowell Myers said foreign-born Hispanics were showing a degree of upward mobility not noted before. Their poverty rate is lower, the high school graduation rate is higher and 55% of California Hispanics who immigrated here at least 20 years ago own homes.

Hispanics are not, as Huntington calls them, "Balkanizers" of the United States. They cherish traditional values as much as the Irish, Italian, Jewish or Chinese migrants. But despite that, Huntington sees Mexicans as separatists, bent on La Reconquista of the territories lost in 1848.

The sword of this alleged irredentist movement, in his view, is the Spanish language. But since when does knowing a second language detract from the multicultural nature of the U.S., a country unique in its monolingual isolation? Throughout Europe and Latin America, most people speak more than one language. The Spanish language is, itself, the result of many cultural encounters. Its roots are Celtic and Iberian, Greek and Latin, Arab, Jewish and Germanic.

Be not afraid, professor Huntington: Cultures perish in isolation. Cultures thrive only in contact with other cultures. Hispanics in general, and Mexicans in particular, are not dividing and destroying the culture of the United States: They are enriching it. . . .

Carlos Fuentes is a novelist and critic. His most recent book is "My Years With Laura Diaz" (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2000).
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La Nueva Orleans
Latino immigrants, many of them here illegally, will rebuild the Gulf Coast -- and stay there.

By Gregory Rodriguez

Contributing editor to The Times and Irvine Senior fellow at the New America Foundation.

Los Angeles Times, September 25, 2005

No matter what all the politicians and activists want, African Americans and impoverished white Cajuns will not be first in line to rebuild the Katrina-ravaged Gulf Coast and New Orleans. Latino immigrants, many of them undocumented, will. And when they're done, they're going to stay, making New Orleans look like Los Angeles. It's the federal government that will have made the transformation possible, further exposing the hollowness of the immigration debate.

President Bush has promised that Washington will pick up the greater part of the cost for "one of the largest reconstruction efforts the world has ever seen." To that end, he suspended provisions of the Davis-Bacon Act that would have required government contractors to pay prevailing wages in Louisiana and devastated parts of Mississippi, Alabama and Florida. And the Department of Homeland Security has temporarily suspended sanctioning employers who hire workers who cannot document their citizenship. The idea is to benefit Americans who may have lost everything in the hurricane, but the main effect will be to let contractors hire illegal immigrants.

Mexican and Central American laborers are already arriving in southeastern Louisiana. One construction firm based in Metairie, La., sent a foreman to Houston to round up 150 workers willing to do cleanup work for \$15 an hour, more than twice their wages in Texas. The men — most of whom are undocumented, according to news accounts — live outside New Orleans in mobile homes without running water and electricity. The foreman expects them to stay "until there's no more work" but "there's going to be a lot of construction jobs for a really long time."

Because they are young and lack roots in the United States, many recent migrants are ideal for the explosion of construction jobs to come. Those living in the U.S. will relocate to the Gulf Coast, while others will come from south of the border. Most will not intend to stay where their new jobs are, but the longer the jobs last, the more likely they will settle permanently. One recent poll of New Orleans evacuees living in Houston emergency shelters found that fewer than half intend to return home. In part, their places will be taken by the migrant workers. Former President Clinton recently hinted as much on NBC's "Meet the Press" when he said New Orleans will be resettled with a different population.

It is not the first time that hurricanes and other natural disasters have triggered population movements. In 1998, Hurricane Mitch slammed into Central America, sending waves of migrants northward. The 2001 earthquakes in El Salvador produced similar shifts. The effects of Hurricane Andrew may better foretell New Orleans' future. The 1992 storm displaced 250,000 residents in southeastern Florida. The construction boom that followed attracted large numbers of Latin American immigrants, who rebuilt towns such as Homestead, whose Latino population has increased by 50% since then.

At the same time, U.S. construction firms have become increasingly reliant on Latino immigrant labor. In 1990, only 3.3% of construction workers were Mexican immigrants. Ten years later, the number was 8.5%. In 2004, 17% of Latino immigrants worked in the business, a higher percentage than in any other industry. Nor is this an exclusively Southwest phenomenon. Even before Katrina, more and more Latin American immigrant workers were locating in the South, with North Carolina and Arkansas incurring the greatest percentage gains between 1990 and 2000. This helps explain why 40% of the workers who rebuilt the Pentagon after the 9/11 attack were Latino.

Reliance on immigrant labor to complete huge projects is part of U.S. history. In the early 19th century, mostly Irish immigrant laborers, who worked for as little as 37 1/2 cents an hour, built the Erie Canal, one of the greatest engineering feats of its day. Later that century, Italian immigrants, sometimes making just \$1.50 a day, were the backbone of the workforce that constructed the New York subway system. In 1890, 90% of New York City's public works employees, and 99% of Chicago's street workers, were Italian.

After Congress authorized construction of the transcontinental railroad in 1862, one of the most ambitious projects in U.S. history, Charles Crocker, head of construction for Central Pacific railroad, recognized that the Civil War was creating a labor shortage. So he turned to Chinese immigrants to do the job. By 1867, 12,000 of Central Pacific's 13,500 workers were Chinese immigrants, who were paid between \$26 and \$35 for a six-day workweek of 12 hours a day. At the turn of the 20th century, Mexican immigrant laborers did most of the railroad construction in Southern California, Arizona, New Mexico and Nevada.

Mexican workers were also essential in turning the Southwest into a fertile region, which by 1929 produced 40% of the United States' fruits and vegetables. They cleared the mesquite brush of south Texas to make room for the expansion of agriculture, then played a primary role in the success of cotton farming in the state. A generation earlier, German immigrants from Russia and Norwegians had busted the prairie sod to turn the grasslands of North Dakota into arable fields.

The major difference between then and now is that neither the American public nor the government will admit their dependence on a labor force that is heavily undocumented. When Mexican President Vicente Fox offered to provide Mexican labor to help rebuild New Orleans — "If there is anything Mexicans are good at, it is construction," he said — the federal government ignored him. At the same time, some of the undocumented Mexicans who have cleaned up and begun to rebuild Biloxi, Miss., are wondering whether they deserve at least a temporary visa so they can live in the U.S. legally.

Last week, the White House said it will push its plan to allow illegal immigrants already in the U.S. to become legal guest workers. Good. Hurricane Katrina exposed the nation's black-white divide. Post-Katrina reconstruction will soon spotlight the hypocrisy of refusing to grant legal status to those who will rebuild the Gulf Coast and New Orleans.

© *Los Angeles Times*

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* Including up to 75,000 Canadians.

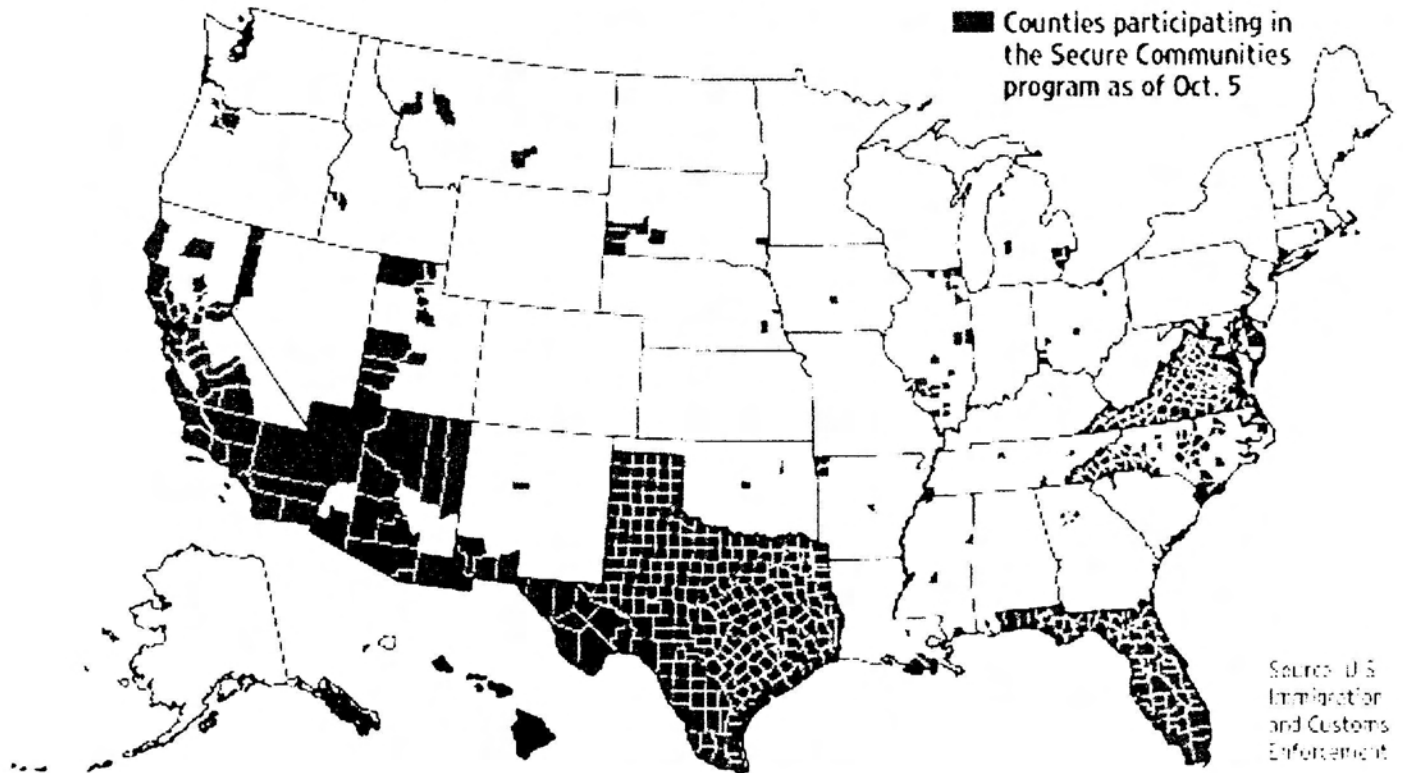
[Biometric] Deportation Program Grows: Texas Fully Adopts Much-Debated Federal Plan Aimed at All Counties by 2013

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By **ANA CAMPOY** *Wall Street Journal*, Oct 18, 2010

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704518104575546212615541500.html>
?KEYWORDS=ana+campoy

Sweeping the Nation | Who has biometric information sharing capability



AUSTIN, Texas—A federal program that scans local jails for illegal immigrants is being expanded across the state, the latest front in the nation's battle over immigration policy.

In the past two weeks, Texas became the first border state to fully deploy the Department of Homeland Security program, which is scheduled to be rolled out to all U.S. counties by 2013. The program automatically routes prisoners' fingerprints to the department, which tries to determine whether they are allowed to be in the U.S.

Known as Secure Communities, the program is designed to intercept and remove illegal immigrants who have committed serious crimes such as homicide, rape and kidnapping, immigration officials say.

But immigrant groups and lawyers argue it is also singling out immigrants with no serious criminal record, clogging up the courts. Political analysts say Secure Communities and related programs are alienating Democratic-leaning Hispanic voters from the Obama administration.

"Why are we wasting funds to deport people who aren't even supposed to be targets of the program?" said Jim Harrington, director of the Texas Civil Rights Project, which provides legal assistance to low-income people.

Proponents of stricter immigration controls contend Secure Communities is a step in the right direction to protect the nation from dangerous illegal immigrants.

"Every day, we have murders and serious crimes committed against citizens and legal immigrants," said Janice Kephart, national-security policy director at the Center for Immigration Studies, which favors curbing all immigration to the U.S. "It is a public-safety issue."

The expanded program comes at a time when a national debate is raging over Arizona's immigration law, which would require local police to check the immigration status of people stopped for other possible violations.

The federal government has successfully blocked that law in court so far, arguing it shifts responsibility for immigration enforcement from federal to local officials.

Unlike the Arizona law, Secure Communities doesn't require local law enforcement to perform any additional tasks. Using fingerprints the police already have collected for the Federal Bureau of Investigation, it merges those records with Homeland Security's database, which contains all legal and some illegal entrants into the U.S. That assists the department in identifying criminal suspects in violation of immigration laws. If the fingerprints don't match any record, Homeland Security can deploy immigration officers to the jail to investigate further.

Last week, Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano touted the success of the program, saying Secure Communities contributed to a 70% increase since 2008 in deportations of criminal suspects who were illegal immigrants.

But many in the Hispanic community are frustrated over Secure Communities and related Obama administration programs, which they see as a step-up in deportations without addressing other facets of the immigration debate, such as whether there will be a path to citizenship for illegal immigrants.

"Not only are they not helping to solve the issue, but they are criminalizing more immigrants," said union organizer Ben Monterroso of Secure Communities.

As head of a multistate campaign to boost Latino turnout, he is trying to persuade Latinos to put their frustration aside and go to the polls.

A recent poll by the Pew Hispanic Center shows that Latinos are less motivated than other voters to go to the polls in November.

In Arlington, Va., and Santa Clara County, Calif., local officials recently passed resolutions to opt out from Secure Communities in response to community concerns that the program would make immigrants afraid of the police and result in the deportation of non-criminals.

Since 2008, when Secure Communities was launched in individual counties around the nation, more than a quarter of the illegal immigrants identified by the program and sent back to their countries of origin were non-criminals, government statistics show.

In Travis County, Texas, where Austin sits, about 1,000 immigrants have been removed since Secure Communities was deployed in the county in 2009. More than 30% had no criminal record.

In San Antonio, the nearest immigration court, the number of pending cases has grown to about 4,800 so far this year, compared with 1,821 in 2008, according to data compiled by the Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse at Syracuse University.

Noe Jimenez Ruano, a day laborer from Guatemala, was arrested for criminal trespassing in July while standing outside an Austin business looking for work, according to his lawyer and the director of the shelter where he lived.

A magistrate judge found no probable cause for the arrest, but immigration officials learned he was in the country illegally through the booking process and deported him last month.

Nicole True, Mr. Jimenez Ruano's lawyer, said, "People forget that the way someone ends up in jail is based on a human being making a decision."

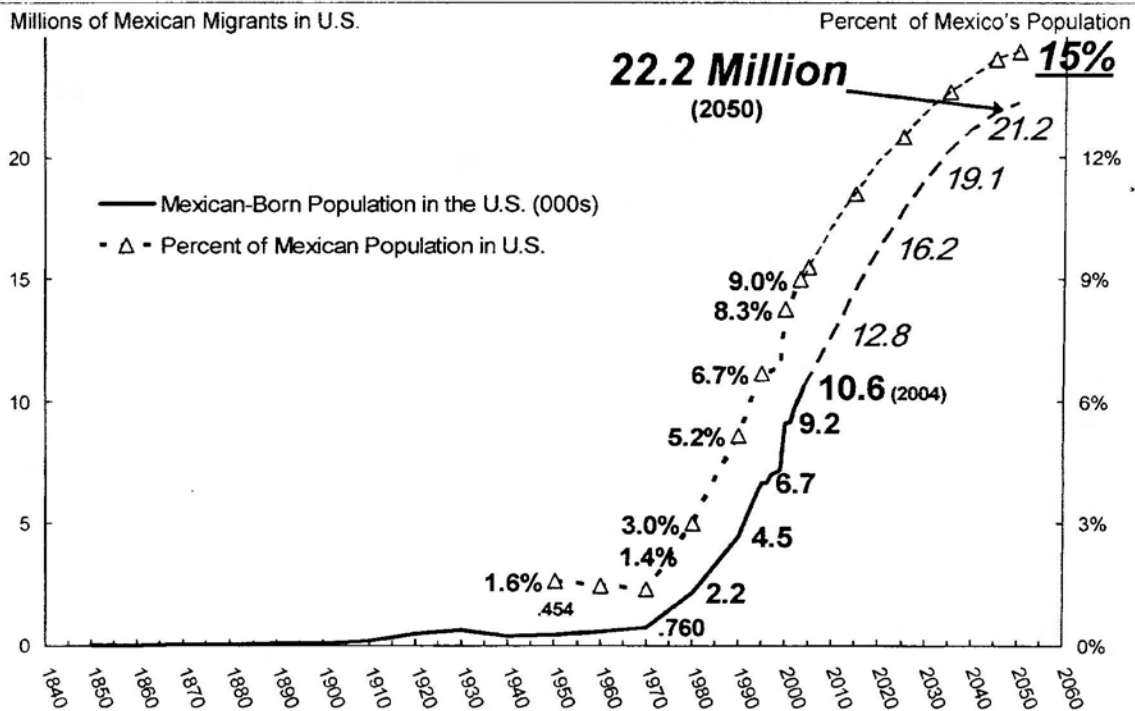
Homeland Security has said that while Secure Communities focuses on dangerous criminals, the agency has the authority to remove anyone who enters the U.S. illegally.

An agency official said some immigrants categorized as non-criminal have lengthy rap sheets of charges and arrests but have never been convicted.

Write to Ana Campoy at ana.campoy@dowjones.com

Growth of Mexicans in U.S. Continues

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This chart displays the historical information on Mexicans in the United States, as previously displayed, together with projections of Mexicans in the United States based on the CONAPO assumptions about Mexico-U.S. migration.

The number of Mexicans in the United States is projected to increase steadily from 10.6 million in 2004 to more than 22 million in 2050. At this time, more than 1-in-7 (or 15%) of persons born in Mexico are projected to be living in the United States.

In addition to the migrants in the United States, the Mexicans in the U.S. have children who, were the migrants still living in Mexico, would be Mexican-born. These post-2000 births also represent a sizeable group. By 2050, these post-2000 births to Mexican immigrants living in the U.S. and their descendants amount to another almost 17 million persons in addition to the 22.2 million shown in the chart. Thus, the 39 million Mexican immigrants and their post-2000 U.S.-born descendants would be equal to about 30% of the 130 million Mexicans projected to be living in Mexico.

Note that this scenario should not be treated as a prediction, but rather as the consequences of the assumptions built into the CONAPO projection. This scenario takes into account only the demographic assumptions, not any assumptions about migration policy or enforcement. Under the current immigration policies of the United States, the projected level of Mexico-U.S. migration built into this scenario would imply that at least half of the migration and possibly as much as two-thirds would have to be outside of legal channels. Demographically, these assumptions would imply more than half of the 2050 population of Mexicans in the United States would have to be unauthorized. Whether such a scenario is politically viable is outside the scope of these projections.

Sources: Decennial censuses through 2000 (Campbell and Lennon 1999), Urban Institute and Pew Hispanic Center tabulations of March CPS for 1995-2004, U.S. Census Bureau estimates of the Mexican population, and CONAPO estimates and projections. Projections beyond 2000 by author combining U.S. decennial census and CPS estimates with CONAPO projections of future migration levels.



June 14, 2005

Unauthorized Migrants: Numbers and Characteristics

About the Paper

This report was developed as a briefing paper for the Independent Task Force on Immigration and America's Future, co-chaired by former Senator Spencer Abraham (R-MI) and former Congressman Lee Hamilton (D-IN). The bipartisan task force has been convened by the Migration Policy Institute in partnership with the Manhattan Institute and the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. The report on the unauthorized population was presented to the task force by the Pew Hispanic Center, a nonpartisan research group in Washington DC, to provide a factual basis for its discussions. The Pew Hispanic Center, which does not engage in issue advocacy, is not participating in the task force's deliberations or its policy recommendations.

The report draws on both new research and previous work done by the author at the Pew Hispanic Center and the Urban Institute where he worked until January 2005.

Background Briefing Prepared for Task Force on Immigration and America's Future

By Jeffrey S. Passel
Senior Research Associate
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6-14-05

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[Obama Deportation High Rates to End in 2012, after
GOP Rejects "Dream Act" in Dec 2010 that would have
Meant Slight Movement on Immigration Reform:]

**Obama proposes new rule for immigrant families -
Illegal immigrants who are immediate relatives of citizens could stay
in the U.S. while applying for permanent residency. The goal is to
reduce a family's time apart.**

By Brian Bennett, *Los Angeles Times* Washington Bureau
March 30, 2012

WASHINGTON — The Obama administration is proposing to make it easier for illegal immigrants who are **immediate family members of American citizens to apply for permanent residency**, a move that could affect as many as 1 million of the estimated 11 million immigrants living here illegally.

In 2011, Obama deported a record high of 397,000 persons

Deportations

Annual deportations from
the U.S.:

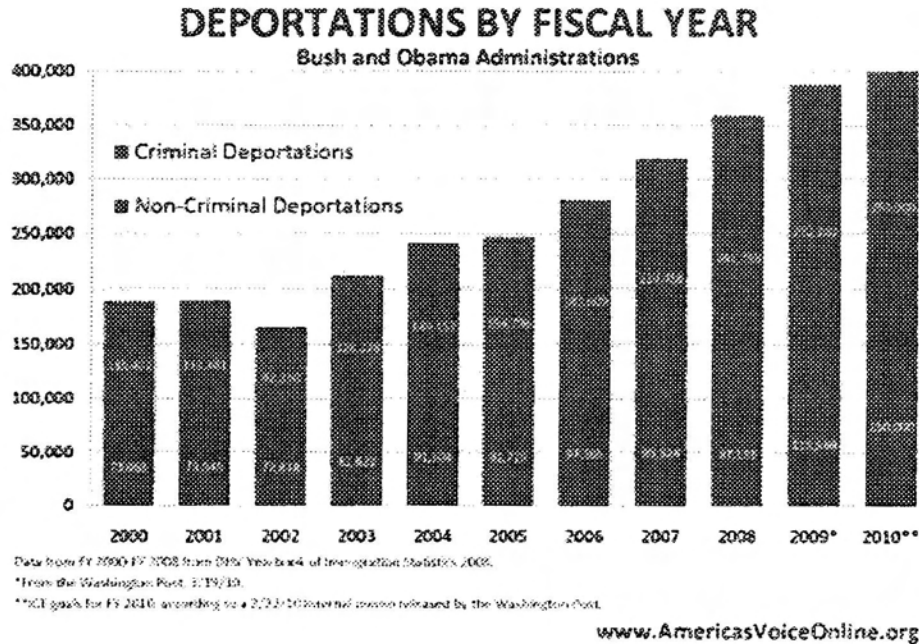
(Scale in thousands)



Source: Department of Homeland Security

Obama increased in 2009 deportations by at least 8% more than Bush II, in 2010 raising the total to 388,000
All data are in U.S. Fiscal Years Oct 1-Sept 30

Here are the totals for the period 2000-2010SS



Source for the above Chart is <http://my.firedoglake.com/michaelwhitney/tag/deportations/>
 Data for 2010 are as of October 5, 2010, after the close of the Fiscal Year 2009-2010:
http://americasvoiceonline.org/research/entry/charts_enforcement_spending_and_deportation_level_is_continue_to_skyrock

The new rule, which the Department of Homeland Security will post for public comment Monday, would reduce the time illegal immigrants are separated from their American families while seeking legal status, immigration officials said. Currently, such immigrants must leave the country to apply for a legal visa, often leading to long stints away as they await resolution of their applications.

The proposal is the latest move by the administration to use its executive powers to revise immigration procedures without changing the law. It reflects an effort by President Obama to improve his standing among those Latino voters who feel he has not met his 2008 campaign promise to pursue comprehensive immigration reform.

The president's push to pass the Dream Act, a law that would have created a path to citizenship for young illegal immigrants enrolled in college or enlisted in the military, was defeated in the Senate in December. No reform legislation has been under serious consideration since, yet the U.S. has deported a record number of illegal immigrants under Obama.

Many immigrants who might seek legal status do not pursue it out of fear they will not receive a "hardship waiver" of strict U.S. immigration laws: An illegal immigrant who has overstayed a visa for more than six months is barred from reentering the U.S. for three years; those who overstay more than a year are barred for 10 years.

Lisa Battan, an immigration attorney based in Boulder, Colo., said the current process is "encouraging people to remain illegal."

The revised rule would allow illegal immigrants to claim that time apart from a spouse, child or parent who is a U.S. citizen would create "extreme hardship," and would permit them to remain in the country as they apply for legal status. Once approved, applicants would be required to leave the U.S. briefly, simply to return to their native country and pick up their visa.

The change could reduce a family's time apart to one week in some cases, officials said. The White House hopes to have the new procedures in place by the end of the year.

David Leopold, a Cleveland attorney and past president of the American Immigration Lawyers Assn., said the change was a "minor processing tweak, but it has great value to families."

Hundreds of thousands of the estimated 2.5 million illegal immigrants in California could benefit from the proposed change, according to immigration activists.

Republicans accused Obama of making an end run around Congress.

"President Obama and his administration are bending long-established rules to grant backdoor amnesty to potentially millions of illegal immigrants," Lamar Smith (R-Texas) said in a statement Friday.

U.S. immigration officials counter that the revision affects only how the applications are processed, not whether the legal status ultimately is granted.

"I don't think that criticism is warranted at all," said Alejandro Mayorkas, director of

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. "What we are doing is reducing the time of separation, not changing the standard of obtaining a waiver."

That the proposal is being announced in an election year has a whiff of political calculation, said Javier Ortiz, a Republican strategist.

"It looks like the president is pandering to Hispanic voters," said Ortiz, asserting that Obama could have proposed the change three years ago when he took office. "I would argue that Hispanics are smarter than that, and they know he has failed to bring forward comprehensive immigration reform."

The White House has previously made other administrative changes, such as a policy announced in June that gave prosecutors new authority to put on hold cases against immigration violators who have strong ties to the U.S. and no criminal record. The "discretion policy" encouraged immigration agents to focus on the removal of illegal immigrants who pose a threat to public safety or are repeat immigration law violators.

A program intended to cull so-called "low priority" cases from immigration courts began in Denver and Baltimore early this year and is being expanded to six other cities across the U.S. over the next four months, including Los Angeles and San Francisco.

The more-targeted approach hasn't reduced the total number of people being deported annually from the U.S. Last year, 396,906 people were deported, a record number for the third consecutive year, and many of the deportees were relatives of U.S. citizens. In the first half of last year alone, immigration officials deported more than 46,000 parents of U.S. citizens, according to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

For some immigrants, the danger of returning to their home country for a long period discourages them from seeking legal status. Mexican nationals are required by the State Department to apply for their hardship waivers at the U.S. consulate in Juarez, Mexico, a city plagued by drug cartel violence that saw about 2,000 homicides in 2011.

