

## The Mexican Case Since 1989 as a Model for World Development and the Globalization of PROFMEX

By James W. Wilkie

*Mexico Policy News*, No. 9 Fall 1993

[http://profmex.org/Mexico\\_Policy\\_News/Mexico\\_Policy\\_News\\_no\\_9\\_fall\\_1993.pdf](http://profmex.org/Mexico_Policy_News/Mexico_Policy_News_no_9_fall_1993.pdf)

Moscow, June 1993-The invitations for my visit here and the welcome accorded by (a) the Institute of Latin America at the Russian Academy of Sciences (ILA-RAS) and its *Revista América Latina*, (b) the Moscow State Institute of Foreign Relations (MGIMO), and (c) the Russian Committee for Cooperation with Latin America (RCFLA) symbolize in eight aspects why and how PROFMEX has developed into the worldwide network for Mexico policy research.

The first three of the aspects involve practical actions which can have an immediate impact on policy-making; the last five involve longer-term impact.

With regard to immediate results vis- á-vis Mexico policy relations:

1. So that Russia may emulate the Mexican tax model in which laws have been changed to harmonize the U.S.- Mexican nonprofit sectors, **Rostilov A. Sergeev** (the USSR's Ambassador to Mexico from 1980 to 1990 and currently President of the Latin American Advisory Board at MGIMO and President of Russia's Ecological Security Council) invited me to meet with Russian foundation leaders to inform them about my work for the International Task Force on Philanthropy, chaired by **Janice W. Windle** of the U.S. Council on Foundations. They agreed on the need to establish a Russian Council on Foundation (See accompanying article "Russian Council on Foundations Forming.")

2. To link into PROFMEXIS (The PROFMEX Information System) via Internet electronic access and to establish research base for PROFMEX in Russia, **Boris Koval** and I signed an agreement naming him the Director of the PROFMEX Office in Russia. The office is located at the IIL-RSAS A-RAS, at which PROFMEX members have a base of operations and computer communications with Mexico and the world. Reestablishment of communications is especially important because the Russian mail service has broken down and international courier service is very expensive.

Contemplated is the opportunity to place the Institute's *Revista América Latina* on-line, thus reestablishing circulation otherwise broken since 1989, according to Editor **Vladimir Krestianinov** and Associate Editor **Vera Kuteischikova**.

Inaugurating the PROFMEX Office in Moscow as a research base from which to investigate the USSR archives on Latin American affairs was **Catherine Komisariuk**, doctoral student and coeditor of UCLA's *Statistical Abstract of Latin America*.

3. To link into PROFMEXIS the monthly *Rusia y América Latina: Resumen de la Prensa de Rusia*, I had a successful planning meeting with **Karen A Jachaturov**, President of the Russian Committee for Cooperation with Latin America.

4. Russia's new policy leaders see the Mexican case since 1989 as a major model for privatization of state-owned enterprises with relative economic stability. Russian scholars

and policymakers are giving priority to Mexican studies and to the process and problems of change led by President **Carlos Salinas de Gortari**.

5. Salinas' political reforms designed to defeat local bossism are of immediate interest to new Russian leaders as they evaluate lessons from abroad about how to defeat the old Communist Party bosses throughout Russia. (See my "Salinas Versus the Caciques," *Mexico Policy News* [no. 6, 1991, pp. 11-13] and "Eastern Europe and North America," *Mexico Policy News* [no. 7, 1992, p. 5]).

6. Mexico's development of its Solidarity Program to aid impoverished areas provides an important example for analysis in relation to meeting Russia's regional problems.

7. Because the telecommunication infrastructure was, until 1989, relatively the same in Russia and Mexico and because of Mexico's recent great strides in international linkages, Mexico is seen as a hopeful model that Russia can indeed emulate, according to BESENET President **Frank Medeiros** (SDSU). Mexico, notes Medeiros, never broke with the communist countries and thus serves as a "nonimperialist model" for certain Russian groups who are concerned about Russia becoming openly dependent upon the United States.

8. The case of Mexico is important geopolitically to Russia because Mexico serves as a model for the asymmetric integration of a small, strategically located economy into a large trading bloc with short distance transportation costs and comparatively low wages, a model the Russians would like to emulate in relation to the European Community. Thus, the old saying "Poor Mexico, so far from God, so close to the United States" has been revised in Russia by intellectuals who jokingly say: "Lucky Mexico, so close to God, so close to the United States where one finds the economic residence of God," according to **Yakov G. Mashbits**, Chief Scientist, Institute of Geography of the Russian Academy of Sciences. (Mashbits is author and contributor to the atlases of Cuba, North Korea, Vietnam, and Mongolia.)

From the Mexican point of view, Russia is important. For example, CONACYT has contracted with 400 Russian physicists to teach in Mexican universities.

That these eight aspects symbolize the globalization of PROFMEX activities and links is echoed in the establishment of PROFMEX offices for China, Europe, and the Middle East, as well as for Ottawa and Toronto. For example, **John C. Cross** has moved from the University of the Americas/Mexico City College to the American University in Cairo, where he is opening the PROFMEX Middle East Office. **Alan Alexandroff**, **Gérard Chaliand**, and **Sengen Zhang**, who also developed their studies of Mexico at UCLA, now direct affairs at the PROFMEX Offices in Toronto, Paris, and Beijing, respectively.

Thanks are due to the following for making the Russia trip possible: **Delta Air Lines** for free international air transportation; **Olga M. Lazín** for having organized the Moscow schedule;

PROFMEXIS Officer in Moscow **Tatiana V. Khakhaleva**, for guidance and help in electronic networking; PROFMEX Central Contact Director **Robert Gibson**, for having made initial contacts in Russia in 1991 and for having organized travel from the United States; Vladimir Krestianinov, for having hosted the trip in Russia; **Andrei Stepanov**, President of Intralibra Travel Service Company in Moscow, for making local arrangements; and **Galina**

**Saveljeva, Serghei Serioja Saveljev, Veronica Kaozłowska Yladimirovna** for interpreting services and guidance in St. Petersburg.

For further information, contact in Moscow: Jachaturov at Tel/Fax (095) 200-4225; Koval at Tel/Fax 433-9512; Krestianinov at Tel 203-7477; Kuteischikovo at Tel 151-2809; Sergeev at Tel 928-9769; Saveljeva at Tel 314-2611; Stepanov of Intralibra Travel at Tel 451-0905