

By James W. Wilkie

PROFMEX Letter, No.2, December, 1994, p. 5.

Mexican National Lottery Sponsors Eastern European Connection to Mexico's Model for Globalizing Nonprofit Sectors

To assist Russia and Eastern Europe in meeting the shortfall in social funds caused by the contraction of statism, Mexico's Lotería Nacional para la Asistencia Pública granted funds during 1994 to PROFMEX. The grant enabled PROFMEX to extend the Mexican model for facilitating the mutual recognition of Not-for-Private-Profit Sectors in order to encourage the flow of foundation funds from the United States into formerly statist countries.

Capitalizing on the PROFMEX experience in helping to develop Mexico's cooperation with the United States (the world's largest source of foundation funds), Mexico's National Lottery seeks to help developing countries help themselves. In making the grant to PROFMEX, Director General **Manuel Alonso Muñoz** noted that the roots for development of a strong civil society require the establishment of diverse social funds which can help maintain the social safety net threatened by the dramatic decline in government expenditures. Alonso stated that the establishment of tax-deductible community funds outside the control of the government are necessary to solve local problems; and he noted PROFMEX's important contribution in helping formerly Communist countries of Eastern Europe to develop the requisite legal framework for attracting donations from foreign and domestic sources.

Mexico is uniquely positioned in two ways to aid in globalizing flows of foundation funds. First, by achieving mutual recognition of its Not-for-Private-Profit Sector with that of the USA, Mexico has succeeded where other such treaties failed (namely, U.S.-Canada, U.S.-Germany, U.S.-Israel, U.S.-England, U.S.-Russia). Second, during the long years of the Cold War, Mexico maintained close relations with Eastern Europe and Russia.

To carry out the grant from Mexico's lottery, PROFMEX developed its activities in Mexico City, Bucharest, Budapest, and Moscow. With regard to Russia, PROFMEX consulted with **Boris Koval**, Director of the Institute of Latin America, Russian Academy of Sciences, about organizing RUSconAMS, the Russian Consortium for the Americas. This policy analysis group will take into account the Mexican case as it develops plans, programs, and a legal framework to establish Russian Not-for-Private Profit relations with Latin America as well as the USA.

For Eastern Europe, representatives to the PROFMEX August 1994 International Policy Analysis Symposium in Mexico City consulted about organizing Not-for-Private-Profit Organizations (NPPOs) which to date have lacked leadership in changing national legal

structures for interaction especially with the USA. Thus **Zoltán Kárpáti** (PROFMEX Budapest) will use his base in the Hungarian Academy of Sciences to work with Hungarian Treasury officials to make reforms consistent with permitting Hungarian institutions to develop cross-border relations consonant with lessons and comparisons with NAFTA. Kárpáti is organizing MAFIL—Hungarian Council on Philanthropy.

For Romania, **Nicolae Coman** (Vice-Rector, University of Cluj) is establishing ROMFIL, the Romanian Council on Philanthropy, which will work with **Alin Teodorescu**, President of the Soros Foundation for an Open Society, to advocate establishment of the U.S.-Mexican NPPO model as a basis for a Romanian interaction with NAFTA.

Lic. Alonso, who met at the PROFMEX International Symposium with PROFMEX's worldwide representatives has long been involved in carrying Mexico's message to the world. Born in 1929, he studied at the Escuela Nacional Preparatoria and Columbia University in New York City. During the 1940s, Alonso was a reporter for UPI International as well as Mexico City's *El Universal* and *La Prensa*. During the 1950s, he was the Mexican correspondent for *Visión de América Latina* and Brazil's *O Cruzeiro*. In the 1960s, he was public relations director for a number of enterprises as well as public relations advisor to the organizing committee for the 1968 Olympic Games held in Mexico City.

Continuing his international involvement, during the 1970s and 1980s, Alonso was a member of the Mexican government team that organized presidential travel to more than 40 countries (1970-1976). After serving during 1975-1976 at PRI's Secretaría de Prensa, he served as Press Secretary for Mexico's Comisión Federal de Electricidad, 1976-1980. During the 1980s, Alonso served as President de la Madrid's Press Secretary. During the early 1990s, Alonso gained further international recognition. As Mexico's Consul General in New York City from October 1990 to December 1992, his work made him one of the City's most effective consular corps leaders. Returning to Mexico in 1993, Alonso brought an international dimension to the social role of Mexico's National Lottery. As of December 1994, he has taken the assignment of Editor-in-Chief of Mexico City's *La Prensa* in order to make it into a major force in the news world.

[On the history of the National Lottery, see *Mexico Policy News* 9 (1993), p. 9.]