Abel Aguirre de la Cruz and his wife, Jessica Martinez, a U.S. citizen, were carjacked at gunpoint with their infant child in November 2010 in Fresnillo, Mexico, while going through the waiver application process, according to Battan, the Colorado-based lawyer, who represents the couple. On March 15, 20 months after the family first applied for a waiver, the consulate in Juarez requested more information.

After the administration's new proposal is posted in the Federal Register on Monday, the public will have 60 days to critique the change.

brian.bennett@latimes.com

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Immigrant Soldiers Serve Country, Still Face Deportation http://colorlines.com/archives/2010/10/immigrant_vets_facing_deportation.html

It jars the mind: immigrants who put their lives on the line, served in wars from Korea to Kosovo, and are being rewarded for their service by being deported from the United States. How can it be? And yet, many are.

The AP's Juliana Barbassa reports that an estimated 4,000 immigrant veterans are facing deportation or have already been deported because of criminal convictions. Barbassa profiles Rohan Coombs, a 43-year-old Jamaican-born U.S. Marine who fell on hard times after he came back from serving in the Persian Gulf in the first Iraq war. Coombs was convicted of selling pot to an undercover cop in 2008, when he was working as a bouncer outside a club. He's facing deportation now to a country he left when he was a child.

"If I had died," Coombs tells Barbassa, "they would have made me a citizen, given me a military funeral, and given the flag to my mom. But I didn't die. Here I am. I just want another chance."

Barbassa reports that around 8,000 legal residents enlist in the military every year, and currently there are almost 17,000 people who are not citizens on active duty. Undocumented immigrants are barred from serving in the military.

A set of laws passed by Congress in 1996 made immigrants convicted of a class of so-called "aggravated felonies"—any crime where the possible jail

sentence was two years—deportable. Under this new designation, “aggravated felonies” for immigration purposes could be crimes that are not actually felonies in criminal law. For the majority of people, the law was crystal clear: no judicial discretion, no second chances. Even if they arrived in the country as kids and don’t speak the language of the country they’re being sent to. Even if they had since rebuilt their lives and gotten themselves back on track. Even if they are U.S. military.

CNN recently profiled a pair of brothers in their fifties named Manuel and Valente Valenzuela who are facing deportation for convictions that are years old. One was convicted on domestic violence charges eleven years ago, another for resisting arrest 25 years ago. People serve time for their criminal convictions, and then face a second punishment all over again with deportation. The story is not uncommon, but it’s not often told.

While there are reports that the Obama administration is allowing some immigration judges to exercise discretion in a select few deportation cases, the vast majority do not get such treatment. Coombs and the Valenzuelas will be forced to leave the country unless the U.S. government steps in to halt their removal orders.

Among the millions of immigrants who’ve seen their families torn apart by deportation, criminal deportees’ stories’ don’t often lend themselves to easy storytelling or sympathy. Perhaps because of this, they’re neither as visible nor as outspoken in the mainstream immigrant rights movement. None of the policy options on the table in the current immigration reform debate would address the plight of criminal deportees.

Indeed, they’re the favored scapegoat of the immigrant rights discourse. The Obama administration has committed to cracking down on immigrants with criminal convictions on their records—hardened and dangerous criminals, the administration calls them. And deportations of people with criminal convictions are indeed up, as are deportations of those with no criminal history. The Obama administration deported 392,000 people in the last fiscal year, a record number of single-year removals.

Many who’ve been kicked out of the country, however, were convicted of minor, nonviolent crimes like shoplifting and pot possession. There are those, too, who are deported from the country and barred from re-entering because of domestic violence convictions, and even homicide.

Except everyone’s story is much more complicated than just the crimes

they were convicted of, none more so than for immigrant vets.

That one person can be both valorous hero and convicted criminal—indeed that any person might have been convicted of a terrible crime and still deserve legal protection and the right to stay in the country with their families—messes with the story we've been told about who deserves to stay in the country and who doesn't.

Our legal system gets similarly confused. The immigration system is not prepared to deal with these nuances, and the immigration laws no longer make allowance for complicated pasts and the full spectrum of human reality. Untold thousands of families have been torn apart as a result.

Barbassa reports that the U.S. government couldn't give hard numbers on how many vets are deported every year, but will start tracking that. And, in a bit of hopeful news, immigrant vets facing similar fates may have an ally in Congress:

Rep. Bob Filner, D-Calif., chairman of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, is looking into potential changes to the law so immigrants who serve in the military can avoid deportation.

"You come back from Iraq or Afghanistan today, you have put yourself on the line for this country," said Filner. "An incredible number of kids come back with an injury or illness that puts them in trouble with the law. To simply have these people deported is not a good way to thank them for their service."

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Sept. 10 1999 L.A. Weekly

L.A. CUCARACHA — LALO ALCARAZ

FROM LA CUCARACHA'S THIS ACTUALLY HAPPENED FILES:



CAMBRIDGE, MASS. POLICE TRAINING MANUAL



PEPPER SPRAY
CERTAIN ETHNIC GROUPS ARE IMMUNE TO CAYENNE PEPPER BASED SPRAY BECAUSE THEY'VE CONSUMED SPICY FOODS SINCE CHILDHOOD OR PICKED PEPPERS IN THE FIELDS.

PEPPER SPRAY IS INEFFECTIVE AGAINST:



ALSO DO NOT EMPLOY PEPPER SPRAY TO SUBDUCE ANY OF THE SPICE GIRLS.



• USE YOUR POLICE DISGRESSION WHEN SUBDUING THESE TWO SUSPECTS.



ALSO, DO NOT ATTEMPT TO SUBDUCE MEXICAN-AMERICANS OR LATINOS WITH BEAN BAG GUNS. LATINOS SUBSIST MAINLY ON REFRIED BEANS, AND MAY CONSUME THE BEAN BAG PROJECTILES AS NUTRIENTS.

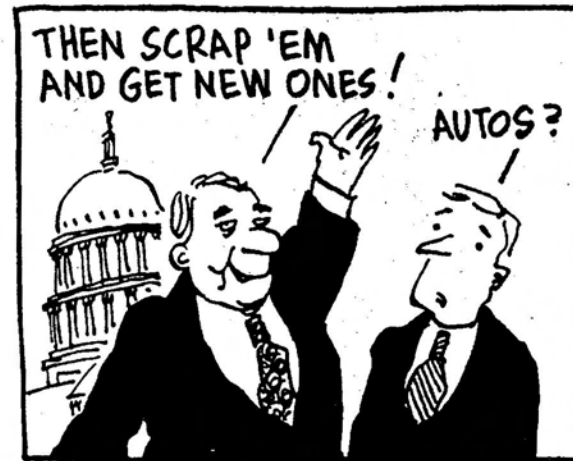
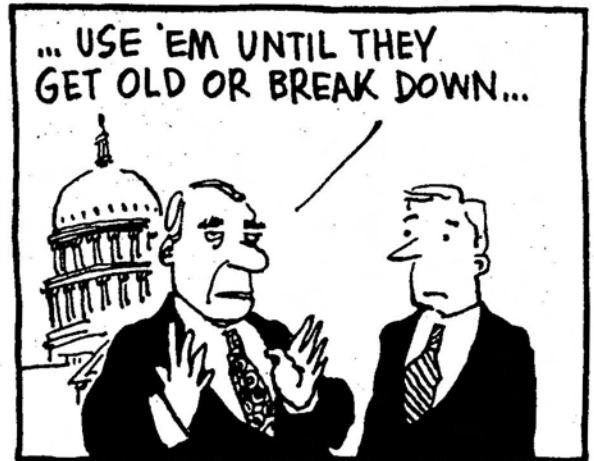
IT IS STRONGLY BELIEVED THAT MEXICAN-AMERICANS HAVE AN IMMUNITY TO TEAR GAS. (SEE PG. 2, BEANS, BEANS, THE MUSICAL FRUIT) RECONSIDER CHOKING OR GOOD OLD FASHIONED SHOOTING!

LALO ALCARAZ

la cucaracha 1999 by lalo alcaraz. lalo@pcho.com www.lacucaracha.com

Commentary

DRAWINGBOARD / WASSERMAN



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PERSPECTIVE ON EASTERN EUROPE

Helsinki Can Be the Cure for Yalta



As members of NATO, Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic are not a threat but a security belt for Russia.

By ZYGMUNT NAGORSKI

aggression and England's mood of appeasement was viewed during the 1920s and 1930s as the most politically advanced nation of the region.

In human terms, Yalta forced millions of Central and Eastern Europeans into a doubly hostile environment of Soviet control and occupation and communist authoritarianism. This latest Helsinki agreement, which is just the beginning of a process, gave Poles and Czechs a sense of taking a first

Boris Yeltsin, understand the nature of the evolving relationship between former satellites and Moscow, mutual animosity gradually would be replaced by a businesslike pragmatism.

This could influence Moscow's attitude toward the expansion of NATO, allow Russian leaders to see in the new NATO not a threat but a security belt for Russia. None of the new NATO members harbor hostile plans toward Moscow. If Russia returns, it will be up to Russia to demonstrate understanding and respect for Western neighbors. Once such a mutual relationship develops, once the first

Outside of strategic, political and diplomatic aspects of the two major agreements-by the United

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Border Patrol Faces New Limits in Inland Empire

After June arrests drew protests, U.S. officials want the agents to restrict enforcement.

The Border Patrol will take the lead at the border and on all arrests of illegal immigrants in inland areas as they travel north; ICE [Immigration and Customs Enforcement] agents will focus on enforcement away from border areas and take the lead on all immigration investigations.

Still to be defined, however, is where the border region ends and the inland area begins.

By H.G. Reza

L A Times, August 4, 2004

Two months after Border Patrol agents made a series of controversial arrests in the Inland Empire, federal officials are finalizing a policy to limit the agency's operations in interior areas.

Documents and interviews show that Department of Homeland Security officials want to concentrate Border Patrol agents at the borders and limit their inland activity to arresting illegal immigrants while they are traveling from the border and at transportation centers such as Los Angeles International Airport and highway checkpoints such as those in Temecula and San Clemente.

Authorities said the changes were under discussion before the June arrests, which stirred protests in the Latino community. About 450 suspected illegal immigrants in Riverside, San Bernardino and San Diego counties were arrested in less than a month by a specially trained team of 12 agents called the Mobile Patrol Group.

Agents arrested the immigrants in residential and commercial areas, saying they were acting on information about smuggling. The arrests ended when a Homeland Security official said the sweeps violated agency policy because they had not been approved in Washington.

Gloria Chavez, a spokeswoman for U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the parent agency of the Border Patrol, said the proposal is being finalized in a memorandum that will clearly define the responsibilities of the Border Patrol and the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Both agencies are part of the Department of Homeland Security.

The Border Patrol will take the lead at the border and on all arrests of illegal immigrants in inland areas as they travel north; ICE agents will focus on enforcement away from border areas and take the lead on all immigration investigations.

Still to be defined, however, is where the border region ends and the inland area begins.

The proposed policy is already drawing fire from Border Patrol agents.

Joseph Dassaro — president of the National Border Patrol Council, Local 1613, the union that represents 1,500 agents in San Diego — said ICE was not equipped to enforce immigration law.

ICE agents already conduct investigations of immigrant smuggling rings, in addition to crimes such as terrorism, child pornography, copyright infringement, drug smuggling and customs violations.

"The mission of ICE agents is broad and diluted. They don't know whether they should be going after terrorists, child pornographers or smuggling rings," Dassaro said.

R.C. Martinez, Border Patrol spokesman in San Diego, said his office had received more than 2,000 e-mails and telephone calls applauding the June sweeps. The sweeps were ordered to be stopped by Asa Hutchinson, undersecretary for border and transportation security at Homeland Security, who said department officials had to approve them.

The proposed changes are being discussed at a time when a funding shortage has forced ICE administrators to curtail investigations and do more with fewer agents.

A memo from the agency's San Diego office to senior managers says Homeland Security officials have "encouraged" the special agent in charge to "closely scrutinize all expenditures and curtail spending to the maximum extent possible," and warns that it is "unknown if any funds will be available to bail out any offices." In addition, the memo says the hiring freeze will probably continue into the next fiscal year.

ICE spokesman Russ Knocke declined to say whether the agency had enough money and agents to conduct criminal investigations and carry out the inland enforcement the Border Patrol is performing.

Neither did he say whether his department would launch sweeps of the kind that created controversy for the Border Patrol.

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Michoacan Governor Welcomed in O.C.

Hundreds of expatriates from his state greet Gov. Lazaro Cardenas Batel, considered a possible presidential candidate.

By Jennifer Mena
L.A. Times, April 17, 2004

Hundreds of Mexican immigrants in Santa Ana met Michoacan Gov. Lazaro Cardenas Batel on Friday to pay homage to this grandson of a Mexican president, who is remembered for nationalizing the country's petroleum industry.

They came to ask for help, for new plazas and roads back in Michoacan. And they came to see a Mexican leader who, with their help, could someday become that nation's president.

More than any economic report on globalization, it was a testament to how little the border means in this part of Orange County, a city where an estimated 100,000 people — about one in three — come from Michoacan, an arid agricultural state midway between Mexico City and Guadalajara.

Michoacan "is not just a place," said Edward Hernandez, chancellor of Rancho Santiago Community College, which hosted a question-and-answer session for the governor. "The beauty in its people ... is where they go. That is where Michoacan is."

The opportunity to shake hands and kiss babies in Santa Ana was not lost on the 38-year-old governor, a member of an important Mexican political family who has been considered a possible presidential candidate for the center-left PRD party.

Those who showed up — along with an estimated 2 million natives of the Mexican state who now live elsewhere in the U.S. — could soon have the right to vote in Mexican elections.

"I appreciate the opportunity to be near the people. There is a need for us to represent all Mexicans," said Cardenas after the meeting, which attracted immigrants ranging from busboys to business

owners to the community college campus. "It's an obligation we have because there will be no democracy in Mexico, not politically or socially, until we give all Mexicans the right to vote."

Mexico is considering how best to implement legislation that allows millions of its citizens living outside the country to participate in presidential elections in 2006. Meanwhile, Michoacan's state legislature is debating a measure that would allow emigrants to vote in state elections. Already nearby Zacatecas state has given emigrants that right and created two seats in the legislature to represent them.

During a daylong tour of Santa Ana, Cardenas met with leaders of Santa Ana's soccer leagues, which include 60,000 Latino players. He also talked with members of the City Council, and educators at the college's international business program. In the evening, he addressed more than 400 immigrants at the Delhi Community Center.

For Michoacan natives, the governor's visit was a chance to approach a Mexican politician with political star-power similar to that of a Kennedy. Old-timers recalled the day they met his grandfather, Lazaro Cardenas, in their villages or had seen his father, Cuauhtemoc Cardenas, a former Mexico City mayor and presidential candidate.

Many of those who shook hands with Cardenas came with written pleas for help. Pedro Rodriguez of Los Angeles, 62, wants assistance improving the plaza in his native town. Ernesto Figueroa, 36, of Santa Ana, a former Army sergeant in Iraq, wants roads improved in his native Cotija de la Paz. Anaheim resident Gabriela Herrera, 32, asked if the governor could help her husband, a native of Zamora, Michoacan, who is in jail in San Diego.

Santa Ana resident Pedro Magallon Cardenas, who said his grandfather and Cardenas Batel's were cousins, came to get help in exporting mangos from an orchard he wants to buy in Michoacan. Though he made no promises, Cardenas kept a list of the requests — and, for many, that may have been enough. They came for the thrill

of meeting a governor whom they identify with more than California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

"He's a Cardenas, and he makes me proud," said Magallon Cardenas, 27, president of the Santa Ana Youth Soccer Assn., who came to the United States when he was 4. "His grandfather and his father did a lot for Mexico. He's like a Kennedy. I can tell you that Schwarzenegger would not get as good a reception here."

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PROGRAM ON MEXICO

Paper presented to the

Mexican Senate
North American Commission

November 10, 2004

**“EDUCATION FOR ‘BANCARIZATION’
OF THE MEXICAN LOW-INCOME POPULATION
IN THE UNITED STATES AND MEXICO”**

By

James Wilkie

Chair, UCLA Program on Mexico
President, PROFMEX-Worldwide Consortium for Research on Mexico

Latest News: Even though in 2003 oil was the largest foreign-exchange source of income for Mexico (US\$ 18,653 billion), remittances have become the second largest foreign-exchange source of income from abroad

(US\$ 13,396 billion),

surpassing direct foreign investment (US\$10783 billion) and tourism (US\$ 9,457 billion)—the third and fourth sources respectively. [*Crónica*, November 6, 2004.]

Let me ask: Why does the population of Mexicans belonging to the low-income population prosper in the United

States and not in México? For many reasons. However, today we are interested in discussing two aspects related to remittances from abroad: the educational aspect, and the framework of access, cost and price.

In the first place, in the United States, Mexicans from the popular sector can open a bank account without difficulty and pay almost half of what a Mexican bank would charge them in interest and commissions—furthermore, this allows them to obtain a credit card, which is not possible for them to do in Mexico.

Furthermore, Mexicans belonging to the low-income population in the United States have access to better information on how to manage their own finances, and how to participate in educational seminars where they learn to use bank services.

How can Mexico, then, “bancarize” its low-income population?

I believe that providing a financial education to the banks’ client is the basic element in this process.

I would like to share with you my educational role, in general terms, before speaking in specific terms about the financial literacy project and in particular about the publication by PROFMEX of the booklet *La Matricula Consular y los Servicios Bancarios*.

In general, as Chair of the UCLA Program on Mexico, I have developed numerous projects for the Mexican Federal and State Governments in the fields of:

- **Double Taxation**
- **Social Security**
- Micro-credit
- Green Revolution
- Higher Education
- Trans-border Government

Part of the Treaty Against Double Taxation was completed twelve years ago, when I worked with the Mexican

Treasury Department (SHCP) to achieve the flow of philanthropy-originated funds between the United States and Mexico. Thus, the United States has conceded to the SHCP the right to approve philanthropic deductions allowed in Mexico against income earned in the United States. This is the first and only world-wide treaty of this type.

With regard to the second part of the Treaty necessary to Avoid Double Taxation, this year the UCLA PROGRAM ON MEXICO has proposed to the SHCP the renegotiation with the USA of the Treaty in order to include the protection of individuals, an advantage which to date has profited only corporations and philanthropic entities. We estimate that the U. S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) over withholds taxes from migrant workers and professionals working in both countries at an annual rate of:

US\$ 8,000,000,000

and few of them know how to recover their share.

Furthermore, by 2002, the amount over withheld by the U. S. to pay Social Security taxes had reached a total equivalent to:

US\$ 30,000,000,000,

amount that the U. S. Social Security System recognizes owing Mexican nationals who have returned to Mexico. This amount continues to accrue.

Specifically, and in regards to the Mexican migrant residing in the U.S. who sends remittances to Mexico, I am pleased to share with you the scope of educational activities carried out by UCLA Program on Mexico since 2002, in conjunction with the most important U. S. Banks associated with PROFMEX.

With the goal to create better-informed users, who will feel more empowered and capable of accessing bank services, the UCLA PROGRAM ON MEXICO advised PROFMEX in the

development of the Guidebook *La Matricula Consular y los Servicios Bancarios*, which has been funded by U. S. Banks as a public service and sponsored by the Mexican Foreign Relations Office [SURE-Spanish acronym for Secretarial de Relations Exteriors].

I offer this Guide to you here for your consideration. As you can see on both front and back covers, it includes explicit acknowledgements to the participating institutions.

Two million free copies of this Guide, *La Matrícula Consular y los Servicios Bancarios*,¹ have been distributed throughout the Mexican consulates in the United States, with a letter of introduction from the Secretary of Foreign Relations of Mexico.

The Mexican consulates have played a significant role in obtaining the acceptance of the *Matricula Consular* as the main document of identification to qualify persons for the opening of bank accounts in more than:

155 financial institutions,

and to establish their identity in:

944 police departments,

126 cities, and

37 counties in the de United States.

Distribution of the *Matrícula Consular* Guide is a non-profit project, and any surplus funds generated are donated by PROFMEX to the Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior (IME).

The Guide teaches migrants, step by step, how to open their bank account, and how to operate it at low cost. Upon getting his or her bank account, the user automatically receives a personal checkbook and an ATM card. Furthermore, users are taught how to open a savings account which pays

¹ (Six editions: Los Angeles: PROFMEX, 2002, 2003), translated by Edna Monzón Wilkie

interest and therefore obligates the account holder to obtain his or her federal tax identification number (ITIN).

The latter can be an incentive to show the consistent responsibility necessary to acquire a “green card.”

Banks offer courses for Mexican women, which they can attend with their children. These women are the ones who take on the responsibility of gaining access to a bank in the name of their family. (Similarly, they cooperate with the schools to insure scholastic progress of their children.) In a way, it's women who are in charge of the development of the Mexican family in the U. S. We should add that once they have received direct training from bankers, they loose all fear of the banking system.

The Guide also teaches the account holder how to establish his or her credit history and keep the payment of his or her bills updated, thus showing ability to manage finances accurately. Those who properly manage their account soon receive a call from the bank and are offered a credit card. This instrument allows them the possibility of full access to the U.S. economy.

In November, 2001, Wells Fargo was the first bank to accept, nationwide, the Matrícula Consular in lieu of a passport and it was the first bank not to take into account the residence status of the bank-account holder in the U. S. Since then, Wells Fargo has opened more than

500 thousand bank accounts

in the name of Mexican citizens, without requiring the account holder to show any U.S. Government documents. Wells Fargo expected the initial average deposit to be US\$ 300; however, in reality, the average is:

US\$ 3,000.

We estimate the number of new bank accounts opened by Mexican nationals to be more than

2.3 million

(including the Wells Fargo accounts), which provide a person a safer place in which to keep his or her money instead of hiding it, so to speak, “under the mattress”. (Thus, the large number of residential burglaries by thieves looking for money has decreased—the money is now in the bank.)

As the Mexican low-income population establishes bank accounts in the United States, these account holders have access to low-cost transfer of funds to Mexico by two different means.

First, through accounts that link relatives in both countries; for example, by means of InterCuenta Exprés de Wells Fargo they can transfer up to

US\$ 3,000 per day for only US\$ 8.

Furthermore, other very competitive remittance services are available from important banks such as CitiBank, Bank of America and US Bank, to mention a few.

Second, account holders send ATM and credit cards to their relatives in Mexico in order to provide them access to the money that they send from the U.S.—this second way is done formally and informally, since many Mexicans living in the USA send their own ATM or credit card, which is not authorized by banks.

With these credit and ATM cards received by Mexicans from their relatives residing in the USA, a process of “plastification” has begun to take place in Mexico. However, it is Mexico’s turn to open its banking system to low-income persons. Thus a new bank-literate population can develop, providing wider access to the different ways of receiving

remittances at a lower cost, through personal interconnected accounts between the United States and Mexico.

Furthermore, this process provides the receptors of remittances the possibility of establishing their own record of financial management responsibility, therefore making them eligible to have access in Mexico to all services offered by financial institutions. Thus those receiving remittances will be linked to productive activities, especially those pertaining to infrastructure and housing.

Based on the success of the bank-literacy program in the USA, I am pleased to endorse bancarization of low-income Mexicans focusing on the following:

- 1) Receiving remittances from the United States at the lowest possible market price.
- 2) Opening checking and savings accounts and obtaining credit cards.
- 3) Acquiring property by means of a mortgage.

Although it will not be easy, we can hope that finally Mexican Banks will incorporate the low-income sectors of Mexico's population into the country's financial system.

August 6, 2004 , LAT

Mexican Senate Approves Bill to Reform Social Security Finances

Measure calls for new workers at government agency to fund their own pensions. The system's woes jeopardize healthcare for millions.

The [employees of the Mexican Social Security Agency—IMSS] on average retire at **age 53 with 130% of their salaries**, with taxpayers footing most of the bill. In contrast, private-sector workers fund the lion's share of their own pensions and must wait until age **65 to draw checks that average 42%** of their final pay.

About half of all Mexican workers toil in the underground economy and have no retirement or health benefits.

By Marla Dickerson, Times Staff Writer

MEXICO CITY — In a showdown with one of the nations' most powerful unions, federal legislators on Thursday approved reforms aimed at shoring up Mexico's financially troubled social security system, which provides healthcare for 50 million Mexicans.

In the predawn hours of an emergency session, the Mexican Senate took aim at ballooning pension liabilities that are straining the system's finances to the breaking point.

Projections show that generous retirement benefits paid to government doctors, nurses and other social security workers will devour the system's entire budget within 15 years if nothing is done to rein in costs.

The reforms would require all new employees at the Mexican Social Security Institute to begin financing their own pensions, though the specifics would be left to contract negotiations. Mexico's lower house, the Chamber of Deputies, approved the measure last week. All that's needed now is the approval of President Vicente Fox, who is expected to act quickly.

Union members say that the measure would be an attack on the labor rights of all Mexicans and the first step toward dismantling the nation's main public healthcare system. Enraged government medical workers have marched in the streets, blockaded federal buildings and threatened a nationwide strike.

Fox in turn has characterized the conflict as a choice between using tax money to support social programs that benefit millions of Mexicans or for maintaining perks for civil servants.

"Sooner or later, this country has to confront these decisions," Fox said. "There is no way that this government ... can meet the demands [for] higher education, the battle against poverty or the push for economic growth if these reforms aren't approved."

Fox's conservative National Action Party was joined by opposition legislators in the rare face-off with employees of the mammoth social security agency, whose union has won lucrative benefits for its 370,000 active members and 120,000 retirees over the years.

The agency's employees on average retire at age 53 with 130% of their salaries, with taxpayers footing most of the bill. In contrast, private-sector workers fund the lion's share of their own pensions and must wait until age 65 to draw checks that average 42% of their final pay.

About half of all Mexican workers toil in the underground economy and have no retirement or health benefits.

Leaders of the union, known as the National Union of Social Security Workers, or SNTSS, say that poor management of Mexico's social system, not employee pensions, is to blame for the agency's fiscal woes. They vow to

challenge the constitutionality of the legislation in the courts. The union is also threatening disruptive street demonstrations, targeted work stoppages and even a nationwide strike that would cripple the public healthcare system.

"The government is going to see a hardening of the workers of SNTSS and other unions," said the union's leader, Roberto Vega Galina. "We're going to strike" if the legislation isn't overturned.

Mexico hasn't seen a major public sector strike for decades. The Institutional Revolutionary Party, or PRI, that ruled the nation for 71 years traditionally kept government unions happy by doling out generous salaries and benefits in exchange for political support.

That cozy relationship ended with the ascension of Fox and his National Action Party in 2000. But observers note that a number of PRI legislators also supported the reforms largely because the social security agency's finances have deteriorated to the point where jeopardizing the healthcare of millions of voters is riskier than alienating a few hundred thousand union members.

Patients in the nation's main public healthcare system already face medicine shortages and lengthy delays for treatment, problems that will only worsen if more resources aren't found to treat Mexico's burgeoning elderly population.

"We're headed toward a crisis," said Genaro Borrego, a PRI senator who voted in favor of the reforms. "The demographic transformation we're seeing is raising the cost of healthcare dramatically."

Overhauling government pension programs has taken on new urgency throughout Latin America, where weak economies and poor tax collection have created unsustainable financial burdens.

Ironically, the region has been a leader in private-sector pension reform. For example, Mexico in 1997 began requiring all workers in private industry to contribute 11.5% of their salaries toward their retirement years, much of it into privately managed 401(k)-style accounts.

Latin American governments have been slower to force such changes on politically powerful civil-service unions. But pensions experts say aging populations and crumbling finances are forcing politicians in Mexico to deal with what they've long avoided.

"Public pension reform is an absolute necessity in much of Latin America," said Olivia S. Mitchell, an employee benefits expert at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School. "The private sector has already taken the bitter pill. Asking the public sector to share more of the burden seems not only reasonable, but inevitable."

Although Mexico has taken the first steps in that direction, some say the pension reforms passed Thursday won't be sufficient to repair the troubled finances of the social security system, largely because they apply only to future workers.

"It's not enough," said Mexico City economist Rogelio Ramirez de la O. "We're moving sideways."

Swine Flu Endangers Health of Mexico's Tourism Industry

Already Hurting From Drug Violence, Country Prepares to See Third-Largest Business Shrink

By [Rich Thomaselli](#)

Published: April 28, 2009

NEW YORK (AdAge.com) -- First drug-cartel violence, then an earthquake in its capital city, and now a worldwide panic over swine flu is threatening Mexico's third-largest industry: its \$13.3 billion tourism business.

due to drug-cartel violence, earthqu

Mexico's tourism industry is being hit hard due to drug-cartel violence, earthquakes and the latest panic over swine flu.

Photo Credit: AP

By this morning, the swine-flu outbreak in Mexico was suspected in more than 150 deaths and more than 1,600 illnesses. There have been 50 confirmed cases in the U.S. and dozens more in Europe, Canada and Israel, among other countries. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued a notice yesterday telling Americans to avoid travel to Mexico, and Canada has issued a travel advisory. No less an authority than Richard Besser, acting head of the CDC, said on CNN's "American Morning" program today, "If I had vacation plans in Mexico coming up right now, I'd look to postpone those." The European Union Health Commissioner made a similar pronouncement.

The Associated Press reported that Germany's biggest tour operator and Japan's largest tour agency both suspended charter flights and tours to Mexico through May 4 and June 30, respectively. The AP also noted that Acapulco's mayor has closed most bars and restaurants in the city.

Most major U.S. domestic airlines that regularly fly into Mexico, including American and Continental, are relaxing their policies on changing reservations. American said that anyone who bought a ticket to Mexico prior to April 25 can change it by May 6 without incurring a fee.

Bad timing

But it's the market closest to home that concerns Mexico, which shares a border with the U.S. and draws 80% of its tourists there. Mexico spent \$40 million last year on tourism campaigns targeted to the U.S., according to TNS Media Intelligence.

The timing couldn't be worse for Mexico. Despite the weakened economy and the ongoing drug-cartel violence that has claimed nearly 2,000 lives, the country's tourism trade had been doing well. The Mexico Tourism Board reported a 2% increase in visitors in the first three months of 2009 compared with the same time period in 2008; for full-year 2008, visits were up 5.9% from 2007. Some of that is likely due to Americans pinched by the economy who were opting to travel to Mexico rather than take a more costly trek to Europe -- until now.

Efforts to reach Mexico Secretary of Tourism Rodolfo Elizondo Torres were unsuccessful. Gustavo Rivas, of the Mexico Tourism Board's New York office, did not respond by press time. Manny Machado, CEO of Machado

En ruinas, todos los centros turísticos de QR, confirman

Alejandro Suverza/Enviado y corresponsales
El Universal
Martes 25 de octubre de 2005
Primera plana, página 1

Infraestructura de Cancún, Cozumel e Isla Mujeres, afectada casi en 100 por ciento

CANCÚN, QR.- Los municipios de Isla Mujeres, Cozumel y Benito Juárez (donde se encuentra Cancún) presentan daños en prácticamente 100 por ciento de su infraestructura tras el paso del huracán *Wilma*, de acuerdo con el gobierno de Quintana Roo.

En Solidaridad, Lázaro Cárdenas y Felipe Carrillo Puerto, los servicios también quedaron dañados.

"En la región afectada está 75 por ciento de la población total del estado y 98 por ciento de la infraestructura hotelera", según el balance del gobierno local.

Porcentualmente, Cozumel e Isla Mujeres son los municipios que resultaron más dañados.

Los datos divulgados señalan que en Cozumel 100 por ciento de los hoteles, de los hospitales, de las carreteras, de la red vial, de las señalizaciones y de la infraestructura deportiva quedaron colapsados.

La energía eléctrica está suspendida y 50 de las 65 escuelas están afectadas. No se reportan pérdidas humanas.

En Isla Mujeres 100 por ciento de las escuelas quedaron afectadas; los cuatro hospitales con los que cuenta están inutilizados. Los daños en carreteras son también de 100 por ciento.

Los dos puertos del municipio están inservibles. Hay 49 hoteles; ninguno quedó a salvo de *Wilma*.

De acuerdo con el reporte estatal, el servicio de energía eléctrica está dañado y suspendido en su totalidad; mientras que 90 por ciento del alumbrado público está afectado.

Cuatro días después de que la navegación fue interrumpida, ayer se reanudó el tránsito marítimo desde la plataforma continental de Cancún.

El Centro de Salud municipal previó que en los próximos días broten enfermedades por la falta de agua potable que padecen los 17 mil habitantes isleños.

Ayer fue encontrado el cuerpo sin vida de un pescador, el único saldo fatal hasta el momento del paso del huracán.

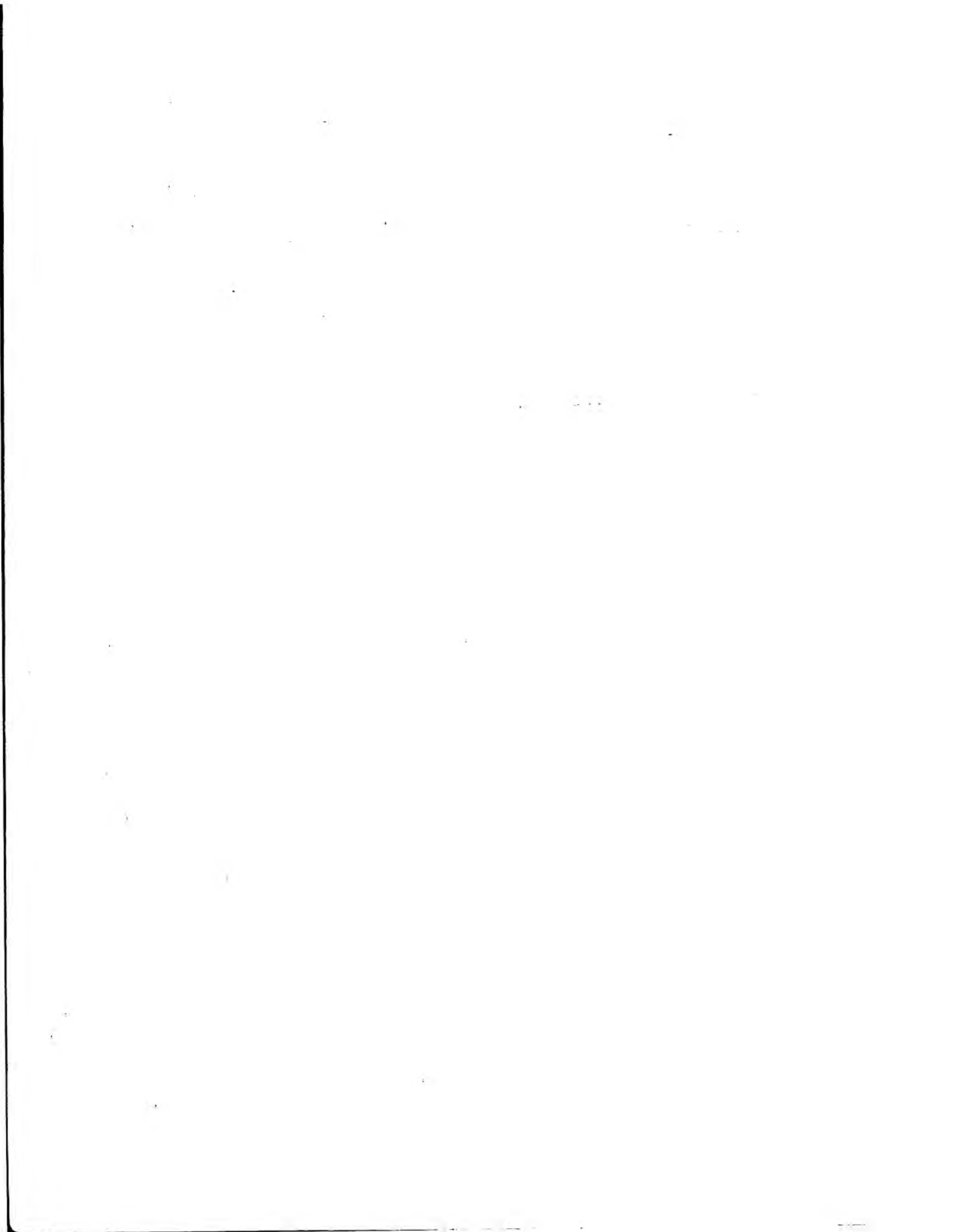
El documento da cuenta de que en el municipio de Benito Juárez la infraestructura hotelera está afectada de manera total.

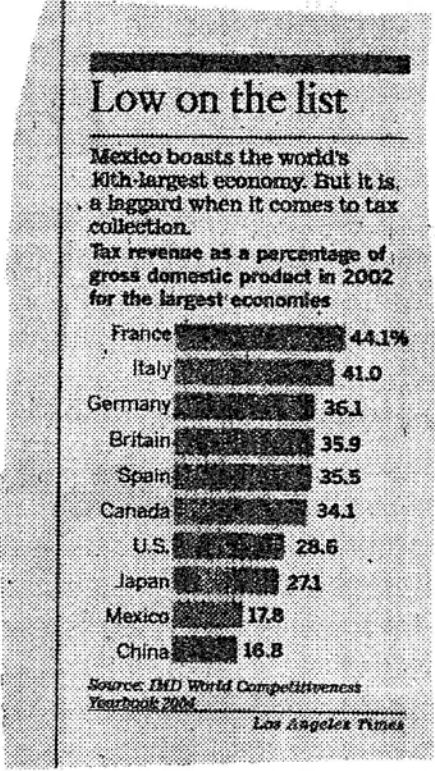
Los 27 mil 882 cuartos que posee Cancún en sus 145 hoteles fueron afectados por el ciclón, añade. También están colapsados los 28 hospitales del municipio.

Por otra parte, el director de la Comisión Federal de Electricidad, Alfredo Elías Ayub, dio a conocer que el paso del meteoro derrumbó 200 torres de alta tensión y 10 mil postes de cableado.

"El esfuerzo que se tendrá que realizar en la entidad será cinco veces mayor al que la Comisión ha tenido que hacer en cualquier otra emergencia", advirtió.

Admitió que al igual que Cancún, en Cozumel la red eléctrica está destruida, al igual que en Isla Mujeres y Playa del Carmen.





Sure Things in Mexico: Death, Taxes and Evasion

By Marla Dickerson

L.A. Times, May 16, 2004

MEXICO CITY — High taxes might be weighing on the California economy, but Mexico is proving that a low tax take could be worse. Tax collection in this country is meager, and it's sinking the nation's competitiveness. Mexico, though the world's 10th-largest economy, ranks with Sri Lanka and Ethiopia when it comes to generating revenue to pay for public services.

Distrust of the government runs so deep, and the untaxed underground economy is so vast, that by some estimates as much as half of Mexico's potential tax take is lost to evasion. In fact, if not for royalties and pump taxes from state-owned oil monopoly Pemex, which fund nearly one-third of the \$150 billion in annual federal spending, Mexico's fiscal house would collapse.

The government tried emotional appeals this year to get people to pay, placing newspaper ads showing smiling tots and the disabled urging taxpayers to "keep helping Mexico" by filing their returns by the April 30 deadline.

"People aren't stupid," said Rogelio Ramirez de la O, a Mexico City economist. "They're very dubious about where that money is going."

* Holes in the Treasury

The country is paying dearly for its citizens' perpetual tax holiday. While up-and-comers like China are throwing billions of dollars into advanced research, superhighways and high-technology parks, Mexico's tax haul can't cover basics like schoolbooks, cops and sewers.

Just-released rankings of global competitiveness put out by IMD International, the Switzerland-based International Institute for Management Development, placed Mexico at 56 out of 60 economies examined, largely because of a dearth of investment in everything from potable water to ports. Only Poland, Indonesia, Argentina and Venezuela ranked lower.

"Essentially you've got a country that isn't spending enough on fundamentals like education and healthcare that are essential to economic growth, much less the infrastructure development that leads to more competitiveness," said Jorge Martinez-Vazquez, an economics professor at Georgia State University and an expert on the Mexican tax system. "Mexico provides a clear example of what happens in an economy when there is a consistent failure to raise the tax effort."

Martinez-Vazquez said Mexico's tax rates and structure generally were in line with those of other major economies. For example, its top income tax bracket in 2003 was 34%, compared with the top U.S. rate of 35%. But Mexico's collection rate is abysmal.

According to the World Bank, Mexico's tax revenue has generally ranged from 12% to 15% of its gross domestic product over the last couple of decades. The latest figures from IMD International put Mexico's total tax collection somewhat higher, about 17.8% of GDP in 2002. By

comparison, IMD said, the U.S. collection rate amounted to 28.6% of its GDP in 2002, while some European nations are north of 40%. Analysts said Mexico's percentage drops to single digits when oil revenue is discounted, putting its tax collectors among the most inept on the planet.

Experts point to a variety of factors to explain the lousy showing, including Mexico's exploding underground economy, complicated tax laws and weak enforcement. The system has long burdened the small middle class while offering breaks to businesses and the rich. But many say the heart of the problem lies in decades of government corruption that has sapped Mexicans' willingness to pay.

A poll of 17 Latin American countries last year by Chile-based Corporacion Latinobarometro showed that 9% of Mexicans surveyed believed that their taxes were well-spent. The only respondents more pessimistic were residents of Ecuador, where unrest over entrenched poverty and government thievery led to a military coup in 2000.

To be sure, Americans aren't exactly enamored of paying taxes, and there is plenty of government waste and fraud in the United States. Still, transparency laws, public audits and local control over many forms of taxation mean that basic services are paid for and delivered. In contrast, Mexico's tax system is highly centralized, with the federal government collecting most of the revenue, then distributing it back to the states.

- Paying Up, Reluctantly

Christian Stracke, a Mexico analyst with New York-based research firm CreditSights, said that has fed a murky patronage system that for decades has benefited a few at the expense of millions.

For example, lucrative pensions for federal government workers are devouring the budgets of Mexico's public health and university systems. Meanwhile, 1 in 6 Mexicans doesn't have running water, and about 4 in 5 lack high school diplomas.

"The average guy looks at his tax money going to overpaid, politically connected bureaucrats and wonders why he should support the system,"

Stracke said. "It creates this vicious circle, because people don't want to pay because of the poor quality of services. But the services are bad because there aren't enough people paying."

There weren't many happy faces outside the main office of Servicio de Administracion Tributaria, Mexico's version of the Internal Revenue Service, late last month as the deadline to file income tax declarations approached.

Waiting in line to procure the services of a sidewalk typist to complete his forms, Jose Luis Elizalde said he felt like a sap for filing a return when nearly half of Mexican workers don't.

"Of course it bothers me that the guy next to me isn't paying anything," said Elizalde, 39, an assistant in an accounting office. "But it would be just my luck to get audited."

Just ahead of him, Jesus Souto complained that Mexico's tax-supported health service lacked sufficient medicine and equipment, although he gave President Vicente Fox some credit for trying to restore confidence in the system.

"A society without taxes can't function," said Souto, 56, a marketing consultant. "But Fox alone can't change everything. He arrived with a Congress that doesn't want to do anything."

With his National Action Party lacking a majority, Fox has seen his efforts to reform the tax code go nowhere. Apart from royalties from Pemex, Mexico relies on three major revenue sources: income taxes; value-added taxes on goods and services; and so-called special taxes on products such as tobacco, alcohol and fuel.

Fox's tax plan, put before Congress last year, focused mainly on the value-added tax, known as the IVA in Mexico; the levy is assessed on the increased value of products as they move from raw material to final sale. Essentially, each processor or middleman pays IVA on the amount he or she marks up the goods, while consumers pay it as a sort of sales tax. The Fox administration had proposed lowering the tax to 10% from 15%, while closing loopholes and levying it on a broader range of goods and

services. The most controversial aspect of the plan was to slap the IVA on food and medicine, staples that had previously been tax-free.

Some economists like value-added taxes because they penalize consumption rather than investment. But they also are regressive, hitting lower-income consumers relatively harder than the rich. So even though the Fox plan would have raised the equivalent of \$9 billion, it was squelched in December by legislators in rival parties who decried the plan as unfair to the poor.

* True Reform on Hold

Political experts say Mexican tax reform is all but dead for the remainder of Fox's term, leaving him little to do between now and 2006 except tinker around the edges. The government is making efforts to strengthen enforcement, using electronic tools to search bank records and other financial data to root out cheats. But some worry that such efforts will lead to harassment of existing taxpayers while ignoring the system's true weakness.

"The problem is growing the number of contributors," said Jaime Sempere Campello, director of the Center for Economic Studies at Colegio de Mexico. " ... That's the reason Mexico doesn't collect enough to maintain an efficient government."

One of the most obvious targets is the massive underground economy, which accounts for one-fourth of Mexico's GDP. It's estimated that nearly half the workforce is off the books, from day laborers, maids and street vendors who scratch out a living day to day, to lucrative pirating operations that control the lion's share of Mexico's music and video distribution.

Trying to legalize all that activity is so daunting and potentially counterproductive that even the experts hardly know where to begin. Efforts by Fox to encourage more legitimate business formation and hiring have borne little fruit. Meanwhile, tax authorities simply don't have the resources to chase down every corner shoeshine man and chewing gum saleswoman.

Still, economist Ramirez de la O said, Mexico's underground economy is growing so rapidly that steps must be taken to rein it in. For starters, he

said, the government needs to cut the costs, paperwork and delays in starting a legal business, while bureaucrats need to start thinking about what they can offer the shadow entrepreneurs instead of only what they can squeeze out of them.

For example, he said, many of the tens of thousands of itinerant vendors on Mexico City's streets must pay protection money for their little patches of turf, either to police or to organized crime. He figures that many would gladly pay those same sums to the government if, in return, they could expect a clean, safe place to sell their wares.

"You've got illegal vendors selling right in front of the Treasury Ministry," Ramirez de la O said. "The government has got to reestablish the legitimacy of the state in society."

Mexico's reluctance to face up to its taxing situation is now draining its one reliable source of revenue: oil. The government is sucking so much money out of Pemex to fund its own operations that the state-owned company lacks the resources it needs to invest in exploration. At a public meeting this month, Roberto Oseguera Villaseñor, director of strategic planning for Pemex, warned that the government was killing its own golden goose.

"It isn't possible that this situation can continue like this for much longer," he said, "because if so, the patrimony of Mexico is going to be zero, a technical bankruptcy."

What's cooking?

Nutritional-value comparison of one 85-gram package of ramen noodles versus one 85-gram portion of rice and beans*

	Ramen noodles	Rice and beans (with butter)
Calories	385.0	145.0
Total fat (grams)	14.5	4.4
Cholesterol (mg)	0.0	11.0
Sodium (mg)	986.0	277.0
Carbohydrates (grams)	56.0	21.8
Dietary fiber (grams)	2.0	3.8
Protein (grams)	8.0	4.7

*40 grams white long-grain rice, cooked, with salt, plus 40 grams boiled pinto beans, with salt, and 5 grams of butter.

Source: USDA National Nutrient Database

Los Angeles Times

Steeped in a New Tradition

Instant ramen noodles are supplanting beans and rice for many in Mexico. Defenders of the nation's cuisine and dietitians are alarmed.

By Marla Dickerson

Los Angeles Times, October 21, 2005

COAMILPA, Mexico — Only 3 years old, Leon Gustavo Davila Hinojosa is still learning to speak Spanish. But the precocious youngster already knows a bit of Japanese: "Maruchan."

That's a brand of instant ramen noodles that to him means lunch. Leon's grandmother stocks them in her tiny grocery store in this hamlet 40 miles southwest of the capital. The preschooler prefers his shrimp-flavor ramen with a dollop of liquid heat.

"With salsa!" he said exuberantly at the mention of his favorite noodle soup.

Through the centuries, Moorish spices, French pastries and Spanish citrus have left lasting impressions on Mexico's cuisine. Now Japanese fast-food noodles, first imported here in the 1980s, are filling pantries across the country.

Time-pressed school kids, construction workers and office drones have helped turn Mexicans into Latin America's largest per-capita consumers of instant ramen. Diners here slurped down 1 billion servings last year, up threefold since 1999, according to a Japanese noodle association.

Urban convenience stores do a brisk trade selling ramen "*preparada*," providing customers with hot water, plastic forks and packets of salsa to prepare their lunches on the spot.

People in the countryside have developed a taste for it too. As part of a food assistance program, the Mexican government distributes ramen to commissaries in some of the most remote pockets of the country, where it is supplanting rice and beans on many tables.

The product is so pervasive that a national newspaper recently dubbed Mexico "Maruchan Nation."

Purveyors say you don't have to strain your noodle to figure out why. Nearly 60% of Mexico's workforce earns less than \$13 a day. Instant ramen is a hot meal that fills stomachs, typically for less than 40 cents a serving. The product doesn't need refrigeration and it's so easy to make that some here call it "*sopa para flojos*," or "lazy people's soup."

Sold here mainly in insulated, disposable containers that look like Styrofoam coffee cups, instant ramen starts as a clot of precooked

dried noodles topped with seasoning and a few dehydrated vegetables. Boiling water turns the lump into tender strands of pasta in broth, ready to eat in three minutes.

That's a profane act for some Mexicans whose relationship with food is so sacred that their ancestors believed that humankind descended from corn.

Food here is history. It is religion. It is patrimony. Ask anyone who has savored such delights as *chiles en nogada*, poblano chilies stuffed with spiced pork and topped with creamy walnut sauce and pomegranate seeds to replicate the green, white and red colors of the Mexican flag.

It's also passion. In Laura Esquivel's popular novel "Like Water for Chocolate," the sensuous alchemy of Mexican cooking unleashes a family's ravenous desires.

Small wonder that defenders of the nation's cuisine, such as Gloria Lopez Morales, an official with Mexico's National Council for Culture and Arts, are appalled that Mexican palates have been seduced by this lissome ramen import.

Lopez is leading an effort to have UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, recognize Mexican food as a "patrimony of humanity" that should be nurtured and protected.

She worries that globalization is disconnecting Mexicans from their very life source, be it U.S. corn displacing ancient strains of *maiz* or fast food encroaching on the traditional *comida*, or leisurely afternoon meal.

"For Mexicans, food is basically culture. The act of eating here in Mexico is an act of enormous significance," she said. "We have entered a period of threat, of crisis."

Nutritionists likewise are alarmed that instant ramen, a dish loaded with fat, carbohydrates and sodium, has become a cornerstone of the food pyramid.

With the majority of the population now urbanized and on the go, Mexicans are embracing the convenience foods of their neighbors in the U.S. while abandoning some healthful traditions. The result is soaring levels of obesity, diabetes and heart disease, particularly among the poor.

"It's cheap energy," said Dr. Gustavo Acosta Altamirano, a nutrition expert at Juarez Hospital in Mexico City, of the nation's growing addiction to soft drinks, sugary snacks and starchy foods like ramen noodles. "But it's making us fat."

Instant ramen has its roots in aching hunger. It was invented by Momofuku Ando, a serial entrepreneur whose businesses crumbled with Japan's defeat in World War II.

Memories of shivering Japanese lined up for a bowl of noodles in bombed-out Osaka haunted Ando for years, he wrote in his autobiography, "My Resume: The Story of the Invention of Instant Ramen."

Ando, now 95, founded Nissin Food Products Co. in that city, guided by the mantra: "Peace follows from a full stomach." He figured out that frying fresh ramen was the key to preserving the noodle and making it porous, so that it could be reconstituted with boiling water into fast, cheap nourishment.

Instant ramen hit the Japanese market in 1958 and became an immediate sensation. The product is such an icon in Japan that thousands visit Nissin's ramen museum each year to see a replica of the tiny backyard workshop where Ando cooked up his invention.

The most economical version is sold in plastic-wrapped, dehydrated squares that consumers typically heat in saucepans on the stove. The average U.S. price is 14 cents per package, thanks to highly automated manufacturing in plants on American soil.

Most of Mexico's ramen is imported and served in insulated, disposable cups, which drives the price up to about 35 cents. Most of that product is manufactured in Southern California, where Japanese food giants Nissin and Tokyo-based Toyo Suisan Kaisha Ltd., maker of the Maruchan brand, have their U.S. headquarters.

Asian nations remain the world's top consumers. The Chinese alone ate nearly 30.5 billion servings last year. Outside that region, only the United States, Russia and Brazil gobbled more instant ramen than Mexico. But in Latin America, Mexico is the noodle champ. Its consumers ate an average of 9.4 servings in 2004 compared with slightly more than six bowls for those in runner-up Brazil, according to the Japan-based International Ramen Manufacturers Assn.

The most popular brand here is Maruchan, whose logo of a cheerful, round-faced boy peeps out from stores shelves nationwide.

Maruchan executives declined to be interviewed. "They like to keep a low profile," said Mark Horikawa, a spokesman for the company's U.S. headquarters in Irvine.

But with a Mexican market share estimated at about 85%, the brand is impossible to ignore. Like Band-Aid bandages and Kleenex tissues in the United States, Maruchan has become the generic term for ramen noodles in Mexico.

That's clearly an irritation to Nissin, which is running a distant second here. "We call them copycats," Takayuki Naruto, president of Nissin Foods (USA) Co., said in an interview at the company's U.S. headquarters in Gardena.

But the firm that invented instant ramen grudgingly acknowledges that it has learned from its imitator.

Naruto said that Maruchan won cost-conscious customers by "lowering the grade" of ramen, allowing it to undercut Nissin's price. He said Maruchan also handled Mexico's mid-1990s peso crisis more deftly than its competitors. While other brands pulled out or hiked their prices significantly to compensate for the devalued currency, Naruto said Maruchan hung tough, increasing its share of the market.

Nissin ultimately cut back on the vegetables and other ingredients in its soups and lowered its prices. "People still ask us where the egg went," said Masa Takada, Nissin's marketing manager.

Naruto said he considered the Mexican market "critically important" and that the company had only begun to fight. The ramen maker has an extensive product research and development unit where food scientists experiment with new flavors catering to regional preferences.

For Latinos, Nissin has created goat-meat flavored ramen, a zesty chicken flavor derived from Mexican *tlalpeno* soup, and *picante* shrimp, beef and chicken varieties.

Takato "Tim" Shimizu, a serious man in light blue coveralls, is Nissin's top taster in Gardena. Shimizu said he tried to tune his Japanese palate to spicy cadences of Latin America. For confirmation, he routinely pulls Mexican-born workers off the packing line to try out his latest recipe.

But no matter how hard Shimizu works to fine-tune the seasoning, he said his tasters insisted on cranking it up a notch.

"I am surprised at the amount of lime and hot sauce they add," he said.

Tastes are changing in the Mexican countryside as well.

In a giant warehouse of Diconsa, a government agency that distributes food to the rural poor, cases of Maruchan are stacked on pallets, along with staples such as powdered milk, flour and cooking oil. The agency began stocking the noodles about five years ago after managers of government-subsidized country stores reported that their customers were clamoring for them. Diconsa purchased about 5.5 million pounds of Maruchan last year, nearly triple what it bought in 2000.

Miguel Angel Ansareo Mogollon, manager of the central warehouse located outside Mexico City, said rural women busy with children and chores were influenced by television advertising.

A cup of instant ramen costs 4 pesos, or about 37 cents in Diconsa-affiliated shops. A serving of beans costs pennies in comparison. Still, the average Mexican's consumption of *frijoles* has dropped by more than half since 1995, according to an agriculture trade group. Per capita consumption of tortillas has declined precipitously as well.

"Traditions are changing fast, even up in the mountains and in the countryside," Ansareo said. "You can spend days cooking beans. Maruchan is ready in three minutes. All the mother has to do is boil the water and throw in the chilies."

But back in Coamilpa, Leon's grandmother, shopkeeper Nohemi Moreno Vasquez, boasted that she has lived 70 years without tasting instant ramen and doesn't plan to start now.

Moreno is proud of Mexican cuisine and its traditions of fresh ingredients, slow-cooked sauces and hand-worked doughs.

She sees no benefit in feeding her grandson instant noodles, even if his parents are exhausted and have little time to cook after working at the local auto plant.

"Our food is our heritage. There are riches on our tables," Moreno said.

"If we don't partake out of laziness, shame on us."

Mexico's Ties to Cuba Unravel

The Fox administration has openly shown its irritation with Castro by denouncing his human rights record and recalling its ambassador.

By Marla Dickerson

L. A. Times, May 4, 2004

MEXICO CITY — Mexico's decision over the weekend to downgrade diplomatic ties with Cuba marks the unraveling of a once-tight relationship between the Caribbean neighbors as the Mexican government has allied itself more closely with the United States.

Mexico on Sunday recalled its ambassador to Cuba in response to a fiery weekend speech by Cuban President Fidel Castro, who blasted this country for supporting a United Nations measure last month condemning his government's record on human rights.

Mexican officials, already irritated by recent harsh comments out of Havana regarding a political scandal here, also expelled the Cuban ambassador to Mexico, accusing the Castro government of meddling in its internal affairs. Mexico stopped short of severing all diplomatic relations with Cuba. Still, the moves underscore a deepening rift that has emerged between the two countries since Mexican President Vicente Fox was elected in 2000.

The nation traditionally has avoided any public castigation of Cuba's treatment of pro-democracy dissidents. But under Fox, Mexico for the first time in 2002 stepped up to support a perennial U.S.-backed vote by the Human Rights Commission criticizing Cuba's track record.

The Fox administration has continued to throw its support behind the American position. That has enraged Castro, who in his annual May Day speech Saturday maintained that Mexico's prestige in Latin America and beyond has "turned to ashes" because, he said, Mexico had fallen in lock step with U.S. foreign policy.

The diplomatic breach also follows recent sharp remarks that Cuban officials made about the scandal involving Mexican businessman Carlos Ahumada, who was caught on videotape passing wads of cash to Mexico

City officials. Ahumada fled to Cuba, which returned him last week — but not before a top Cuban official insinuated that the Fox government created the video scandal to discredit left-leaning Mexico City Mayor Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador.

Cuban Foreign Minister Felipe Perez Roque alleged that Ahumada had told Cuban officials the videos were "deliberately calculated to achieve political objectives," implying that the Fox administration had a role in their release. Before the scandal, Lopez Obrador had been widely viewed as the front-runner in the 2006 presidential race.

The Fox government denied any involvement and immediately took issue with Perez Roque's allegations. Ahumada's lawyer told the Reforma newspaper Monday his client was pressured by Cuban authorities into making the remarks while being held for extradition.

Despite Cuban criticism that the Fox administration is too closely aligned with the Bush administration, the U.S.-Mexican relationship has been marked by its own tensions in recent years, among them Mexico's opposition to the American-led war in Iraq. But Daniel P. Erikson, an expert on Caribbean affairs for the Inter-American Dialogue in Washington, said Latin American nations are finding it increasingly tricky to foster friendly diplomatic ties with both Cuba and the United States given the deep hostility between them.

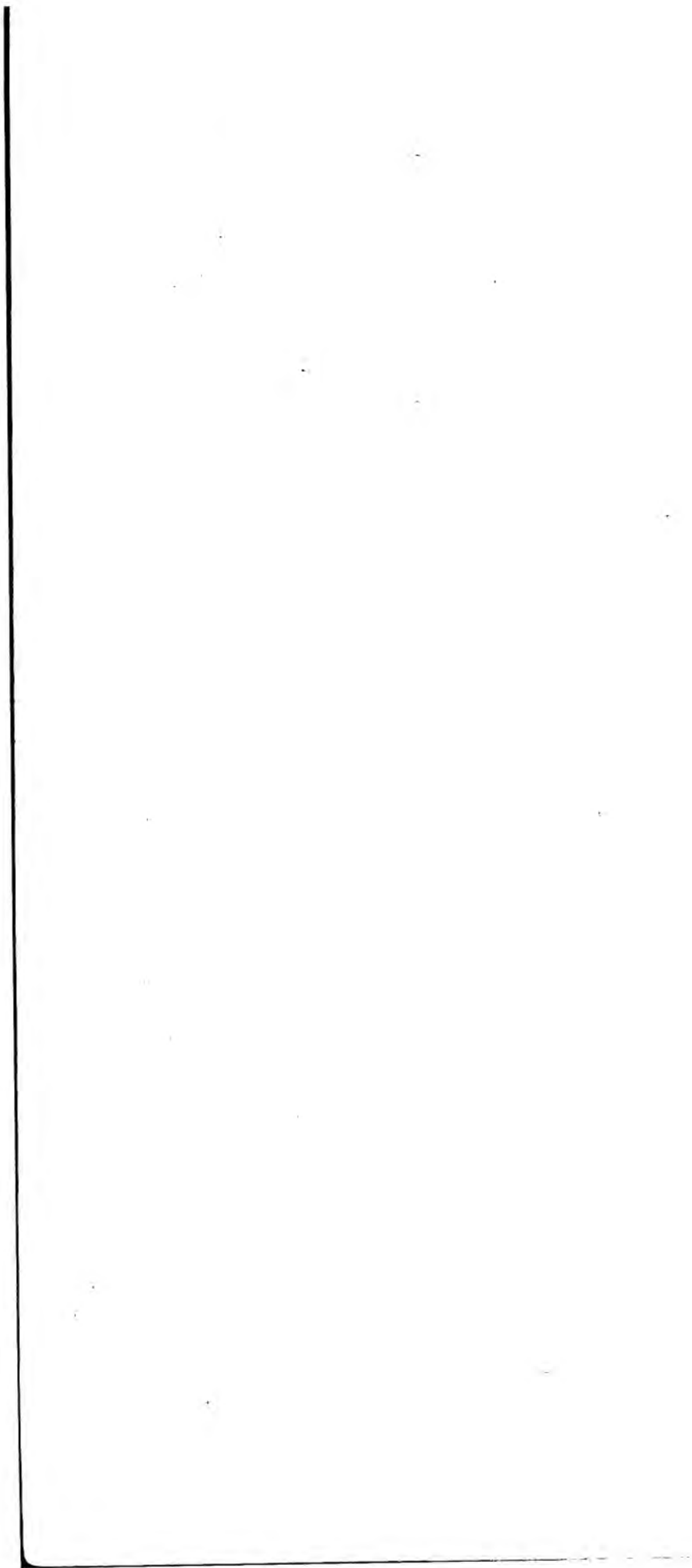
"I think that in general, every country in Latin America knows that it's difficult to simultaneously improve relations with the U.S. and Cuba. You have to keep one or the other at bay," Erikson said. "For Castro particularly, the U.N. vote is a litmus test on whether you're for him or against him."

Peru on Sunday also pulled its ambassador from Cuba after withering comments by Castro about Peruvian President Alejandro Toledo. Like Mexico, the Andean nation supported the U.S.-backed measure critical of Cuba, which was narrowly approved by the U.N. panel in Geneva last month.

But many Mexicans are sensitive to the impression that their country has abandoned its longtime friend, albeit a communist one, to curry favor with the United States.

During the late 1950s, a number of exiled Cuban guerrillas — including Castro and Ernesto "Che" Guevara — resided in Mexico, where they plotted the overthrow of the U.S.-backed government in their homeland. After the revolution, when the U.S. was pressuring Latin American countries to join in isolating the Castro regime, Mexico stayed neutral.

By Monday, the gates outside the Cuban Embassy in Mexico City were covered with signs supporting the Cuban government and reproaching the Fox and Bush administrations: "Enough Already of Yankee Aggressions, Long Live the Cuban Revolution," "Mexico and Cuba Are Brothers," "Fox, Understand That Fidel Isn't For Sale."



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Ghost of Rev. Marcial Maciel vs Ratzinger (now Pope Benedict XVI) at Guanajuato Mass 2012

TRACY WILKINSON AND MICHAEL ROBINSON CHAVEZ
By TRACY WILKINSON AND MICHAEL ROBINSON
CHAVEZ

Los Angeles Times, May 25, 2012

<http://www.theolympian.com/2012/03/24/2043739/in-mexico-tens-of-thousands-gather.html>

Singing, strumming guitars and trying to shield themselves from a searing sun, tens of thousands of Mexican Catholics came together Saturday nearly 24 hours ahead of an open-air Mass with Pope Benedict XVI.

They walked miles and took up position in Bicentennial Park, a short distance from a hilltop monument that honors the 1920s Cristero War by Catholic counter-revolutionaries.

But as religious fervor was on display here in Silao, in central Mexico's Guanajuato state, a sexual-abuse scandal involving a notorious Mexican priest threatened to cast a pall on the pope's first visit to the Spanish-speaking Americas.

At a news conference in nearby Leon to launch a scathing book, sexual-abuse victims and advocates angrily accused the Vatican of protecting the priest, the late Rev. Marcial Maciel, for decades. And they said they were dismayed that there were no plans for Benedict to meet victims.

Benedict has sat down with abuse victims in almost every country he has visited. But his spokesman said Mexican bishops didn't request such an encounter here - an omission that victims' advocates said was unconscionable.

The pope arrived in Leon, Mexico, on Friday and will continue on to Cuba on Monday, the first time a pontiff has traveled to the communist island since Pope John Paul II's historic trip in 1998.

Later Saturday, Benedict met with President Felipe Calderon, whose political party faces likely defeat in upcoming presidential elections and could use the boost that a pope's visit provides.

Benedict also reached out to those he hopes are a future generation of Catholics, telling children in the picturesque historic center of Guanajuato that they must pray, love God and be good Christians.

On Sunday, Benedict was to preside over an open-air Mass in the vast, treeless park where people were already gathering Saturday. Organizers say the event could draw more than 300,000 people; also in the audience will be Mexico's four candidates for the July 1 presidential election and the world's richest man, Mexican tycoon Carlos Slim.

"Emotions are very strong," said Felipe Martinez, 36, a telephone company employee with a rhinestone crucifix on his belt buckle. "This pope is more reserved and cerebral than John Paul, but maybe that's what we need now, to take on the violence and decay in family values."

This is the most conservatively Catholic part of Mexico. Although church membership has declined nationwide - from percentages in the high 90s two decades ago to the mid-80s now - Guanajuato state remains overwhelmingly Catholic. Historically, the area was also the heart of the Cristero revolt against revolution-era anti-

clerical laws in the early part of the 20th century.

Meanwhile, the sexual-abuse group said the new book establishes "irrefutably" that Vatican officials - including the man who would become pope - knew of Maciel's abuses.

Maciel was the Mexican-born founder of the Legion of Christ, a very conservative and influential order that dates to the 1940s. He wielded enormous power and was considered a favorite of John Paul. After Maciel's death in 2008, the church was forced to acknowledge that the priest had fathered at least three children with two women and for years had sexually assaulted seminarians and other youths.

Although the book, "La Voluntad de No Saber" ("The Will to Not Know"), doesn't contain new allegations, it does purport to document efforts to conceal the truth about Maciel in what the authors called a "complicity of silence" that went on for years.

"The book shows that the Vatican not only knew about (Maciel), but it tolerated and protected" his abuses, said Bernardo Barranco, a church expert who wrote the book's prologue. "The Vatican lied about Maciel and about sexual abuse."

Co-authors include Jose Barba, a former Legionary who said he was abused by Maciel, and Alberto Athie, a former priest who renounced the cloth in 2000 because of disgust over pedophilia in the church.

The documents in the book include Vatican correspondence and internal reports and are part of a cache of more than 200 pieces of evidence smuggled from Holy See files. Among those who should have known, the authors argue, was then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, for 24 years head of the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and today the pope.

Maciel was also protected by some of Mexico's most wealthy entrepreneurs and media tycoons, with whom he had profitable friendships, along with the conservative local church hierarchy. The Legion of Christ established a chain of elite private schools attended by the children of Mexico's rich and powerful, including Slim.

The authors said it was inexplicable, given the level of Maciel's abuses, that the pope would not meet with victims.

"They have been asking to be heard for 60 years," Athie said.

Later Saturday, the head of the Mexican bishops' conference, the Rev. Carlos Aguiar, who earlier angered victims groups by saying he didn't know who they were, left open the possibility that the pope might yet meet with their representatives.

(Wilkinson reported from Leon and Robinson from Silao, Mexico.)

Read more here: <http://www.theolympian.com/2012/03/24/v-print/2043739/in-mexico-tens-of-thousands-gather.html#storylink=cpy>

Golpe al Estado Laico

345

A puerta cerrada, senadores de PRI y PAN imponen la cuestionada reforma religiosa

Al artículo 24 se agregó el concepto de libertad de conciencia y de convicciones éticas

No fue una demanda social: Moreno

Peña Nieto pactó con el alto clero el cambio a la Carta Magna, acusa Pablo Gómez

No se permitió a grupos opositores entrar al recinto



Protesta afuera del Senado durante la discusión y aprobación de la reforma al artículo 24 constitucionalFoto
Francisco Olvera
ANDREA BECERRIL Y VÍCTOR BALLINAS

Periódico La Jornada

Jueves 29 de marzo de 2012, p. 2

En un recinto cerrado, con las galerías vacías para que no se colara ninguna protesta, la mayoría PRI-PAN en el Senado pasó trabajos, pero logró finalmente la votación calificada y aprobó ayer las reformas al artículo 24 constitucional.

El cambio consiste en agregar al concepto de libertad de religión, ya consignado en ese ordenamiento de la Carta Magna, el de libertad de conciencia y de convicciones éticas.

En tribuna, senadores de PRD, PT y Movimiento Ciudadano, así como la priísta María de los Ángeles Moreno, explicaron que eso significa un avance hacia la desarticulación del Estado laico y es un intento de la jerarquía católica por lograr nuevos privilegios y fueros.

Senadores del PAN reconocieron ante el pleno que a partir de esta reforma deberán debatirse cambios que permitan la enseñanza religiosa en escuelas públicas y que las iglesias pueda tener medios de comunicación masiva.

El perredista Pablo Gómez acusó al candidato presidencial del PRI, Enrique Peña Nieto, de haber pactado esa reforma con el alto clero, y Moreno dijo que ese cambio no es producto de una demanda social, sino más bien de un voluntarismo de religiosos trasnochados o de cúpulas de poder que desean complacer a algunas fuerzas con las que piensan que es útil pactar, sin considerar las graves consecuencias.

Previamente y por mayoría, el Senado aprobó la reforma al artículo 40 constitucional, para refrendar el carácter laico del Estado mexicano, minuta que estuvo congelada durante dos años,

ya que el PAN se oponía a su aprobación. Es una especie de cambalache, ahora por el artículo 24, acusó Pablo Gómez, quien junto con su compañero Leonel Godoy y la priísta Moreno protestaron por la determinación de no permitir que los representantes de grupos como Foro Cívico México Laico accedieran a la galería de invitados del salón de sesiones.

Tanto el pleno como las dos galerías fueron cerradas y sólo se permitió el acceso a los fotógrafos y camarógrafos acreditados. Cuatro opositores a la reforma lograron colarse al sitio de prensa, pero fueron desalojados al primer grito de ¡no a la reforma!

Afuera del recinto de Reforma e Insurgentes, decenas de manifestantes con demandas similares se mantuvieron las cuatro horas que duró la discusión.

Participaron 12 oradores, ocho de ellos en contra. Los perredistas Gómez, Godoy, Rubén Velázquez y Máximo García Zalvidea, Eugenio Govea y Dante Delgado, de Movimiento Ciudadano, y la priísta Moreno argumentaron los riesgos de aprobar un texto mal redactado, que no define ni detalla los alcances y las consecuencias de las nuevas libertades señaladas en el capítulo derechos humanos de la ley suprema del país.

Pablo Gómez expresó ante el pleno que se trata de una modificación innecesaria, porque la libertad de religión se estableció en la Constitución desde 1857. Advirtió que nadie había explicado para qué se quería ese cambio, que podría derivar en la objeción de conciencia.

Por su parte, Godoy advirtió que se pretende abrir una rendija en la Constitución para introducir otros temas, entre ellos el de la educación confesional. Aludió a la redacción actual del artículo 24, que señala: Todo hombre es libre de profesar la creencia religiosa que más le agrade y para practicar las ceremonias,

devociones o actos del culto respectivo, siempre que no constituyan un delito o falta penados por la ley.

La nueva redacción, en cambio, establece: Toda persona tiene derecho a la libertad de convicciones éticas, de conciencia y de religión, y a tener o adoptar, en su caso, la de su agrado. Esta libertad incluye el derecho a participar, individual o colectivamente, tanto en público como en privado, en las ceremonias, devociones o actos de culto respectivo, siempre que no constituyan un delito o falta penados por la ley.

Godoy recalcó que ni mejora la redacción del artículo 24 ni se amplían las libertades de los mexicanos. Se establece la libertad de convicciones éticas y de conciencia, copiando la redacción de tratados internacionales sin precisar sus alcances, lo que las deja a la libre interpretación del ciudadano y ello constituye un riesgo para el sistema jurídico mexicano.

Al presentar el dictamen, el presidente de la Comisión de Puntos Constitucionales, el prista Melquiades Morales, sostuvo que la modificación no es una ocurrencia ni tiene el propósito de conculcar principios que sustentan el Estado laico. Recalcó que de la exposición de motivos de la minuta se eliminó un párrafo en el que los diputados habían establecido que a la luz de ese cambio al artículo 24, se requerirá también la revisión de los artículos tercero, quinto, 27 y 130 de la Carta Magna.

Sin embargo, poco después, en tribuna, la senadora panista Judith Díaz explicó que la libertad de conciencia se relaciona con la libertad de formación y de educación religiosa. Tenemos que empezar a definir a quién corresponde el derecho a la educación, si a los padres, a la Iglesia o a quién.

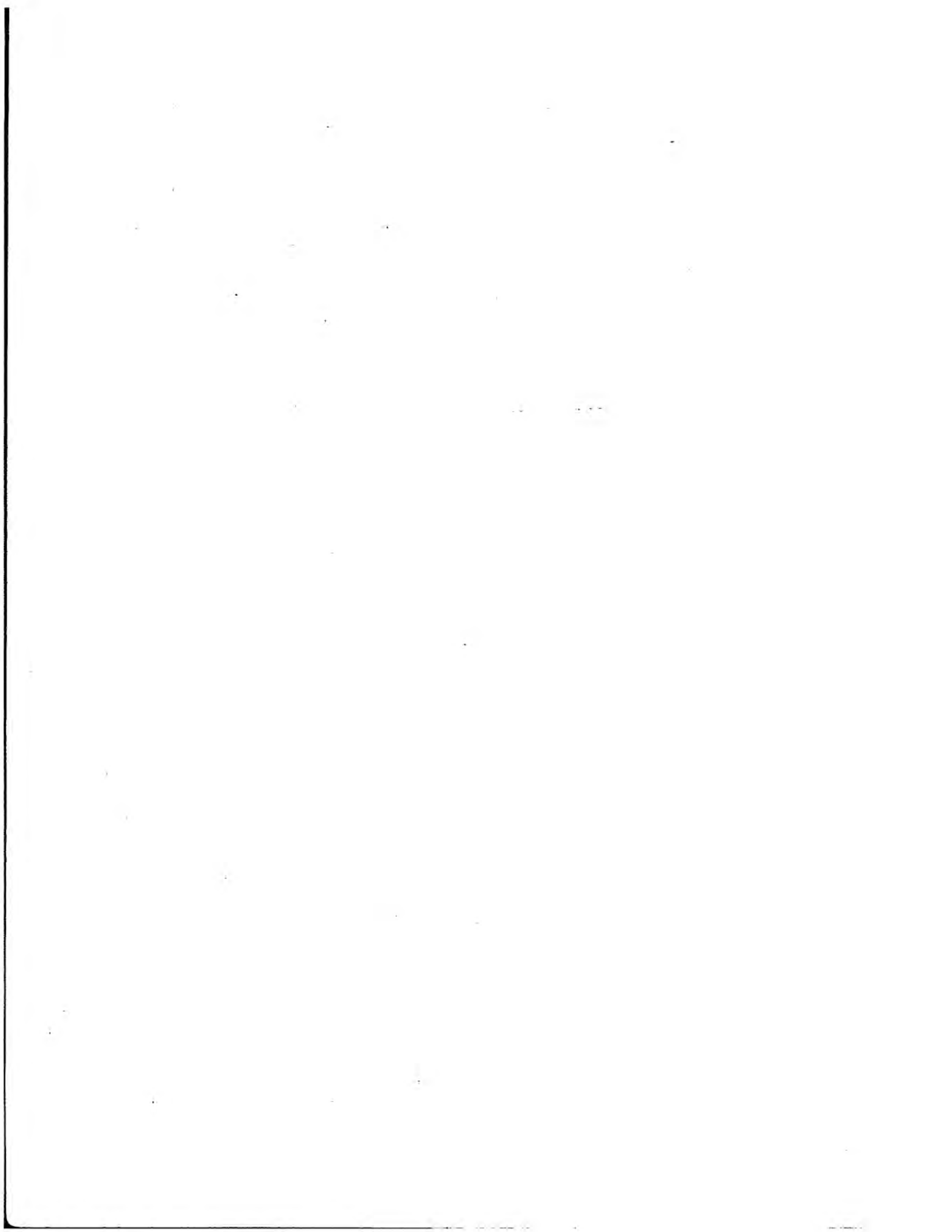
También –agregó– se tiene que definir el acceso de las iglesias, como asociaciones religiosas, a los medios de comunicación masiva.

Por su parte, su correligionario Santiago Creel sostuvo que es hora de dejar atrás las simulaciones, como las que él vivió –dijo– cuando estudiaba en un colegio católico y debían esconder los libros de religión cuando se presentaba un inspector de la Secretaría de Educación Pública.

Una mayoría ciega y sorda, como la definió Eugenio Govea, de Movimiento Ciudadano, aprobó la reforma.

Por lo que se refiere al artículo 40, el texto ayer aprobado queda de esta manera. Es voluntad del pueblo mexicano constituirse en una República representativa, democrática, laica y federal.

Ambas minutas pasaron a las legislaturas de los estados para continuar con el proceso del Constituyente Permanente.



Mexico City's gay marriage law still igniting debate

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A Catholic cardinal accuses the nation's Supreme Court, which this month reaffirmed the law, of being on the take.

By Tracy Wilkinson, Los Angeles Times
www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-mexico-gays-20100818,0,4623266.story

August 18, 2010

Reporting from Mexico City

Reporting from Mexico City — Gays in Mexico's capital today can marry and adopt children, broad rights that go beyond anything offered in much of the world and enshrined now by a remarkable series of rulings by the nation's Supreme Court.

But reaching this point has left casualties along the way.

For President Felipe Calderon and his conservative National Action Party, the decision to challenge Mexico City's same-sex marriage law backfired. Not only did the 11-member court reaffirm the law, but the wording of its rulings could make it more difficult for states to mount challenges.

And the debate ignited an ugly spat with the Roman Catholic Church, with one of the country's top prelates accusing the court of being on the take.

As gay marriage languishes in California, the state's law in limbo, the Mexican Supreme Court voted overwhelmingly this month to uphold the capital's same-sex marriage statute as constitutional; to require such unions to be recognized across the nation; and to permit gay and lesbian couples to adopt children.

The court hewed to Mexico's strict separation of church and state and said the constitution did not indicate that marriage had to be defined as the union of a man and woman. To deny gay couples the right to adopt, the court said, would amount to discrimination.

"There is nothing that indicates that homosexual couples are less apt parents than heterosexual ones," Justice Arturo Zaldivar said in televised proceedings this week.

The adoption provision was upheld 9 to 2 in a vote Monday, as proponents erupted in cheers of "Marriage and adoption! For all the nation!"

The law was first approved by Mexico City's left-dominated government in December — the most far-reaching such legislation in Latin America at the time — and the first marriages took place in March. Mexico City is a federal district like Washington, D.C., and acts as a state.

Immediately Calderon instructed his attorney general to take the law to court, arguing that it posed a threat to traditional families and the procreation of children. Yet even justices appointed by Calderon's PAN party voted to overrule the president.

"This has been an important demonstration of the judicial and political independence of the court," said John Mill Ackerman, a legal expert at the National Autonomous University of Mexico and editor of the Mexican Law Review.

The justices' supplemental ruling that all of Mexico's 31 states must recognize same-sex marriages performed in Mexico City may serve as a preemptive strike to efforts by local authorities to legislate against such unions, Ackerman said. When Mexico City legalized abortion in 2007, a backlash followed in which 17 states introduced measures aimed at "protecting" fetuses and making abortion impossible.

In Mexico, the government recognizes civil weddings, while religious ceremonies are optional.

The fiercest resistance to same-sex marriage has come from the influential Catholic Church.

Cardinal Juan Sandoval Iniguez, archbishop of Guadalajara and one of the most senior prelates in the nation, in recent days made especially harsh comments widely seen here as offensive. His statement set off a firestorm in a country where, by law, the church is not supposed to get involved in politics.

Calling same-sex unions an "aberration," he said, "Would you want to be adopted by a pair of faggots or lesbians?"

He went on to accuse Mexico City Mayor Marcelo Ebrard, of the leftist Democratic Revolution Party, of bribing the justices to force them to go along with gay marriage.

"I don't think the judges would arrive at such absurd conclusions, against the sentiment of the Mexican public, without there being very big motives," Sandoval said, "and the very big motive may be the

money that they are given."

The comments stunned many in Mexico. Ebrard demanded a retraction and threatened to sue. The court, which had included dissenters in the votes on same-sex issues, was unanimous in censuring the cardinal.

But Sandoval did not back down. He received the support of the archdiocese of Mexico City and, when asked whether he had proof of his accusations, added, "Check their bank accounts."

Such comments are virtually unheard of here, and some analysts suggested church authorities may feel emboldened by their closeness with the ruling PAN. Yet Sandoval's reaction was too much even for some members of the party, who said that ultimately the court's decision must be respected.

"There was a tone and content of intolerance [in Sandoval's comments] that are totally incongruous with what should be the attitude of the Catholic Church," television commentator Gabriel Guerra said. Besides, he added, "if Ebrard were really able to co-opt 11 members of the Supreme Court, he'd deserve a prize for efficiency."

It did not seem likely there would be a rush on adoptions by gay couples. Single men and women were already allowed to adopt, so gays in theory could have gotten around any proscriptions before now. And only about 320 same-sex couples have tied the knot in Mexico City since the law went into effect in March.

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Mexico City mayor sues Guadalajara bishop over gay marriage remarks

By Daniel Hernandez in Mexico City

<http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/laplaza/2010/08/mexico-city-supreme-court-gay-adoptions.html>

August 18, 2010

Mayor Marcelo Ebrard of Mexico City on Wednesday filed a civil suit claiming defamation against Cardinal Juan Sandoval Iniguez of Guadalajara, upping the ante in a high-profile political spat over gay marriage in Mexico that pits emboldened secular institutions against the country's influential Roman Catholic clergy (link in Spanish).

The suit comes after Ebrard demanded that Sandoval retract suggestions made over the weekend that Mexico's Supreme Court justices were bribed for their recent landmark rulings in favor of gay marriage and adoption by same-sex couples in the Mexican capital.

Sandoval made the allegations on Sunday during an event in Aguascalientes state. He also used a slur against gays while decrying the recent high court decisions that were called victories for the gay-rights community, as L.A. Times correspondent Tracy Wilkinson analyzes in this story.

Church authorities were not backing down. Sandoval said Monday he would not retract his comments, and the archdiocese in Guadalajara later said it had proof of the allegations against the Supreme Court justices (link in Spanish). Statements in support were issued from the archdiocese in Mexico City, while the Bishops' Conference of Mexico also said it supports Sandoval.

In the secular institutional corner, the Supreme Court censured Sandoval's statements unanimously, and Ebrard issued a stark warning to the highest-ranking prelate of Mexico's second-largest city: "We live in a secular state, and here, whether we like it or not, the law rules the land," Ebrard said, according to La Jornada (links in Spanish). "The cardinal must submit to the law of the land, like all other citizens of this country."

By wide majorities, the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of gay marriages in Mexico City, ruled that those marriages must be recognized in Mexico's 31 states, and upheld a portion of the Mexico City gay-marriage law that permits same-sex couples to adopt children.

Wilkinson reports:

The court hewed to Mexico's strict separation of church and state and said the constitution did not indicate that marriage had to be defined as the union of a man and woman. To deny gay couples the right to adopt, the court said, would amount to discrimination. "There is nothing that indicates that homosexual couples are less apt parents than heterosexual ones," Justice Arturo Zaldívar said in televised proceedings this week. The adoption provision was upheld 9 to 2 in a vote Monday, as proponents erupted in cheers of "Marriage and adoption! For all the nation!"

Mexico City's left-dominated legislative assembly voted to allow same-sex marriage in December. The law went into effect with much city-led fanfare in March and then faced a challenge in the Supreme Court from the conservative-led federal government. An estimated 320 same-sex couples have wed in Mexico City since the law was

enacted, but the city government has offered no figures on adoptions by gay couples, or whether any have been requested.

The federal agency that oversees adoption of children in Mexico has never specified that an adoptive parent must be married or live in an opposite-sex household, notes the daily Milenio (links in Spanish).

The new law is in fact turning attention to the enormous bureaucratic difficulties that characterize the adoption process in Mexico, reports La Jornada. One heterosexual couple told the paper their adoptive process was "very long, complicated, and traumatic." The couple described sitting in interviews as long as seven hours, and requirements that were either contradictory or not mentioned beforehand.

Another woman identified as Karina said that interviewers asked "intimate" questions about her sexual history in the presence of her husband. "The whole process is designed so that people will get discouraged and leave," Karina told the paper.

La Jornada also published a short piece describing requirements for adoption in Mexico. Here's a link to an automated translation in English:

DOZENS OF REQUIEMENTS AND YEARS OF DELAY FOR ADOPTIONS IN MEXICO

La Jornada

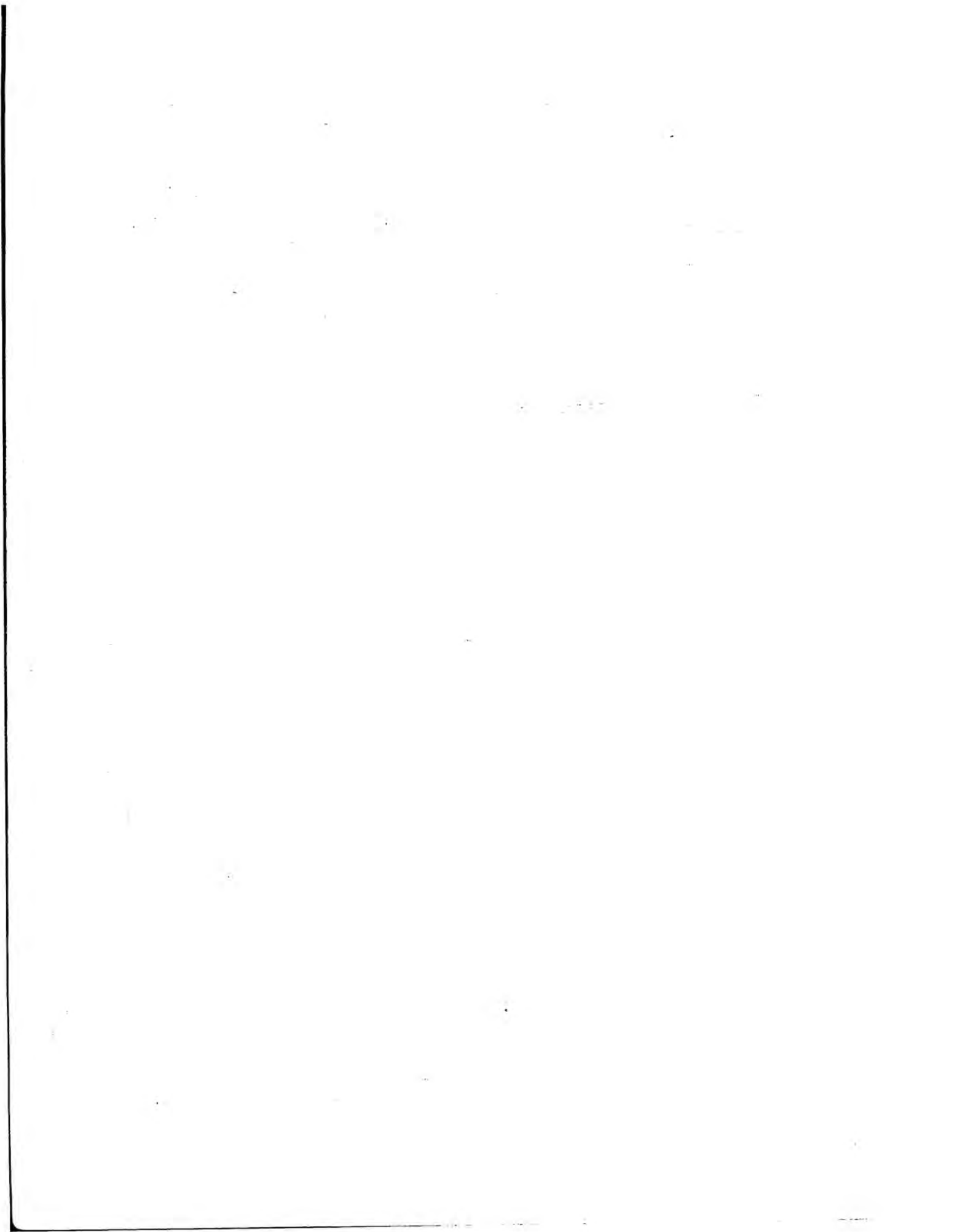
Wednesday August 18, 2010, p. 3

Among the dozens of requirements that the institution provides for the adoption of a child or a child is required to have "sufficient means to provide for the subsistence and education of the adoptee," be over 25 years, married or single-, in good health and be 17 years or more with respect to adoption.

If the person or the marriage applicant meets the requirements will have to go to a lecture where a representative of the institution to make the first interview. The questions revolve around the reasons why you want to take, and socioeconomic and psychological status of those concerned.

“Once” this stage, must submit, within two months, a number of documents in the nomination “dossier,” which includes a medical certificate of good health issued in an official institution, drug tests, recommendation letters, 10 photographs postcard size color and covering the front of the house and all its interior rooms where they would live in the minors as well as family group photos where they appear on or stakeholders. All these documents must be submitted in a folder with plastic spacers, and each separation is to expose each photocopy documents.

If the application is approved, those interested should go for six or eight months school adoptive parents, staff continued examination of psychology and social work and then, over time, begin to have contact and cohabitation with the child and and receive home visits from staff of DIF. The overall process, as explained by several applicants, often more than two years and then another two years of follow-up of children in their new home.



<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-abortion3nov03,1,4672972.story>

From the Los Angeles Times

Abortion is out of the shadows in Mexico City

Legalization of the procedure has meant a big change for pregnant women and girls. Antiabortion activists fear it will be legalized elsewhere.

[The votes of eight of the 11 jurists on the Supreme Court would be needed to overturn the law on the grounds that it violates the rights of the unborn. But abortion supporters count at least four jurists already in the abortion rights camp.]

by Héctor Tobar
Los Angeles Times Staff Writer

November 3, 2007

MEXICO CITY — On the five-hour bus ride from Guadalajara to this capital city, Rocio Medeles cried over her misfortune.

She was a 26-year-old single mother, pregnant by a man who was about to marry someone else. In the past, she would have been presented with a stark choice: Have the baby, or risk permanent damage to her health at one of Guadalajara's many underground abortion clinics.

But in April, legislators decriminalized abortion in Mexico City's Federal District, about 350 miles away. Since May, more than 3,400 women have received abortions at 14 of the capital's public hospitals.

"If it hadn't been for the option to go to the Federal District, I probably wouldn't have risked a clandestine abortion," said Medeles, who traveled to Mexico City for the procedure in September with her 6-year-old daughter. "I might have had the

baby, although I probably would have given it up for adoption."

Abortion remains illegal in the rest of Mexico, as it is in nearly all of Latin America. A group of activists, most of whom are Roman Catholics, routinely picket public hospitals here to condemn abortion.

But in Mexico City, legalization is bringing a profound, if quiet, change to the way thousands of women lead their lives. In a country where unwanted pregnancies often strip women of their independence and ambitions, the extraordinary number of legal abortions taking place every day is beginning to diminish the procedure's considerable cultural stigma.

"When people think of abortion, they no longer think of a hidden, shameful, illegal, clandestine and expensive procedure that is full of risks," said Marta Lamas, who founded Mexico's leading abortion rights group in 1992.

Ana, a 22-year-old Mexico City law student, decided to have a legal abortion after much soul-searching and worry.

"I thought about being pregnant with my studies half-done, with my parents yelling at me, and my boyfriend desperate about money," Ana, who asked that her last name not be published, wrote in an e-mail to *The Times*. "I thought, 'I don't want this for my life.' "

Ana's experience at a Mexico City public hospital included pre- and post-abortion counseling sessions. Like most women undergoing abortions at public hospitals here, she paid nothing for the procedure.

City officials say a range of women and girls have had abortions at the city's hospitals since May, including at least one 11-year-old. A quarter came from outside the city, officials said, some from as far as Baja California, more than 1,000 miles away.

Mexico's Supreme Court is expected to rule early next year on a petition to have Mexico City's law overturned on constitutional

grounds. Abortion opponents are skeptical about their chances.

"It will be difficult, because attitudes are changing," said Jorge Serrano Limon, leader of the National Pro-Life Committee, the leading antiabortion group here. "The pro-abortion current is growing tremendously. At the beginning, there was resistance in the medical community. Now there isn't any."

Serrano Limon fears that two Mexican states with leftist governments, Guerrero and Tabasco, might legalize abortion soon. Venezuela and Brazil could be next in the region to change abortion laws.

"This has been the bitterest battle because now we are seeing killing at a large scale," said Serrano Limon, who formed the National Pro-Life Committee when Mexico's Communist Party first proposed legalizing abortion in the 1970s.

Serrano Limon lashed out at Mexico City Mayor Marcelo Ebrard for signing the bill into law less than a day after it was approved by the city legislature, dominated by the mayor's Democratic Revolution Party. Ebrard's public health department has worked to make abortion available to any woman who wants one and whose pregnancy has not progressed beyond 12 weeks.

"The Aztecs sacrificed prisoners of war, but not even they killed as many people as Marcelo Ebrard is killing now," Serrano Limon said.

The votes of eight of the 11 jurists on the Supreme Court would be needed to overturn the law on the grounds that it violates the rights of the unborn. But Serrano Limon and others count at least four jurists already in the abortion rights camp.

Legalization supporters say that with each day that passes, it is less likely that the court will overturn the law and drive abortion back underground.

Many of the old secret "clinics" that offered the cheapest and most dangerous surgical abortions, usually for about \$400, have closed.

Private hospitals that once charged as much as \$2,000 for an illegal abortion have been forced to sharply reduce their prices, Lamas says.

"The aura of sin, fear and economic extortion is gone," Lamas said.

Still, many of the women who have received the first legal, "on-demand" abortions in Mexican history are entering unknown emotional territory. Some say they approach the decision with dread.

"I hadn't slept and I was afraid, even though I knew it was a safe place," said Ana, the law student, describing the day she arrived at a public hospital for her abortion.

"I believe in God. And at that moment I asked him that nothing happen to me. I wanted to keep on living," she continued. "If I had made that decision [to have an abortion], it was because I wanted to continue with my life goals, not to die."

In the end, there were no medical complications. Ana recently completed her midterm exams.

"A lot of people can judge me for what I did . . . but I made the decision to be responsible," Ana wrote. "If you decide to have a child it should be because you want to, and because you can offer him a decent life."

Nearly all of the abortions at the public hospitals have been performed without complications, said Dr. Manuel Mondragon, the city's top public health official. A quarter have been nonsurgical, with patients given abortion-inducing drugs.

"We know other countries are looking at us, and soon we will be publishing studies about our experience," Mondragon said.

Abortion rights activists say Mondragon's efforts to make abortions safe and widely available in Mexico City will be remembered as a landmark in Latin America's reproductive rights movement.

Mondragon said making abortion legal was a crucial public health issue because of the high rates of death and injury caused by illegal abortions: According to one estimate, more than 3,500 women died from botched abortions each year.

"It hasn't been an easy situation," said Mondragon, 73, who says that he has received death threats and that protesters have distributed pamphlets labeling him a killer. "I am a Catholic, my family is very Catholic, and I have my personal beliefs. But when you're in public administration, that's one of the challenges."

Abortion opponents launched a highly publicized campaign to persuade doctors and nurses at the clinics to be "conscientious objectors" and refuse to participate in abortions.

Serrano Limon, the antiabortion activist, said 22 doctors and about 60 nurses and social workers had declared themselves conscientious objectors. Mondragon said the activists' efforts had not hindered the city's abortion services.

Medeles, the single mother from Guadalajara, didn't encounter any antiabortion activists in Mexico City. She said she met only doctors and nurses whose treatment of her was surprisingly professional.

"I had never seen a public hospital like that in Guadalajara," she said. "All the people in Mexico City gave me a lot of support. The person who did my tests, the nurses, the social workers, the psychologist -- five or six people attended to me."

Back in Guadalajara, her choices had seemed limited. Medeles remembered a 16-year-old classmate who bled to death at home after having an illegal abortion. "My friends in the barrio were telling me to go ahead and have the baby, that abortion would be worse," she said.

But her friends at the university where she takes high school equivalency classes said abortion was a better choice. "They even gave me money so I could go to Mexico City," she said.

Medeles came to Mexico City after her sister found the phone number for Catholic Women for the Right to Choose.

The Catholic women's group got Medeles a hospital appointment in Mexico City. She made four visits to a city clinic over the course of seven days, meeting a few other women undergoing the same procedure.

One was a 14-year-old girl who also feared death. "I got to know her, and afterward we talked and everything went fine with her abortion," Medeles said.

Another was a very poor woman not much older than Medeles, but with five children. "Her face was battered and bruised," Medeles recalled. "She didn't want any more children."

On Medeles' final visit, she met with a staff psychologist. Among other things, the psychologist wanted to know whether she had had any dreams with images of death. Medeles answered that she had not.

"I'm very thankful to them," Medeles said. "They didn't charge me one peso. . . . If any friend asks me for advice, I'd tell them to go to Mexico City because it went well for me. And you don't run any risks."

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LA Times

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Fox Pushes for Overhaul of Justice System

Thwarted in other initiatives, Mexico's president promises 'profound reform.'

By RICHARD BOUDREAU
Times Staff Writer

MEXICO CITY — Stymied in his efforts to raise taxes and open energy markets to private capital, President Vicente Fox is sending Congress a proposed overhaul of Mexico's justice system, including opening trials to the public.

The initiative, to be introduced next week, is Fox's top priority for the legislative session that opened Monday. The bill would abandon a judicial system rooted in 19th century Napoleonic law, in which judges decide cases based on reading documentary evidence, and create an adversarial system centered on oral arguments by prosecutors and defense attorneys.

Fox's proposal includes many of the recommendations made last year by the United Nations high commissioner for human rights to strengthen the separation of powers and the rule of law in Mexico.

They include making the attorney general's office independent of the presidency and the police independent of the attorney general. Criminal defendants would be presumed innocent until proven guilty.

"This would be a profound, profound reform," Fox said in an interview last week. He added that Mexico was moving away from a tradition of "isolating ourselves from the world" and now had "a different position on everything related to human rights."

Fox's election in 2000 ended 71 years of authoritarian rule by the Institutional Revolutionary Party, or PRI. Just more than midway through a six-year term, he has little to show for his promises to create jobs, restructure

the economy and secure a freer flow of migrants from Mexico to the United States.

The Senate and the Chamber of Deputies, both dominated by the PRI and smaller opposition parties, have blocked his energy, labor and tax reforms on ideological grounds. His tax bill was defeated as the previous legislative session ended in December.

Enrique Jackson, a veteran PRI lawmaker who presides over the Senate, said last week that Fox's economic reforms stood little chance of passing. He applauded the shift of focus to judicial reform, calling the concept "something all parties can agree on." But he withheld judgment on the bill itself and chided Fox for having announced it without consulting congressional leaders.

In his interview, conducted by Times executives and reporters, Fox said he would "keep on hammering" for labor and energy reform. And he voiced hope that a months-long fiscal reform convention — launched in February by local, state and federal officials — would help break the deadlock in Congress over proposals to boost tax revenue.

"We will try three, four, five, however many times we need until we convince them that over and above partisan philosophy and group interest should be the interest of Mexico," he said.

Fox is ineligible for reelection in 2006. His setbacks have helped focus Mexican pundits and pollsters on the many politicians — including his wife, Marta Sahagun — who are jockeying as declared or undeclared candidates to succeed him.

Dismissing criticism that he is a lame duck, Fox attributed the election fever to his own successful strategy of launching his campaign three years in advance.

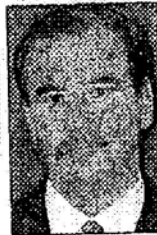
"Now everybody wants to start early," he said. "Many say that will affect politics and will affect the moving of the country. I think the contrary. For those who want to be president, they

should do their best job right now in order to be able to get there. So competition will favor good results for Mexico."

Fox says his wife "has never said that she will be a candidate," though he added that "the

polls say she will make an excellent candidate."

"My wife and I, we are going back to the farm" after his presidency, Fox said. "We are going to go horseback riding. We will enjoy life. We



President
Vicente Fox

will travel around. And we will keep our commitment with Mexico, no doubt."

While downplaying any political ambition on the part of his wife, Fox often goes out of his way to promote her activities. As the interview ended, he mentioned that Sahagun would speak Monday to a meeting of the Inter-American Press Assn. in Los Cabos, Mexico. "Are you coming to Los Cabos?" he asked.

Sahagun's speech extolled the flourishing of a freer press in the post-PRI era and urged the media to focus more on women's rights and the plight of the poor. Under questioning afterward, she said she had not decided whether to run for president.

Fox spoke of his disappointment that President Bush's war on terrorism had turned U.S. attention away from Mexico and an immigration accord that had appeared within reach before the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

The two leaders have begun meeting more frequently, and Fox has applauded Bush's recent proposal to give temporary guest-worker visas to millions of illegal immigrants.

But Fox said he had no illusions that anything would change before the U.S. elections in November, and he sounded uncertain of the American leader's commitment.

"President Bush has told me that he would be trying to submit that [guest-worker] initiative to Congress around the second quarter of this year," Fox said. "I don't know if he will do it or not."

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Mexico courts plan to try out oral trials

By Olga R. Rodriguez

ASSOCIATED PRESS

November 28, 2004

MONTERREY, Mexico – A new measure requiring oral trials in northern Nuevo Leon state was put in motion last week, a U.S.-style system that President Vicente Fox has proposed implementing nationwide.

< The law, passed in June, requires both the prosecution and defense to argue their cases publicly before a judge, and echoes one of the recommendations contained in President Vicente Fox's proposed sweeping overhaul of Mexico's justice system.

In March, Fox presented his proposal to Congress, which is still debating the measure.

Oral trials represent a dramatic departure from the Mexican justice system in which defense lawyers and prosecutors are required to submit written findings and arguments to judges, who then issue written verdicts.

In order to ease the transition to the new system in Nuevo Leon, lawmakers agreed to order oral trials initially only for crimes involving property damage, or in cases where the defendant is accused of battery or manslaughter. The first oral trial in Nuevo Leon is expected to be held in December.

State officials said oral trials would help streamline Nuevo Leon's judicial system, in which many judges handle hundreds of cases per year and the accused often languish in jail for months before being granted a trial.

"Our old system was like entering a long tunnel that could take years to get out of," said Luis Ortiz, Nuevo Leon's assistant attorney general for legal affairs. "With this new system, we hope to expedite our legal process."

For years, human rights groups have asked for broad justice reforms in a country where corruption, confessions extracted under torture, botched investigations and an excess of bureaucracy feed a deep mistrust of the system.

A USAID report this year said, "The lack of public confidence in Mexico's criminal justice system is a major constraint to the country's continued democratic transition and future economic growth."

The report said USAID provided expert advice as Mexican officials drafted the criminal code proposed by Fox. It said the overhaul, if passed, would mean "Mexico is poised to construct and real and effective rule of law."

»Next Story»

PRESUMED GUILTY THEN FINALLY FOUND INNOCENT AFTER DOCUMENTARY FILMS EXPOSES ROTTEN OLD LEGAL SYSTEM...

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A Free Man Still Looks Over His Shoulder in Mexico

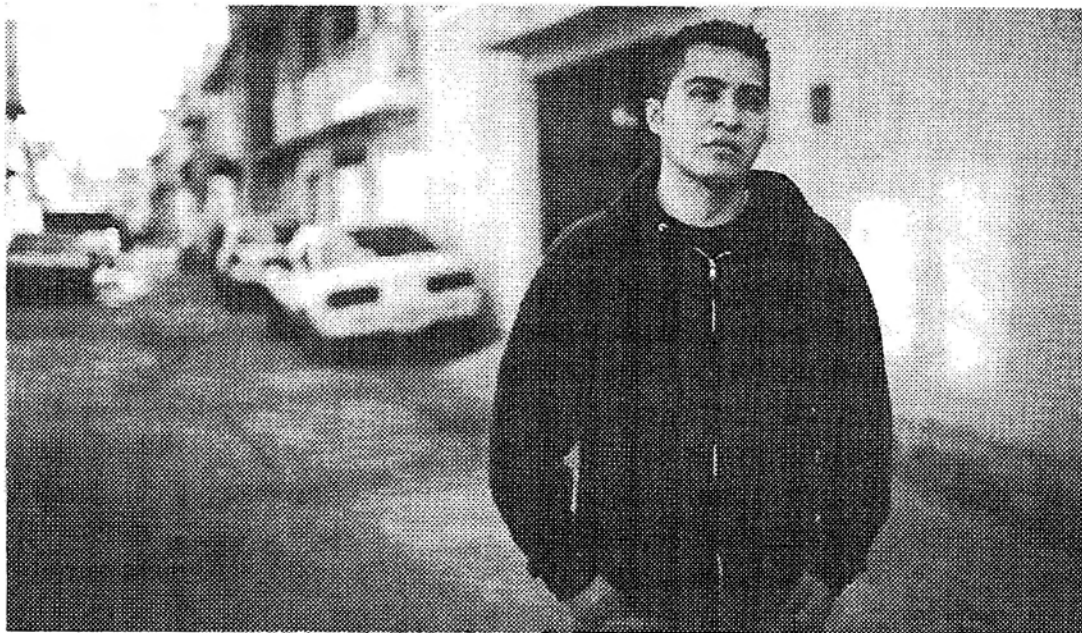
By ELISABETH MALKIN

MEXICO CITY

New York Times, March 4, 2011

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/05/world/americas/05mexico.html>

EVER since he was exonerated for a murder he did not commit and was released from prison, José Antonio Zúñiga has tried to disappear.



He sold his car, so nobody could track his address. He works at home fixing computers, but only for friends. He has no bank account.

"It sounds absurd, but I don't exist," he said.

Absurd, indeed, because in the past couple of weeks, hundreds of thousands of Mexicans have watched Mr. Zúñiga's ordeal unfold on movie screens, turning him into a reluctant symbol of the failings of Mexico's legal system.

As the star of a documentary, "Presumed Guilty," that has become a hit here, Mr. Zúñiga, 31, tells much of his own story as the camera tracks his time in prison and records the retrial that ultimately led to his release.

The film puts Mexico's secretive courts on full display for the first time. With the collaboration of the court's grimacing judge and its simpering prosecutor, its threatening police officers and its stilted

procedures, the criminal justice system seems to manufacture Mr. Zúñiga's guilt, even though the evidence points toward his innocence.

A free man for two and a half years, Mr. Zúñiga, or Toño to everybody who knows him, is fearful that somebody may take revenge for the film. But just as he seeks protection in the city's anonymity, he is obsessively recording his presence. He stands in front of security cameras and saves receipts, anything to prove where he was at any moment — in hopes of establishing an iron-clad alibi should he ever find himself in front of a judge again.

"I don't know if it's a delirium of persecution," he said. "But getting out of there, you don't trust the police, you don't feel calm, out on the street. There are some things you have lost."

ON Dec. 12, 2005, three policemen grabbed Mr. Zúñiga as he was crossing the street in Iztapalapa, a warren of working-class neighborhoods jumbled at the city's eastern edge. After two days in a holding cell, he was told that he was being charged with homicide and sent to prison.

"You get to jail and begin to realize that nobody is interested in what you have to say," Mr. Zúñiga said. "Nobody is interested whether you have proof that it wasn't you. Then you begin to realize that you're a pattern, a number, a statistic."

He was sentenced to 20 years in jail based on the testimony of a single 17-year-old eyewitness, a cousin of the victim, José Carlos Reyes Pacheco, a young man shot to death in broad daylight in a gang-ridden section of Iztapalapa.

The Mexico City judge in the case — there are no juries in Mexico — convicted Mr. Zúñiga despite tests showing that he had never fired a gun. The judge also disqualified the testimony from all the witnesses who said they saw Mr. Zúñiga throughout the day of the murder working his market stall, where he repaired computers and installed software.

The film about his case unrolls almost like fiction, with unexpected twists, a happy ending and a rap soundtrack composed by Mr. Zúñiga and his friends.

But while the documentary "lends itself to heroes and villains," the "real challenge is for people to understand that the villain is the system and the institutional design," said Layda Negrete, one-half of the husband-and-wife team of lawyers who made the film. "To understand that we shouldn't fire the judge, but change the whole structure in which the judges operate."

On Wednesday, a federal judge ordered the film to be pulled from movie screens temporarily in response to a complaint by the witness in the case, Víctor Daniel Reyes, who argued that he was filmed without his consent.

The documentary captures Mr. Reyes, who has trouble understanding much of the legal language and frequently looks at the arresting officers for reassurance, as he eventually recants during the retrial.

Mexico's deputy interior minister, Héctor Villarreal, said Thursday that the federal judge's ruling was confusing and that the film would likely continue in cinemas while officials asked the judge to clarify her decision.

Lucid and introspective, Mr. Zúñiga is a sympathetic protagonist. But the film has also resonated here because its depiction of the police and courts lays bare the weak links in Mexico's effort to build the rule of law and fight organized crime.

That is supposed to be changing. In 2008, as part of the government's battle against drug cartels, Mexico began a sweeping overhaul of its criminal justice structure. As the reforms are phased in over eight years, Mexico's federal and state courts are expected to replace their paper-choked procedures with oral trials. The police have been given more clearly defined investigative responsibilities.

The changes [of 2008 **PRESUME INNOCENCE UNTIL PROVEN GUILTY**] also add safeguards to guarantee a defendant's right to due process [INCLUDING FOR THE FIRST TIME THE RIGHT TO CROSS EXAMINE THE POLICE AND WITNESSES"].

A few states have moved ahead quickly with their reforms, but most others, and Mexico City, are still in the early stages. **[BUT TO RE-EDUCATE JUDGES, PROSECUTORS, AND POLICE AS WELL AS DEFENSE ATTORNEYS IN THE ART OF ORAL TRIALS WILL TAKE YEARS. MOST COURT OFFICIALS PREFER THE OLDSYSTEM, NOW “ILLEGAL.” IN WHICH THE PERSON ON TRIAL SELDOM, IF EVER, SEES THE JUDGE. IN SECRET, MOST JUDGES STILL ONLY CONSIDER WRITTEN BRIEFS SUBMITTED BY THE PROSECUTION AND DEFENSE—QUESTIONING OR CROSS EXAMINATION OF EVIDENCE PERMITTED IN THE OLD TRADITION OF ‘KANGEROO’ COURTS.]**

Legal experts hope that Mr. Zúñiga’s case will give the efforts new energy, though Roberto Hernández, Ms. Negrete’s husband and co-filmmaker, said the reforms needed to go further, particularly with police investigations.

“You can’t combat crime with corrupt police,” Mr. Hernández said. “You had better have a clean police, so at least you know that those few who get caught really did it and also that those few who get caught can’t buy their way out.”

Mr. Hernández and Ms. Negrete have proposed several measures aimed at making trials more transparent: videotaping police interrogations and trials; conducting lineups; and ending the practice of placing the defendant behind a barred window during the trial.

That is where the audience sees Mr. Zúñiga during his retrial.

With the impassioned help of his wife, Eva Gutiérrez, Mr. Zúñiga won a new trial after the filmmakers discovered that his lawyer in the first one had faked his license. But the catch was that Mr. Zúñiga would face the same judge, Héctor Palomares, who convicted him before.

Persuading Mexico City’s chief judge, they won permission to film the retrial, bringing the camera into the courtroom, which is nothing more than a cramped neon-lighted office attached to the prison. At the proceeding, everybody clusters around a small table, while Mr. Zúñiga watches from his tiny holding cell.

It is from behind those bars that Mr. Zúñiga cracks his own case. Mexican law gives defendants the right to question their accusers, and Mr. Zúñiga had prepared for that moment, working to recover the confidence that prison had sucked out of him.

“You stop talking inside,” he recalled. “You feel like you can’t express yourself because nobody will listen to you, so why bother talking?”

In the filmed retrial, Mr. Zúñiga looks squarely at his accuser, Mr. Reyes, repeating his questions until Mr. Reyes haltingly admits that he never saw Mr. Zúñiga kill the victim.

With the prosecution’s only evidence in tatters, release seemed a formality.

But it was not. The judge convicted and sentenced him again. Mr. Zúñiga recalled thinking at that moment: “This trial was worth the trouble. People will be able to see it and ask themselves if this is justice. So the fact that I was sentenced to 20 years again seemed to make sense. Maybe we will be able to change things.”

MR. ZÚÑIGA’S luck finally turned after the filmmakers persuaded one of the three appeals magistrates who reviewed the case to look at the trial video. Convinced of “reasonable doubt,” the magistrate persuaded his two colleagues to release Mr. Zúñiga.

Still, he cannot return to his old life, fearful that somebody angry about the documentary might find him. For now, he feels, the newfound attention protects him. There have been offers — as a motivational speaker, to record his rap music — but he has more mundane concerns: get a high school degree, support his family.

“I don’t have a fixed plan,” he said. “They say that when you design a plan, it doesn’t turn out how you expect.”

Reforzarán la seguridad en México [es difícil: el Sistema Policiaco casi no funciona; see Sistema Judicial y Sistema Penal siguen en pésimas condiciones

Gobierno dará a estados 2,350 millones de dólares para implementar riguroso plan para el Sistema Policial

[Seguridad tiene tres aspectos: 1) el Sistema policiaco tiene el mandato de capturar a los criminales aunque están condiciones malas para hacerlo;

2) el Sistema de Justicia está aún en peores condiciones: sólo tres de las 32 entidades ensayan los procesos de juicios orales (Nuevo León, Chihuahua y Oaxaca) y otras siete lo han implementado de manera parcial (Jalisco, Zacatecas, Estado de México, Morelos, Baja California, Distrito Federal y Durango) con miras a cerrar la transición en 2016, la fecha límite establecida por la ley para la evolución de los juicios orales;

3) el Sistema Penal es peor todavía y los prisioneros con dinero compran su salida con “el milagro de las puertas abiertas”.]

Gardenia Mendoza Aguilar / gardenia.mendoza@laopinion.com

La Opinión, 13 marzo 2012

<http://www.laopinion.com/article/20120313/NEWS04/303139891/-1/news>

MÉXICO, D.F.- El gobierno mexicano anunció que entregará a los 32 estados del país y el Distrito Federal alrededor de 2,350 millones de dólares para mejorar la justicia y la seguridad con medidas que van

desde la aplicación de exámenes de Control de Confianza de un policía municipal hasta la creación de penales, juzgados, unidades antisequestro, plataformas de información y la implementación de juicios orales.

El secretario de Gobernación, Alejandro Poiré, afirmó que se trata de la más alta inversión en este perfil en la historia del país y lanzó una advertencia a los ejecutivos locales: las entidades federativas y de los municipios deberán de dar resultados concretos, que se traduzcan en una mayor seguridad para toda la población.

"No hacerlo, significaría poner en riesgo los logros que hemos tenido y, peor aún, fallar a la exigencia de seguridad que día a día nos hacen los ciudadanos", señaló el funcionario en representación del gobierno federal que ha señalado a la decidida y corrupción en los estados como la causa de la crisis de seguridad que ha costado al país más de 50 mil muertos en el sexenio.

"Los recursos se tienen que ejercer de una forma transparente, racional, eficiente", advirtió.

Del total del dinero, unos 1,400 millones de dólares se asignarán directamente a los gobiernos que cumplan con las redes de operación y los lineamientos establecidos por el Consejo Nacional de Seguridad Pública; el resto, a través de la paraestatal Banrural.

La transferencia será a través de cuatro programas: el Fondo de

Aportaciones a la Seguridad Pública, el Programa de Apoyos en Materia de Seguridad Pública, el Subsidio para la Policía Acreditable y el Subsidio para la Seguridad Pública Municipal.

Los dos últimos, estarán condicionados a la certificación de confianza de los altos mandos y operativos de los cuerpos de seguridad de estados y municipios; una vez con los dineros en mano, éstos deberán ser aplicados para reclutar a elementos capacitados, mejorar el equipo y la infraestructura.

El pasado 8 de marzo se entregaron los primeros recursos a los estados de Oaxaca, Tabasco y Yucatán con aproximadamente 34.5 millones de dólares (mdd) 32.5 mdd y 32 mdd respectivamente. Noventa y nueve millones de dólares en total.

El sistema policiaco mexicano atraviesa por uno de los mayores retos de credibilidad en su historia después de quedar en evidencia los sistemas de complicidad con el crimen organizado en tráfico de drogas, secuestro, robo, extorsión.

La Procuraduría General de la República (PGR) dio a conocer que uno de cada tres elementos que presentaron exámenes de control de confianza del 1 enero de 2001 al 5 de enero de 2012 reprobó las evaluaciones, pero en la provincia la situación es aún más grave: según Poiré ni siquiera el 30% de ellas se han sometido a prueba aún cuando actualmente existen 22 centros certificados.

El analista en temas de seguridad Pedro Isnardo de la Cruz, de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México el reto va más allá de limpiar las policías: "la gran pregunta es cómo van a lograr que los nuevos policías que se contraten no sean corrompidos por el mismo sistema", señala.

"Lo que hace falta es un gran sistema maestro de corresponsabilidad entre el gobierno federal y estatal para dar seguimiento al patrimonio de los mandos medios y altos", precisa.

Del otro lado de la moneda, el Sistema de Justicia Penal está aún en peores condiciones: sólo tres de las 32 entidades ensayan los procesos de juicios orales (Nuevo León, Chihuahua y Oaxaca) y otras [ocho lo han implementado de manera parcial (Jalisco, Zacatecas, Estado de México, Morelos, Baja California, Distrito Federal, [Chiapas] y Durango) con miras a cerrar la transición en 2016, la fecha límite establecida por la ley para la evolución de los juicios orales./

Mexican Prosecutors Train in U.S. for Changes in Their Legal System
Erich Schlegel for The New York Times

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Mexican prosecutors preparing for an exercise this month in their training by American prosecutors.

By RANDAL C. ARCHIBOLD
NYT, April 24, 2009

http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/25/us/25prosecute.html?_r=2&ref=americas

AUSTIN, Tex. — Luz María Hernández slumped in her chair and let out a sigh of relief after doing something she had never done before despite nearly two years as a prosecutor in Mexico. She delivered an opening statement.



Andres Torres Ortiz, a prosecutor in Chihuahua, was congratulated at an awards ceremony.

It wasn't bad, either. Strong voice, facts marshaled effectively, but a little more emotion wouldn't hurt, came the assessment — not from the judge or jury but a group of American state prosecutors coaching her and other Mexican prosecutors on the ins and outs of American-style trials.

Don't ask a witness a question you don't already know the answer to. Seize on the emotional details in the case for those opening or closing arguments. Formulate questions so the witness has little wiggle room beyond answering "yes" or "no."

The advice, familiar to any fan of courtroom drama, was most welcome, the Mexican prosecutors said, though a little bewildering at times.

“This is totally new,” Ms. Hernández, a prosecutor from Oaxaca, said afterward. “I was a little nervous here. But the critiques allow us to know our mistakes in how we express ourselves and present ourselves, so it is very good for us.”

American prosecutors at a hotel here in early April handed her and two dozen fellow Mexican state prosecutors files on an old murder case and then ran them through lectures, practice sessions and videotaped critiques as part of a program to train the prosecutors for changes that are being made in their criminal justice system.

In what experts say is nothing short of a revolution, Mexico is gradually abandoning its centuries-old Napoleonic system of closed-door, written inquisitions — largely a legacy of Spanish colonial rule — that had long been criticized as rife with corruption, opaque decisions, abuse of defendants and red tape that bogged down cases for years.

Instead, for the first time, defendants will be presumed innocent until proved guilty, instead of the other way around, as they are now. The police will use more forensics and meticulous fact-gathering. Plea bargains, mediation and probation, never tried before in Mexico, will become standard.

And, in what many consider one of the biggest leaps, courtroom doors will be thrown open to the public for oral trials before a trio of judges where victims and the accused can confront one another and evidence will be laid out in the open.

In the four states that have adopted the changes — Chihuahua, Oaxaca, Nuevo León and Baja California — there have already been a handful of such trials.

Legal experts said the trials proceeded at a brisker clip, days instead of months, but advocacy groups for private lawyers have complained that training for them and investigators has been sparse and the courtrooms physically inadequate to accommodate such trials.

The effort to make the Mexican system more open and transparent is intended to bolster public confidence in criminal justice and root out the effects of organized crime, which many legal experts and others believe manipulates the system in its favor.

Advocates of the new system, which is intended to include all 31 Mexican states by 2016, contend that an efficient judiciary can play a role in tamping down lawlessness. Non-government groups have estimated that the vast majority of criminal cases in the country are unsolved.

In the past year, a wave of bloody drug cartel violence has killed more than 7,000 people. Cartel crimes tend to be investigated at the federal level, which will be phasing in the changes in the coming years.

The changes, long demanded by human rights groups, are similar to reforms in a dozen other Latin American countries.

“The system is in crisis,” said Carlos F. Natarén, a law professor at National Autonomous University in Mexico City. “It doesn’t leave any of the parties satisfied. There is no efficiency in combating crime, and it’s an area where we systemically find violation of rights.”

Guillermo Trejo, a prosecutor from Chihuahua who trained here last week, said he welcomed the public scrutiny.

“The public will be able to see who is competent and who isn’t as well as the evidence and testimony we deliver to the court,” Mr. Trejo said. “That was just not done in the old system.”

This session, with 27 Mexican lawyers from three states who were vetted by American federal law enforcement agencies, was organized by the Conference of Western Attorneys General and the National Association of Attorneys General, which together will be training several hundred prosecutors in the next few years.

It is part of \$7 million the United States Agency for International Development, a branch of the State Department, has provided in the past year to support the change in Mexico’s court system. Several million more is planned in the next year.

The icy seminars of “Paper Chase,” the training here was not. Chocolate bars and trinkets were handed out to those who provided good answers.

For the Mexican prosecutors, mastering the art of cross examination posed the most trouble. “Very often we would not even see the defendant,” José Carlos González, a Chihuahua prosecutor, said of the old system.

And some of the Mexican prosecutors felt uncomfortable with injecting emotion into their statements, mindful that in their country three judges well-versed in the law, and not a jury of ordinary citizens, would be hearing their cases.

But Carlos Guzman, a prosecutor with the Florida attorney general’s office, said that emotion and story-telling could be persuasive, no matter the audience .

“Judges are human beings,” Mr. Guzman told a group of prosecutors in one session. “Whether a judge or not, they are going to react differently to how they hear the case.”

LEY GENERAL PARA PREVENIR Y SANCIONAR LOS DELITOS EN MATERIA DE SECUESTRO, REGLAMENTARIA DE LA FRACCIÓN XXI DEL ARTÍCULO 73 DE LA CONSTITUCIÓN POLÍTICA DE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS MEXICANOS

Nueva Ley publicada en el Diario Oficial de la Federación el 30 de noviembre de 2010 TEXTO VIGENTE
Última reforma publicada DOF 27-02-2011

<http://www.diputados.gob.mx/LeyesBiblio/pdf/LGPSDMS.pdf>

Artículo 9. Al que prive de la libertad a otro se le aplicarán: I. De veinte a cuarenta años de prisión y de quinientos a dos mil días multa, si la privación de la libertad se efectúa con el propósito de:

- a) Obtener, para sí o para un tercero, rescate o cualquier beneficio;
- b) Detener en calidad de rehén a una persona y amenazar con privarla de la vida o con causarle daño, para obligar a sus familiares o a un particular a que realice o deje de realizar un acto cualquiera;
- c) Causar daño o perjuicio a la persona privada de la libertad o a terceros; o
- d) **Cometer secuestro exprés**, desde el momento mismo de su realización, entendiéndose por éste, el que, para ejecutar los delitos de robo o extorsión, prive de la libertad a otro. Lo anterior, con independencia de las demás sanciones que conforme a esta Ley le correspondan por otros delitos que de su conducta resulten.

Artículo 10. Las penas a que se refiere el artículo 9 de la presente Ley, se agravarán: I. De veinticinco a cuarenta y cinco años de prisión y de dos mil a cuatro mil días multa, si en la privación de la libertad concurre alguna o algunas de las circunstancias siguientes: a) Que se realice en camino público o en lugar desprotegido o solitario; b) Que quienes la lleven a cabo obren en grupo de dos o más personas; c) Que se realice con violencia;

d) Que para privar a una persona de su libertad se allane el inmueble en el que ésta se encuentra;

e) Que la víctima sea menor de dieciocho años o mayor de sesenta años de edad, o que por cualquier otra circunstancia no tenga capacidad para comprender el significado del hecho o capacidad para resistirlo;

3 de 19 **LEY GENERAL PARA PREVENIR Y SANCIONAR LOS DELITOS EN MATERIA DE SECUESTRO, REGLAMENTARIA DE LA FRACCIÓN XXI DEL ARTÍCULO 73 DE LA CONSTITUCIÓN POLÍTICA DE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS MEXICANOS**

CÁMARA DE DIPUTADOS DEL H. CONGRESO DE LA UNIÓN Última Reforma DOF 27-02-2011 Secretaría General Secretaría de Servicios Parlamentarios Dirección General de Servicios de Documentación, Información y Análisis

f) Que la víctima sea una mujer en estado de gravidez;

II. De veinticinco a cincuenta años de prisión y de cuatro mil a ocho mil días multa, si en la privación de la libertad concurren cualquiera de las circunstancias siguientes:

- a) Que el o los autores sean o hayan sido integrantes de alguna institución de seguridad pública, de procuración o administración de justicia, o de las Fuerzas Armadas Mexicanas, o se ostenten como tales sin serlo;
- b) Que el o los autores tengan vínculos de parentesco, amistad, gratitud, confianza o relación laboral con la víctima o persona relacionada con ésta;
- c) Que durante su cautiverio se cause a la víctima alguna lesión de las previstas en los artículos 291 a 293 del Código Penal Federal;
- d) Que en contra de la víctima se hayan ejercido actos de tortura o violencia sexual;
- e) Que durante o después de su cautiverio, la víctima muera debido a cualquier alteración de su salud que sea consecuencia de la privación de la libertad, o por enfermedad previa que no hubiere sido atendida en forma adecuada por los autores o partícipes del delito.

Las sanciones señaladas en el presente artículo se impondrán, sin perjuicio o con independencia de las que correspondan por otros delitos que de las conductas a las que se aplican resulten.

Artículo 11. Si la víctima de los delitos previstos en la presente Ley es privada de la vida por los autores o partícipes de los mismos, se impondrá a éstos una pena de cuarenta a setenta años de prisión y de seis mil a doce mil días multa.

Artículo 12.- Si espontáneamente se libera a la víctima del secuestro dentro de los tres días siguientes al de la privación de la libertad, sin lograr alguno de los propósitos a que se refiere el artículo 9 de esta Ley y sin que se haya presentado alguna de las circunstancias agravantes del delito, la pena será de dos a seis años de prisión y de

cincuenta a ciento cincuenta días multa.

Párrafo reformado DOF 27-02-2011

La misma pena se aplicará a aquél que habiendo participado en la planeación de alguna de las conductas a que hace referencia el presente Capítulo, dé noticia de ese hecho a la autoridad y la víctima sea rescatada con vida.

La pena señalada en el párrafo primero de este artículo se aplicará a aquél que habiendo participado en la comisión de alguna de las conductas a que hace referencia el presente Capítulo, dé noticia de ese hecho a la autoridad para evitar que se cometa el delito y proporcione datos fehacientes o suficientes elementos de convicción contra los demás participantes del hecho o, ya cometido, antes de que se libere a la víctima, proporcione, los datos o elementos referidos, además dé información eficaz para liberar o localizar a la víctima.

No obstante lo anterior, si a la víctima se le hubiere causado alguna lesión de las previstas en los artículos 291 a 293 del Código Penal Federal, la pena será de nueve a dieciséis años de prisión y de trescientos a quinientos días multa, así como la colocación de los dispositivos de localización y vigilancia por la autoridad policial hasta por los cinco años posteriores a su liberación.

Párrafo reformado DOF 27-02-2011

En caso de que espontáneamente se libere al secuestrado dentro de los primeros diez días, sin lograr alguno de los propósitos a que se refiere el artículo 9 de la presente Ley, y sin que se haya presentado

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LEY GENERAL PARA PREVENIR Y SANCIONAR LOS DELITOS EN MATERIA DE SECUESTRO, REGLAMENTARIA DE LA

FRACCIÓN XXI DEL ARTÍCULO 73 DE LA CONSTITUCIÓN POLÍTICA DE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS MEXICANOS

CÁMARA DE DIPUTADOS DEL H. CONGRESO DE LA UNIÓN Última Reforma DOF 27-02-2011 Secretaría General Secretaría de Servicios Parlamentarios Dirección General de Servicios de Documentación, Información y Análisis

alguna de las circunstancias agravantes del delito, la pena de prisión aplicable será de ocho a quince años y de doscientos cincuenta hasta quinientos días multa.

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Secuestro en Mexico

<http://html.rincondelvago.com/secuestro-en-mexico.html>

Mexico Decriminalizes Small-Scale Drug Possession — May Set an Example

44

ONE (See **TWO**, below for specific limits defining “small-scale”)

By Ioan Grillo / Mexico City

Time Magazine, Aug. 26, 2009 <http://www.time.com/time/printout/0,8816,1918725,00.html>

Most surprising was how easily and painlessly the reform slipped into Mexican law. The bill was originally filed in October by President Felipe Calderón, a social conservative who is waging a bloody military crackdown on drug cartels. Congress then approved the bill in April — as Mexico's swine-flu outbreak dominated media attention. And finally the law went into the books without any major protests either in Mexico or north of the border.

Washington's silence on the issue is telling. **In 2006, Mexico's Congress approved a bill with almost exactly the same provisions. However, the Administration of George W. Bush immediately complained about the measure and then President Vicente Fox refused to sign it into law.**

In contrast, officials of the Obama Administration have been decidedly guarded in commenting on the new legislation. When asked about it in his visit to Mexico last month, drug czar Gil Kerlikowske said he would “wait and see.” Many view such a change as evidence that Washington is finally reconsidering its confrontational war on drugs, four decades after Richard Nixon declared it. “There is a growing opinion that the use of force has simply failed to destroy the drug trade and other measures are needed,” says Mexican political analyst José Antonio Crespo. “It appears that the White House may be starting to adjust its approach.”

Mexico's example could also influence other developing countries in their drug policies:.... In February, the former presidents of Brazil, Colombia and Mexico signed a statement calling for decriminalization of several narcotics. “Current drug-repression policies are firmly rooted in prejudices, fears and ideological visions,” it said. **On Aug. 25, 2009, the Argentine Supreme Court essentially legalized the private use of small amounts of marijuana--** <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8221599.stm>

TWO

MARK STEVENSON 08/21/09

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2009/08/21/mexico-decriminalizes-sma_n_264904.html?view=print&comm_ref=false

MEXICO CITY — Mexico [has] decriminalized small amounts of

marijuana, cocaine and heroin – a move that prosecutors say makes sense even in the midst of the government's grueling battle against drug traffickers. Prosecutors said the new law sets clear limits that keep Mexico's corruption-prone police from shaking down casual users and offers addicts free treatment to keep growing domestic drug use in check.

"This is not legalization, this is regulating the issue and giving citizens greater legal certainty," said Bernardo Espino del Castillo of the attorney general's office.

The new law sets out maximum "personal use" amounts for drugs, also including LSD and methamphetamine. People detained with those quantities no longer face criminal prosecution.

Espino del Castillo says, in practice, small users almost never did face charges anyway.

Under the previous law, the possession of any amount of drugs was punishable by stiff jail sentences, but there was leeway for addicts caught with smaller amounts.

"We couldn't charge somebody who was in possession of a dose of a drug, there was no way ... because the person would claim they were an addict," he said.

Despite the provisions, police sometimes hauled in suspects and demanded bribes, threatening long jail sentences if people did not pay. "The bad thing was that it was left up to the discretion of the detective, and it could open the door to corruption or extortion," Espino del Castillo said.

Anyone caught with drug amounts under the new personal-use limit will be encouraged to seek treatment, and for those caught a third time treatment is mandatory.

The maximum amount of marijuana for "personal use" under the new law is 5 grams – the equivalent of about four joints. The limit is a half gram for cocaine, the equivalent of about 4 "lines." For other drugs, the limits are 50 milligrams of heroin, 40 milligrams for methamphetamine and 0.015 milligrams for LSD.

Mexico has emphasized the need to differentiate drug addicts and casual users from the violent traffickers whose turf battles have contributed to the deaths of more than 11,000 people since President Felipe Calderon took office in late 2006.

But one expert saw potential for conflict under the new law.

Javier Oliva, a political scientist at Mexico's National Autonomous University, said the new law posed "a serious contradiction" for the Calderon administration.

"If they decriminalize drugs it could lead the army, which has been given the task of combating this, to say 'What are we doing?'" he said.

Officials said the legal changes could help the government focus more on big-time traffickers.

Espino del Castillo said **since Calderon took office, there have been over 15,000 police searches related to small-scale drug dealing or possession, with 95,000 people detained – but only 12 to 15 percent of whom were ever charged with anything.**

Assessing Felipe Calderón's legacy: NI-NIs

By George W. Grayson

Chron.com, March 16, 2012

<http://www.chron.com/opinion/editorials/article/Assessing-Felipe-Calderon-s-legacy-3414039.php>

Mexico's Felipe Calderón desperately seeks to leave a positive legacy for his six-year term, which formally ends on Dec. 1, 2012, five months after voters select his successor. Although a decent individual who has avoided debilitating scandals, the outgoing chief executive has been pummeled by a Mexico version of a "drug war" that has registered more than [50,000] deaths. Moreover, Josefina Vázquez Mota, the standard-bearer for his center-right National Action Party (PAN), is running behind Enrique Peña Nieto, the movie-star handsome, well-financed nominee of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) whose return to power is anathema to the 48-year-old incumbent.

Calderón is attempting to burnish his lackluster image by arresting Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán Loera, the notorious capo of the Sinaloa drug cartel, who has proved more elusive than Osama bin Laden. The latest near-capture of the kingpin took place in late February, when federal police raided a coastal mansion in Los Cabos last month.

"We know he was there," an exasperated assistant attorney general told the Associated Press.

Meanwhile, the president is attempting to bloody the PRI's nose by launching investigations of several of the Tammany Hall party's former governors allegedly linked to the underworld.

While a meritorious goal, the take-down of El Chapo seems remote inasmuch as he boasts an effective Praetorian Guard, as well as protection from local, state and federal police on whom he showers bribes. At the same time, a move against PRI politicians this late in his administration appears like a gambit to loft Vázquez Mota's political star. A spokesman for the so-called "revolutionary party" dismissed the initiative as "mud-slinging."

There is a much more promising target at whom Calderón should aim his fire—namely, Elba Esther Gordillo, the immensely wealthy and venal boss of the SNTE teachers' syndicate.

During her 23 years at the head of the 1.5-million member union, "La Maestra" has turned corruption from an art form into an exact science. Job-selling in the educational realm flourishes, ever-fatter budgets in the sector have become more opaque, the arrogant Gordillo enjoys half a dozen posh residences, and she has even formed her own New Alliance Party (PANAL) to manipulate the outcome of contests at all levels.

The late Mexico scholar M. Delal Baer labeled her "Jimmy Hoffa in a skirt."

Some hanky-panky could be tolerated; however, Mexico's public school students finish at or near the bottom in mathematics, natural science and reading in the triennial PISA international examination sponsored by the Paris-based Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development.

As a result, middle-class parents make enormous sacrifices to send their youngsters to private schools. Teachers who have bought their jobs care more about ingratiating themselves with the SNTE than improving student performance. The drop-out rate is high for the poor - with an estimated 750,000 "Ni-Nis" - kids who "neither study nor work" - hanging around street corners where criminal organizations may recruit them as couriers or lookouts.

{En agosto pasado, el rector de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM), **José Narro Robles**, declaró que cifras de la Encuesta Nacional de la Juventud indican que en el país existen 7.5 millones de jóvenes de entre 12 y 29 años que no estudian ni trabajan. A través de las secretarías de Gobernación (Segob) y Educación Pública (SEP), el gobierno de México refutó el dato y sostuvo que **"sólo son 285,000 jóvenes en esta condición,"**
<http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2011/03/28/el-gobernador-de-chihuahua-plantea-servicio-militar-pagado-para-ni-nis>].

La Maestra once seemed "untouchable." She spent two decades as a big wheel in the PRI before defecting to Calderón's campaign in 2006. Indeed, votes mobilized by PANAL enabled the PAN contender to nose out a

messianic, populist adversary, Andrés Manuel Lopez Obrador. On other occasions, Gordillo has aligned with leftist parties.

La Maestra may find it difficult to befriend the next president. The PANAL was pulled or pushed out of a coalition with the PRI's Peña Nieto; she and former Education Secretary Vázquez Mota are like two scorpions in a bottle; and the leftist wannabe López Obrador, who is running a distant third, regards her as a leper with halitosis.

Even as she seeks to forge a cynical deal with a major party candidate, Gordillo is manipulating Gabriel Quadri de la Torre, a nondescript, Groucho Marx look-alike who overwhelmingly obtained PANAL's endorsement. In addition, some governors whom she helped elect have no love-lost for the petite labor leader because of her continual pressure on them to boost salaries and perks for teachers who follow the party line. State executives who resist her arm-twisting often suffer massive street protests by SNTÉ stalwarts.

More power to Calderón if he can snag El Chapo and crooked priistas. Still, he could go out of office with a bang by taking legal action against La Maestra, who represents a boulder on the road to his country's children, parents, schools and development.

Grayson teaches at the College of William & Mary and is the author of "Mexico: Narco-Violence and a Failed State?" (Transaction, 2010); and coauthor with Sam Logan of "The Executioners' Men: Los Zetas, Rogue Soldiers, Criminal Entrepreneurs," which will be published this spring.

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Chart

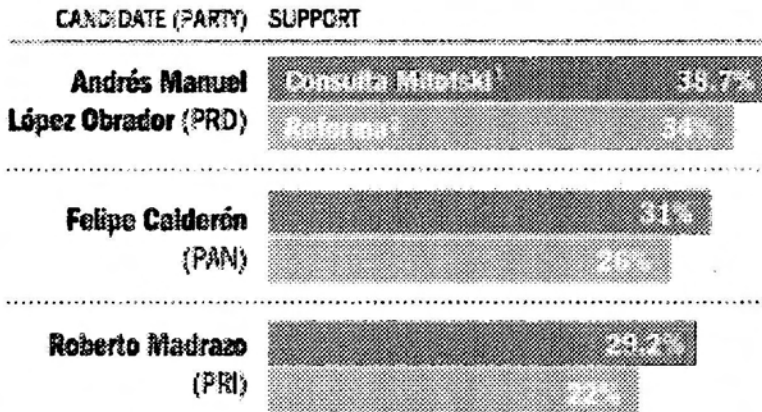
IS THE PRI PARTY OVER? Dynasty's Downfall Could Free Mexico's Modernization Agenda

By JOHN LYONS and DAVID LUHNOW
Staff Reporters of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

January 20, 2006

The Bigger They Are...

A hard landing may be in the cards for Mexico's Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), among the modern era's longest-running political dynasties. Two recent polls show party leader Roberto Madrazo behind his opponents in the presidential race.



¹ Survey of 1,000 registered voters Jan. 12-16; margin of error +/- 3.1%

² Survey of 1,337 registered voters Jan. 14-15; margin of error +/- 2.7%

MEXICO CITY -- Roberto Madrazo, the man trying to reclaim the Mexican presidency for the country's longtime former ruling party in this year's elections, arrived at a campaign rally last fall and had his caravan of cars pelted by eggs.

The image of Mr. Madrazo under siege has been replayed on Mexican television since and may become a lasting symbol of his campaign and the state of the once monolithic Institutional Revolutionary Party, or PRI, that he represents. The PRI ran Mexico for 70 years, and even after losing power to President Vicente Fox in the 2000 elections, it has remained the country's single biggest party and dominated Congress.

But Mr. Madrazo's sputtering presidential campaign could change all that, potentially reshaping Mexican politics more deeply than Mr. Fox's victory did six years ago. Ever since the PRI lost the presidency, it has used its clout in Congress to block nearly all Mr. Fox's major initiatives, such as allowing more foreign participation in the energy industry or overhauling the Byzantine court system. PRI lawmakers even voted once to prevent Mr. Fox from leaving the country for a planned meeting with **Microsoft Corp.** founder Bill Gates.

A solid defeat for the PRI could spur its faithful to jump to other existing parties, or to form new ones, potentially breaking the legislative logjam and reducing the PRI's influence in Congress.

Mr. Madrazo is running third in every major poll, behind the leftist former mayor of Mexico City, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, and the pro-business Felipe Calderón of Mr. Fox's party. The PRI's many different factions, once its greatest strength, are proving hard to hold together. Recent revelations about the opulent lifestyles of PRI bosses have refreshed memories of the party's corrupt underbelly. Recent polls show that a majority of voters wouldn't vote for Mr. Madrazo under any circumstance.

"Mr. Madrazo is going to be the last candidate of the PRI as we know it," says Denise Dresser, a political-science professor at Mexico's ITAM University.

If Mr. Madrazo's weak showing continues in the coming months, it may also turn the July election into a contest of ideas: a showdown between two candidates with fundamentally different views on Mexico's decades-old decision to dismantle trade barriers and join the global economy. Mr. López Obrador, who casts himself as the defender of the poor in an age of globalization, regularly criticizes Mexico's decision to allow foreign ownership of banks, for example, and wants to increase social-welfare spending if elected. Mr. Calderón, by contrast, wants to invite foreign participation into the state-run energy industry and speed up Mexico's integration into the global system to revive a sluggish economy.

Of course, the party still has time to turn itself around -- and it has powerful resources at its disposal, including control of a majority of state governments and most of the public campaign money as the country's biggest party. Mr. Madrazo's supporters say the 54-year-old marathon runner is a proven campaigner who has slugged his way to victory in the past -- including a 1995 defeat of Mr. López Obrador in the Tabasco governorship race. And he is using his reputation as an able politician in casting himself as the most effective leader of the three candidates, someone who can get things done even if it means the smoke-filled rooms of the party's past.

"It's too early to say the PRI won't win. But if Madrazo doesn't get traction in the coming months, then they are in deep trouble," says Luis Rubio, head of a think tank in Mexico City named CIDAC.

Mr. Madrazo's spokesman declined a request for an interview.

It is clear that democracy in Mexico has erased many of the PRI's traditional advantages, including the fawning media coverage that it enjoyed while in power. Mr. Madrazo won't have access to traditional sources of back-channel cash that the PRI secretly relied on during elections, such as funds controlled by the state oil workers' union. Indeed, the union, which still leans toward the PRI, will be under tight scrutiny to prevent a repeat of the 2000 campaign, when it funneled tens of millions of dollars to the PRI campaign.

Internal fighting also has cost Mr. Madrazo important sources of grass-roots support, such as the teachers' union, Latin America's biggest and richest labor organization. After a falling out with Mr. Madrazo, the head of the union is backing a new party whose sole purpose seems to be attacking the PRI standard bearer at every turn, including throwing eggs.

When the PRI was in power, it enjoyed control of the nation's governors, ensuring they would fall in behind the PRI candidate. That is no longer the case, with some PRI governors distancing themselves from Mr. Madrazo. Eduardo Bours, the governor of northern Sonora state, has been openly hostile lately.

One of the modern world's most successful political parties, the PRI was born after Mexico's chaotic 1910 Revolution. The generals who founded the party restored order by incorporating all levels and sectors of society into its apparatus, and viewed themselves as the rightful administrators of public resources -- rather than as public servants. Mr. Madrazo, the son of a PRI governor in Tabasco, gained national prominence after winning that state's governorship in a 1995 election that stood out for alleged irregularities. Mr. Madrazo has always denied any improprieties.

After fighting election officials' demands that he declare his personal assets, Mr. Madrazo, a lifelong bureaucrat, admitted this week to owning four houses, five apartments and a clutch of sports cars and SUVs, together valued at around \$3 million. Mr. Madrazo embodies the so-called dinosaur wing of the party that opposed moves that began in the mid-1980s to end boom-and-bust cycles by opening the country's economy and tying it to the U.S. Associates of Mr. Madrazo openly blame the group of pro-market reformers who orchestrated the changes for diminishing the PRI's power and ultimately costing it the presidency.

While Mr. Madrazo has made recent trips to meet with chief executives in big industrial cities, he hasn't succeeded in convincing many that he is serious about making Mexico's economy more competitive. Indeed, business leaders say it is a difficult message to sell when the PRI's congressional bloc opposed every major economic initiative during Mr. Fox's term.

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Online NewsHour

FULL INTERVIEW: DENISE DRESSER

June 30, 2000



Denise Dresser is a Mexican political scientist and visiting fellow of the University of Southern California's Civil Council on International Policy. Her full interview with Jeffrey Kaye of KCET-Los Angeles is presented below.

► [Click here for Jeffrey Kaye's report on the campaign \(6/29\)](#)

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July 25, 1997: A Newsmaker

JEFFREY KAYE: Many are suggesting this is an historic election in Mexico. Why is that?



DENISE DRESSER/Political Scientist: Well, because never in the country's history had we witnessed an election that is going to be so close. In 1988, many people believed that the candidate of the opposition Cuauhtemoc Cardenas may have won, but we frankly don't know. The ballots were burned subsequently. There were charges of massive fraud. But, now there are polls, there's numbers, there's data that's revealing that for the first time the candidate of the ruling party -- the candidate of the PRI, Francisco Labastida -- may not win. He is running neck-to-neck with the main contender, from the National Action Party, Vicente Fox, who has come out of nowhere over the past two years to challenge the ruling party in an attempt to turn this election into a referendum over change.

JEFFREY KAYE: Well, he hasn't exactly come out of nowhere, right? There's been a transition taking place, isn't that right?

DENISE DRESSER: Yes, but, he is someone who has, created himself as a political figure. He is not a traditional member of the PAN. He has an entrepreneurial background. He was the head of Coca-Cola Mexico for many years and if you'd asked anyone in the National Action Party who its candidate would have -- would be for the 2000 election several years ago, no one would have said Vicente Fox. He has

In 1988, many people believed that the candidate of the opposition Cuauhtemoc Cardenas may have won, but we frankly don't know. The ballots were burned subsequently. There were charges of massive fraud.

DENISE DRESSER
Photo: Al Seaman

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tried to market himself as an antiestablishment politician, who happens to be running on the back of the National Action Party. Many people who are going to vote for him will do so because he represents change, not because they want to empower the PAN the National Action Party.

JEFFREY KAYE: Let's return to PAN and Fox in a minute, but, maybe we should explain or you can explain how Mexico made this transition and got to the point where plurality is reality in Mexican politics. How did that come about?

DENISE DRESSER: Well, over the last twelve years, since 1988, we've witnessed a steady decline of vote for the ruling party. There's been a transition taking place in Mexico -- a transition towards democracy that entails many substantive changes, some of them electoral, some demographic, some of them social. Electorally-speaking we've witnessed the rise of opposition parties, the arrival of opposition parties to state governments. The PRI losing its relative majority in Congress, the emergence of a more plural, independent, combative media, and the emergence of Mexican voters who are questioning the political system and who are advocating change -- who are saying "It's been seventy-one years of dominance by the ruling party, perhaps Mexico is ready for a change in government," for what we call "la denuncia." The real possibility of an opposition party taking control of the executive.



Impact of economic reforms

JEFFREY KAYE: Others have traced this back to the devaluation of the peso, economic woes and economic reforms, that took place throughout Mexico along with political reforms, brought about by people, to some extent like Vicente Fox -- entrepreneurial types...



DENISE DRESSER: Well, political reform and economic reform in Mexico for the past decade have gone hand-in-hand. We've witnessed the emergence of the more modern Mexico, economically speaking -- a Mexico that has embraced

As we've seen in Mexico over the past year, for example, the PRI decided to engage in its first ever historic primary... So, the PRI sent out a message that it was willing to modernize, to democratize, to rethink its past practices.

DENISE DRESSER, Producer of *NewsHour*

The U.S. State
Department's Office
of Mexican Affairs

Articles on Mexican
politics by political
scientist Jorge
Castaneda

A PBS "Frontline"
Special on
corruption during
the Salinas
presidency

free-trade, globalization, economic liberalization. Many of the controls over the economy have been lucent and we see the emergence of more entrepreneurs -- more independent sources of economic activity. And this has clearly had an impact on the political arena, where for the first time opposition politicians are having a real say in the country's economic destiny, as well. However, for the first time in many years, this election may not lead to an economic debacle as it has every six years in Mexico's history. Mexico, at this point, seems to be facing a stable economic scenario -- a certain amount of economic prosperity and, Mexicans seem to be willing to run the risk of change without that wreaking havoc on the economic system.

JEFFREY KAYE: How is it that the PRI got itself in this position. I mean, historically, most ruling parties in most countries don't allow for this kind of gradual disintegration, in a way -- or peaceful change and peaceful transition. How is it that this took place? How did PRI allow this to happen?

DENISE DRESSER: Well, I don't think it's that the PRI has allowed it to happen. It's that the population has forced it to happen. This is a transition that has escaped the control of the ruling party. There have been some changes that are to be applauded, enacted by President Zedillo, himself. Some say, we will have a relatively clean, fair election in contrast with the past because Ernesto Zedillo pushed things forward. His critics say it's because he hasn't intervened to prevent change that change has occurred. So, there's no consensus on that in Mexico today.

JEFFREY KAYE: Can you describe what the PRI has represented in Mexico?

DENISE DRESSER: The genius of the PRI in comparison to other dominant parties throughout the world has been it's capacity for endless reinvention. It's capacity to shift with the winds of change and to ride upon those winds. As we've seen in Mexico over the past year, for example, the PRI decided to engage in its first ever historic primary to elect it's presidential candidate instead of that candidate being chosen by the incumbent president before he leaves office as has been the case for many years. So, the PRI sent out a message that it was willing to modernize, to democratize, to rethink it's past practices. Now many in Mexico that that's not enough -- that in order to completely enter into a democratic regime in Mexico, what is necessary is to boot the bums out. In other

words, to take the PRI out of the executive and that that would entail real change at the level of combating corruption, tearing apart economic monopolies, doing away with the dirty businesses -- business practices of the past, and adding a greater degree of transparency into economic transactions and into political practices.

JEFFREY KAYE: But, that's been happening for a while as opposition parties have gradually become...when governors shifts, municipal elections, I mean, there has been a growth in political opposition, correct?

DENISE DRESSER: But, the polls are showing that many Mexicans think that change has to be faster -- that it's not enough for this gradualistic evolution to a more democratic and open system. Many in Mexico believe that there will not be real change until and unless the PRI loses control of the presidency. Given that this has been such a presidentialist system for many years and that the PRI is not only a party, like many other parties, that it's a party that has been in government for seventy-one years and that this gives it an enormous degree of power; it's not just an incumbent party. It's a party that has at its disposal many government resources, many state subsidies, many social programs to use at its disposal. And it's a party that, because it has that power, has been able to block greater accountability in its actions, delving into corrupt practices, bringing into account corrupt officials. All of that has not been possible because the PRI has also been able to reign in and pressure other independent organizations like, the judiciary in the past, like the central bank, like institutions that were allegedly created to create, that were allegedly created to bring about a balance of power, but have not been able to inject the system with more checks and balances.

The PRI and governmental power

JEFFREY KAYE: Well, in fact many Mexicans don't know the difference between the government and the PRI, right?

DENISE DRESSER: The PRI has never been a real political party except in the places where it has lost and places where it lost control of the governorship of the municipal presidency and therefore was forced into adopting more modern practices that one traditionally associates with a more modern party.

JEFFREY KAYE: Let's talk then about the rise of PAN and Fox. Who ... What is the constituency, PAN's

The interesting thing about this election is that it's showing a generational divide ... What we're seeing is more Mexicans that are young, that are educated, that are urban, are supporting Vicente Fox and supporting the National Action Party.

DENISE DRESSER, Political Scientist

constituency? Who is supporting PAN? Who is supporting Fox?

DENISE DRESSER: Well, the interesting thing about this election is that it's showing a generational divide in terms of the vote. What we're seeing is more Mexicans that are young, that are educated, that are urban, supporting Vicente Fox and supporting the National Action Party. Whereas the PRI's base of support comes from its traditional bases including the rural poor, impoverished women, the less well-educated, the people who don't have college degrees. Those are becoming the tradition; those are the bases of support for the PRI today.

JEFFREY KAYE: What are the lessons that can be drawn from Guanajuato, the state Fox represented as governor?

DENISE DRESSER: Well, I think it's important to make a distinction between Vicente Fox and the National Action Party. Because Vicente Fox has proven over the course of time as governor of Guanajuato to have a more flexible agenda than many PAN governors have had. He seems to be more open, more willing to dialogue with the opposition. He actually had an opposition Congress while he was governor; the Congress of the state of Guanajuato was dominated by the PRI actually, and he developed a good working relationship. Fox has made an emphasis in his campaign on saying that Mexico needs to integrate further into the global economy. He's talked about the need for a complete economic union with the United States, of perhaps thinking about a common currency. He seems to be very aware of the need to train Mexicans to face the future.



JEFFREY KAYE: But what kind of a mark did he make in Guanajuato? How was his style of operation different from what would have been more traditional?

DENISE DRESSER: Fox was a very popular governor in Guanajuato. He had a very interesting style. He's not a desk man. He liked being out there among the people. He was very clean -- keen to delegate. He had a very strong team that surrounded him and he liked going out into the countryside, meeting with people. One of the great accomplishments that he trumpets about his tenure in Guanajuato was the creation of

Institutes for Micro- Credit, providing credit to small, medium-sized businesses, empowering women through credit. He seemed to style himself along the lines of a Mexican-style Ghandi sitting under trees talking to peasants, listening to their concerns, going back to his office and making a very quick executive decision. And I think this garnered him a lot of popularity among people who are accustomed to witnessing political officials from a distance and not having any direct contact with them.

JEFFREY KAYE: But, also, I mean, wasn't he able to get things done, raise property taxes, uh, be seen as friendly to small business owners? I mean, maybe you can talk a little bit about...

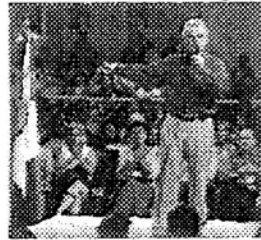
DENISE DRESSER: Given...

JEFFREY KAYE: His policies.

DENISE DRESSER: Given his business background he has been very keen to send a message that he is friendly to Mexican business, that he is friendly to private enterprise, that he is friendly to foreign investment, that he places economic growth as one of his highest priorities, that he believes in education as a key for empowering Mexicans to face the challenges of globalization.

JEFFREY KAYE: And is that in contrast to Labastida?

DENISE DRESSER: Let's say Labastida is more of a traditional Mexican politician. His key strengths lie in the political arena -- in the capacity to build consensus, to bring in members of disparate factions of the PRI. He's viewed as a traditional bureaucrat. His fame, his claim to fame throughout the various ministries in which he worked throughout his lifetime was basically to roll with the punches, to follow orders, to keep the system going. He is not well-remembered, not well-known, for having enacted any dramatic change in any of the ministries that he was head of.



JEFFREY KAYE: Are there significant ideological differences?

DENISE DRESSER: Well, one of the things that Labastida has argued is that Vicente Fox is very socially conservative and that that is a real question

mark that Mexicans should deal with. I think that this accusation -- doesn't -- isn't quite fair towards Fox, but it is fair toward the National Action Party. A party that in local government has taken it upon itself to eliminate things -- prohibit things such as miniskirts for women working in government offices, that has tried to take a very strong public stance against a portion, and that has talked about the return of the church as a force in Mexican education -- something that makes many Mexicans very nervous.

JEFFREY KAYE: M-hmm. But you don't think that applies -- those characterizations apply to Fox?

DENISE DRESSER: I think Fox is religiously conservative, but does not intend to impose his views on the population at large.

JEFFREY KAYE: Other than that, I mean, are there striking policy differences between Fox and Labastida? I mean, you've said -- you've suggested that's what PAN is to the right of Fox. But if you were looking at Fox and Labastida what would you say other than...

DENISE DRESSER: If you look at their economic programs I'd say that the differences lie more in style than in substance. Both are promising neo-liberalism with a human face. In other words, the need to inject more of a social dimension to Mexico's economic reform. To spend more on education, to spend more on social programs and to bring in, uh, the dispossessed to Mexico's economic reform. In other words, to -- one of the things that both have argued is that Mexico's modernization has benefited a few and not the many and that it's time to change that, to rework economic reform so that the benefits are more evenly spread. Now, I think that the differences in terms of style have to do with Fox advocating much more transparency in economic transactions. His calling for a real crusade against corruption, saying that all public officials will make their net worth known to the public, for bringing his -- he promises to create more institutions that will actually check what government officials are doing. And I think that resonates among many Mexicans who feel that the PRI has gotten away with too much, precisely because there haven't been enough organisms of vigilance over what party officials do and say behind closed doors in Mexico.

The PRD's Cuauhtemoc Cardenas

JEFFREY KAYE: We haven't spoken about the other major opposition candidate and that's Cardenas who was widely believed to have -- perhaps one or as many expected that he would have been the last president and would be the next president. What happened to Cardenas?

DENISE DRESSER: Well, Cardenas governed Mexico City for several years and that turned out to be his political tomb, instead of his springboard for higher office. Many criticize his tenure there because he did not take risks. He was not willing to combat entrenched interests, perhaps because he was governing with the presidency in mind. He wanted to send out a message that his government would not be tantamount to chaos. And that he could be trusted to provide stability in Mexico City which is what he did at the expense of enacting greater change. He dashed many expectations because those who voted for him in 1997 believed that his government would bring about a dramatic watershed in terms of governance in Mexico City and that did not happen. So, we saw his support plummet from 27 percent that the PRD garnered in 1997 to anywhere between 14 and 15 percent where he stands in the polls today.

However, Cardenas is in a win-win situation paradoxically, because even though he will not win the presidential race, and that is clear, he will go home on July 3rd having achieved a great deal for his party, the PRD, the Party of the Democratic Revolution. That party will have a large representation in Congress and in all likelihood it will win Mexico City, where its candidate is running twenty points above his closest contender. So with that in mind, Cardenas can spend the next six years preparing Mexico for a transition -- a real transition in his mind that would be led by the Mexican left not by the National Action Party that he views as a party that has governed too closely with the PRI.

JEFFREY KAYE: Given that, why are so many on the left in Mexico supporting Fox?

DENISE DRESSER: Because there are many members of the left who supported Cardenas, who voted for him in 1997, who now believe that a vote for Cardenas is a wasted vote -- and that they want to use their vote in a useful fashion. The way Fox has been campaigning has been to draw out the "voto util," the useful vote. To say, "vote for me because your vote will actually bring about change." And many of those who are shifting from the left to vote for Fox are doing

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DENISE DRESSER,
Political Scientist

so, not for ideological reasons, but for pragmatic reasons. In other words they want to see the PRI out of power and are willing to give their vote to whoever can accomplish that, regardless of whether that man is on the left or on the right of the political spectrum.

JEFFREY KAYE: A couple more questions. Now let me ask you one about the -- first about the election itself and how PRI runs an election, a campaign. What are the hallmarks of the PRI campaign in terms of social programs, public works projects, media coverage? What should one look for and see and expect in a PRI campaign?

DENISE DRESSER: Well, what we've seen over the past month is the machinery of the PRI being turned on and put into full gear. When the Labastida campaign realized that the PRI was losing points dramatically and that Labastida had lost



the two presidential debates, the Labastida campaign made dramatic changes. It brought in many of the old party bosses of the political dinosaurs in an effort to reunite a divided PRI and to put the machinery into place. And what does the PRI machinery mean? It means, public works being advertised to benefit the ruling party, it means social programs being put to work in favor of the ruling party in some ways legally, such as saying, "Reward us with your vote because we have given you social benefits. We've given you checks; we've given you subsidies; we've given you vaccinations and medicines and in some senses that machinery works -- or could work in an illegal fashion -- which is to condition, further benefits to a vote for the PRI." And we may or may not see that in this campaign. But it has occurred in the past and is a real possibility. This would not be overt fraud, but it would be pressuring, vote-buying -- about fuzzy gray area where the federal electoral institute cannot intervene to sanction those who endorse those sort of practices and carry them out.

JEFFREY KAYE: And in media coverage?

DENISE DRESSER: In media coverage it means, it means skewing coverage in favor of the ruling party candidate. We've seen a turn towards fair media coverage, equal time allotted to each one of the candidates. But the content of that coverage has not always been fair. Labastida, in many cases, is

portrayed as more presidential, as more serene. His policies are given a greater -- when his policies are mentioned the head of the newscast will say that they are favorable and attractive. The content still has yet to change in some cases. And what the national media has done in turn of fairer coverage has yet to trickle down to the local media, where we see many of the practices of the past still in place. Local newspapers and local radio shows endorsing the candidate of the PRI because they believe that if they don't, they will be sanctioned or concessions, to radio stations will be taken away or editors will be fired or other sanctions will be applied as they have been in the past.

JEFFREY KAYE: Finally, in terms of bilateral relations between Mexico and the U.S., will there be any significant difference in the foreign policy of Labstida vs. Fox?

DENISE DRESSER: Labstida is a man of the past in many ways. He does not speak English. He doesn't feel comfortable visiting the American audiences. I think in that sense U.S./Mexico policy would continue along the same lines, perhaps with a less intense degree of engagement given his personal background, the fact that he was not educated in the United States, that he does not come from the cadre of modernizing technocrats that share in many of the views of their Washington counterparts. So perhaps the climate of cordiality would prevail, but not the intensity, the common ties, the common view of the world, the common mindset that has bound many Mexican and American officials together over the past twelve years since Mexico moved to a -- towards a more technocratic government. I think that if Fox came into power we would see an attempt to engage the United States more directly and with more enthusiasm because he is someone who has advocated closer ties, who has called for the need to sit down to the table and renegotiate current immigration laws, and he's even talked about the need or the desire for further and fuller integration between Mexico and the U.S. That may or may not happen, but we've seen in his campaign, a willingness to bring it about.

DENISE DRESSER: One of the more dramatic changes that we've seen in Mexico over the past six years has been the decline of presidential power and authority. President Zedillo has enacted a new style of presidentialism, which is much less vigorous, much more subdued. He has let other powers flourish in Mexico such as the Congress, the media, opposition parties and opposition leaders. And that is a trend that

will, in all likelihood, continue. The prize that will be won the day of the election will be, yes, control over the executive, but a much leaner executive. An executive that has to contend with other sources and accountability in the Mexican system. So, that's a good thing for Mexico. Regardless of who they empower, that president will not be able to rule at his whim nor at the whim of the ruling party... whatever party that will be.

(Discussion off mic/producer question)

Support split between candidates

DENISE DRESSER: I think that what this election has revealed is that there are "many Mexico's." And those many Mexico's are supporting different candidates for different reasons. As I said earlier, I think the young, the prosperous, the people who have staked their professional future on Mexico's integration with the global economy, the dot-commers. They are supporting Vicente Fox because they view him as emblematic of change. Change at the level of the executive. Change in terms of the political stripes of the many who would be in office and change because of the rhetoric that he has espoused throughout his campaign. However, there are many in Mexico who don't share those views -- who want change at a slower, more subtle pace, who are more conservative, who don't want to gamble on a raucous, aggressive, risk-taking president, who would rather see someone serene and gray and perhaps a bit more somber, but more trustworthy, in their view, at the helm of the presidency. And there -- and co-existing with those two groups are many rural, impoverished, uneducated Mexicans who are willing to vote who -- for whoever grants them social benefits and whoever assures them that those benefits will continue. And they may not run the risk of voting for the opposition for fear of losing those benefits.

JEFFREY KAYE: One thing we didn't talk about that you eluded to and, that is, for many people PRI, for good or bad, and particularly for poorer people, represents the known.

DENISE DRESSER: Yeah.

JEFFREY KAYE: It represents stability, isn't that right?

DENISE DRESSER: The PRI, for many Mexicans, represents stability. They look at their situation and they compare it to the Colombian "narco-democracy"

or to the troubles in Peru and they say, "Well at least the PRI has guaranteed, continuity, stability, a certain amount of economic reform, a transition towards democracy, even if it is at a slow pace." And for many Mexicans the PRI is a source of income. It's their lifestyle. It's the way of making a living. Millions in the bureaucracy will vote for Labastida, not because they don't believe in change or wouldn't support Fox in other circumstances, but because their own lifestyles, their own ways of earning a living, their political survival, their economic survival is at stake. They have staked out many years of work in the Mexican bureaucracy on the continuity of the PRI. Empowering the opposition would mean a dramatic change at all those levels of the Mexican bureaucracy.

JEFFREY KAYE: You've mentioned there are many Mexico's, but there's also more than one PRI in a sense, right? I mean, a PRI that's adaptable, the old guard...the dinosaurs and by the same token what's been called the new PRI.

DENISE DRESSER: Well, but the new PRI is something that many Mexicans had hoped would come about as a result of the primary. And many saw their hopes dashed with the changes in the Labastida campaign. He seemed to toss out the new PRI -- out the window -- and we empower, we invigorate many of the members of the old guard, the old party bosses. But, perhaps if this election is contested enough and if the signals of change come across clear enough for Labastida even if he wins, he may be forced to take on the banner of change within the PRI looking towards the year 2006 and looking towards many of the local elections and the mid-term elections that will take place throughout his tenure. However, the incentives for the -- for that change will also have to come from outside the PRI itself. And, in all likelihood, they will. Even if Labastida wins, he will not have a mandate. In all likelihood he will win by a very small percentage in which case he will have to negotiate power with other interlocutors. He will not be able to just administer it from above.

JEFFREY KAYE: Good, we'll leave it there.

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Mexico City – As I reflect on my troubled country, the lyrics of a Bruce Springsteen song come to mind: "We are far, far away from home. Our home is far, far away from us." That's how it feels to live in Mexico nowadays: far from democratic normalcy; far from a health system that inspires confidence; far from a government that builds trust; far from home and close to everything that imperils it.



Illustration by Newsart

My homeland has become a place where too many people are victims, succumbing to a virus, or gunned down by a drug-trafficker; assaulted by a robber, shot by an ill-trained policeman, or kidnapped by a member of a criminal gang. The flu epidemic, which probably began in the southern state of Veracruz, is yet another sign that all is not well in Mexico.

The country seems to be caught in a permanent, uneasy tug-of-war between the past and the future, between change and the actors who seek

to place obstacles in its path. For example, when initial reports surfaced about the first swine flu cases, it took three weeks for the information to reach federal health authorities, because state governments were reluctant to report cases quickly due to political and electoral considerations.

Mexico faces mid-term elections for Congress in the fall, and President Felipe Calderón's National Action Party is trailing slightly in the polls over its main rivals, who would like nothing better than to see a health emergency translate into a political defeat. In the face of a public health system that seemed incapable of diagnosing and treating the outbreak quickly, the government felt it had little choice but to shut down Mexico City, dealing a severe blow to an already crippled economy.

In contrast with Mexico's authoritarian past, when an "imperial presidency" constituted a major obstacle to modernization, power has been dispersed. What the executive branch has relinquished, or been forced to give up, vested interests have seized.

The problem is no longer too much power in the president's hands, but too much power in the hands of "veto centers" – including public-sector unions – that are blocking much-needed reforms, including in the health system. In all likelihood, the 22 reported dead from swine flu reflect a social safety net falling to pieces due to lack of public investment and union recalcitrance.

The flu also revealed some of Mexico's other fundamental flaws. The political system has become a peculiar hybrid of authoritarian remnants and newly established mechanisms for transparency. The electoral process has been unable to guarantee decent democratic governance, rein in predatory practices among the political class, or make public officials follow established rules, keep them responsive to citizen preferences, and deter them from channeling public funds into private hands.

Lack of accountability has both encouraged corruption and fed perceptions that abuse remains unpunished. Impunity, in turn, erodes the credibility of the country's institutions, including public hospitals and clinics. Today, conspiracy theories abound in Mexico about the origins of the virus, because government officials are viewed with such ingrained suspicion.

Throughout the epidemic, citizens have largely obeyed government guidelines and followed public health prescriptions. But that doesn't mean they trust the government. Public-opinion polls reveal that more than 50% of the population believe that political parties are "not necessary" for the good of the country. Disapproval of Congress is growing, and people's satisfaction with representative democracy has decreased.

In the midst of the epidemic, 66% of Mexicans believe that the country is regressing. Seventy-five percent of crimes are not reported due to lack of trust in the authorities, and 98% of crimes are never resolved or punished. Public opinion seems disenchanted with a democracy incapable of offering tangible solutions to problems, the flu crisis being the most recent example.

Saddled by a viral infection, drug-related insecurity, and rising crime, Mexico feels like a besieged place. The noted columnist Miguel Angel Granados Chapa wrote last week: "All that's missing is for Mexico to get peed on by a dog."

Mexico's bad health is a symptom of problems that run deeper and are more widespread than swine flu. Over the past ten years, political and economic actors intent on preserving the *status quo* have blocked further democratic change and economic reform, condemning Mexico to move sideways, even as other emerging markets surge ahead.

Lately, political battles among key actors have not been about how to build a more effective of representative political system or a more equitable, dynamic economy, but about how to maintain control of accumulated power or distribute it among their allies. Political parties appear far removed from citizen demands, beset by internal divisions, incapable of addressing deep-rooted inequality and lawlessness, and prone to populist or authoritarian leadership that promises quick fixes to entrenched problems.

Mexico's current quandary is the flu, but it faces more important challenges than a mutating microbe. With more than 40 million people living in poverty and 7,000 killed in drug-related violence last year, Mexico will need to reform quickly to address what the virus has brought to light: a government far removed from the suffering of ordinary people and too frequently insensitive to their plight.

In this national crisis, Mexico's people have closed ranks, collaborated, and showed that they are capable of working together to achieve common goals in the public interest. But their political and economic elites frequently seem incapable of doing so. That is why home seems far, far away for so many Mexicans.

Denise Dresser Open Letter to Carlos Slim

Instead of helping with solutions for Mexico, you are the problem*

March 13, 2011

I write you this letter as a citizen, consumer and as a Mexican who is concerned about the country's destiny and the role you play in its present and future. I have read carefully the words you said in the forum "Qué hacer para crecer" and I have thought over their implications. Your stance on various topics brought to mind that famous phrase ascribed to the chairman and CEO of GM, who said "what's good for General Motors is good for America". I believe you think alike, what's good for Carlos Slim, Telmex, Telcel and Grupo Carso is good for Mexico, it is not like this however. You perceive yourself as the solution when you have become part of the problem. You perceive yourself as a statesman with the ability to diagnose the country's ills when you have contributed to create them. You perceive yourself as an indispensable savior when you have blocked development reprehensibly. Hence the contradictions, the gap and distortion that plagued your speech, you said the most noticeable aspects.

You say that is necessary go from an urban and industrialized society to a service, technological and, information society. This is true however, Mexico's transition becomes difficult to the extent that telecommunications costs are so high, telephone service is so expensive, and the broadband penetration is so low. This is the result of the predominance you and your companies have over the market. In other words, in your speech you suggest something that in real life

you are committed to impede.

You emphasize the need to promote productivity and competition, however, over the years you have been protected by the court before regulatory efforts that seek these. You welcome competition but as long as it is not promoted in your sector. You say there is no need to worry about the growth of the GDP and that the most important thing is to care about the jobs that people like you provide. Nonetheless, it is just the lack of economic growth that explains the high unemployment rate in Mexico from years ago. Moreover, the lack of growth is directly connected with the persistence of performing anti-competitive actions that people like you justify.

You deliver the message that foreign investment must be seen with fear and ambivalence. You say that “the modern companies are the old armies”. The armies would conquer territories and charged tribute. You say, hopefully we won’t enter into a “Sell Mexico” phase to foreign investors and you negotiate in your own way so that foreign investment won’t be allowed regarding phone services. But at the same time, you as a foreign investor in America just invested millions of dollars in The New York Times, Saks stores and Citigroup. From your no nonsense perspective, foreign investment is okay and must be applauded. However, it must be rejected when in Mexico.

You reaffirm that “we need to be competitive in this information society and we need competition; I agree with the competition”. But at the same time, in recent days you have expressed your opposition to promote it. You discredited, for instance, the interconnection program that seeks to level the playing field for everybody. You say it is essential to boost small and medium enterprises yet your company- Telmex- forces these businesses to submit to telecommunications

costs that slow growth and expansion down.

You say that the middle class has shrunk, that people have no income, and there's must be better income distribution. The diagnosis is correct, but I am surprised by the lack of understanding of how you contribute to this situation. The chairman of the Federal Competition Commission explains it very clearly. Consumers spend 40 percent more than they should because of the lack of competition in these sectors such as telecommunications. The higher price is paid by the poor.

You suggest that the main reasons why Mexico lags behind fall on the government, the inefficiency of government bureaucracy, corruption, inappropriate infrastructure, the lack of access to financing, crime and public monopolies. With no doubt all the above contribute to the lack of competition, however private monopolies such as yours also do.

You speak about the need "to go through an economic model imposed as an ideological dogma" that has produced mediocre growth. But just this model, of regulatory failure and government collusion, has allowed people like you to get the fortune you now have, worth 59 billion dollars. From your point of view, the model is wrong, but it can not be changed according to your particular way of building wealth.

The detailed review of your words and your performance during more than a decade reveals a serious problem. There's a gap between how you perceive yourself and the harmful impact of your performance. There is a contradiction between what you suggest and what you do, you suffer from shortsightedness that leads you to see the speck in your neighbor's eye but do not notice the log in your own

eye.

You see yourself as a great man of great ideas that deserve to be heard. However, that day before the representatives, senators and public opinion, you did not talk about the great investments you were about to make, the great infrastructure projects you were about to promote, the jobs you were about to create, the social commitment and nothing about the characteristics of the new economic model that you would support. Instead of it, you threatened us and told us words, words and, more words – that the economic situation would be worse and before this; no one should touch you, regulate you, question you, or force you to compete. Besides, that day government published the Interconnection Program that seeks just these. You, in response, made the announcement that Telmex would cut its investment plan. You showed yourself as someone willing to hurt Mexico if you don't get what you want and when you want it. You had the opportunity to grow but instead you belittled yourself.

With no doubt, you have the right to promote your interests, but the problem here is that you make it at the expense of the country. You have the freedom of speech to say your ideas but by your behavior, it is hard to see you as a praiseworthy, altruistic, and an unselfish activist who seeks Mexico's development. Without a doubt, you have an unique and admirable talent, and you know where, when, and how to invest. As well you display another less attractive characteristic; you know where, when, and how to put pressure on, blackmail legislators, regulatory bodies, media, judges, journalists and the left-wing party intelligentsia, as well as the ones who are misguided by a misunderstood nationalism. Therefore, the exploitation of Mexican people because –at least- you are not an alien.

You will probably discredit this letter in many ways as you discredit criticism of others. You may say I envy your fortune as others do or I have a personal problem or that I am a resentful person. It is not like this however.

I write with the shared discomfort by millions of Mexicans who are tired of outrageous phone bills; tired of inconceivable contracts, tired of transferring incomes, tired of thieving companies, tired of civil servants that occasionally criticize monopolies but don't do anything to dismantle them.

Sadly I write with frustration and disappointment when I witness the behavior of someone who could be better, someone who could devote time to innovate instead of blocking, someone who could successfully compete but rather to be protected constantly, someone who could give a lot back to the country but chooses to keep taking advantage of it, someone who could become the most influential philanthropist but insists on being the most insensitive plutocrat.

John F Kennedy once said; that great crises produce great men. It is a shame that in this critical moment for Mexico, you insist on showing us that you do not aspire to be one.

*Translated by Isaac Ochoa-Pérez

<http://stanceontranslation.blogspot.com/2011/03/denise-dresser-carta-abierta-carlos.html>

School Daze: Mexico documentary points up sad state of public schools

'De Panzazo,' slang for 'barely passing,' is a dissection and call to action by Luna Films.

The film faults teachers, parents, officials and unions.

April 03, 2012 | By Ken Ellingwood, Los Angeles Times

Documenary "De Panzazo" has soared... (La Media Luna Producciones)

MEXICO CITY — Mexico picks a president in July, and the winner would be smart to study the lessons of a new film depicting public schools in the country as a giant factory of failure.

Classrooms that are crumbling. Pupils who don't understand what they read. Parents who aren't involved. Teachers, often inept, who are protected by a powerful union boss and the politicians who fear her.

If this were science class, Mexico's education system might be floating in a jar of formaldehyde, a sorry specimen of how not to prepare young people for the 21st century.

Although flaws in public schools are well known in Mexico, they have perhaps never been as crisply cataloged as in "De Panzazo," a documentary that has been outdrawing Oscar-winning features since opening across the country in February.

"De Panzazo," slang for "barely passing," is a dissection and call to action in one. Sponsored by a reform group called Mexicanos Primero (Mexicans First), it was directed by Juan Carlos Rulfo, a well-regarded documentary maker, and Carlos Loret de Mola, a Matt Lauer-like host of a morning news show on the nation's dominant network, Televisa.

"De Panzazo" isn't likely to be the first time that viewers have heard about problems with public schools in Mexico or elsewhere. As in many places, even humble families try to scrape together what money they can to send their children to private schools to avoid the public system.

But the film offers an unusual look inside those battle-scarred classrooms — about a quarter of the movie was shot by students with borrowed cameras — as it tallies the shortcomings of a system responsible for 35 million youngsters.

"We don't all have the same level of education," says a private school student quoted in the film. "If poor people got the same level we do, maybe they would stop being poor."

A girl at a public junior high expressed worry over the toll of a teacher work stoppage.

"I've been reading my guide for high school," she says. "There's a lot I don't know."

The list of troubles is long, and illustrated by copious statistics showing just how far Mexico trails in academic performance (very far), how many hours students spend in class (fewer than half of what they do in education-rigorous South Korea) and how long they attend school (on average, only through junior high).

And despite ranking high in public spending for education, Mexico finished last among 34 nations in math, reading and science tests administered by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. Half of the Mexican students flunked and more than a quarter barely passed. Less than 1% scored "excellent."

Rulfo said the film was meant to awaken Mexicans to a crisis that many accept as a fact of daily life.

In a country where "education for everyone" has been a battle cry since the Mexican Revolution 100 years ago, "De Panzazo" finds fault all around.

It starts with teachers, who in recent days have taken to the streets to resist performance evaluations, and then methodically turns the spotlight on other faltering pillars: parents, school officials, the national teachers union.

The lasting impression is of an opaque system in which some good teachers and committed students and parents stand little chance of success in the face of inertia and political expediency.

Teachers often pay money to the union to gain classroom slots they aren't qualified to hold, while bureaucrats appear to be relegated to the role of hapless bystanders as students' scores sag.

In one amusing if contrived sequence, Loret chases officials at the federal Education Ministry for an answer on what should be a no-brainer: How many teachers are working in Mexico?

No one knows. In the end, the journalist is referred to the longtime union chief, Elba Esther Gordillo, one of the most powerful, and detested, figures in Mexican public life. The film then shows a string of video of Gordillo over more than 30 years in which she promises, again and again, to fight for educational excellence.

The three-year film project grew out of the reform group's work. Its leaders, who include Alejandro Ramirez, chief executive of the huge Cinopolis theater chain, approached Loret to pitch a series of news pieces on the state of schools.

Loret proposed instead a full-length documentary and took a first stab at it. Rulfo, who also has won praise for films about the families of U.S.-bound migrants and about workers toiling on a highway-building project in Mexico City, was recruited because of his

reputation for empathy.

Not all are pleased with the result. Many teachers view the movie as an unfair assault, while some leftists can't warm to Loret, a symbol of Mexico's establishment. Some commentators grouse that "De Panzazo" hits no harder than a conventional TV news story.

"It doesn't look at the root of the problem," complained Santos Villagran, an elementary school teacher in Mexico City.

He said parents do too little at home to help school their children.

But the film has soared at the box office in 32 cities. Mexicanos Primero plans to use inflatable screens to show "De Panzazo" in rural zones lacking commercial theaters.

At the ticket counter, moviegoers get a card with sections that can be torn off and passed to education officials and teachers, exhorting them to improve schools.

"It's important for people to get angry, bothered, that they know their children deserve better," said David Calderon, director general of Mexicanos Primero. "If they leave the movie theater angry, we will have done our job well."

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