

Dateline Mexico by Josefina Menéndez

Some warning shots of terror

Is the mayor of Mexico City, Hank González, sending a political message for 1982?

As my readers will remember, I reported a month ago that the powerful mayor of Mexico City, Carlos Hank González, has a very particular strategy to arrive at the presidency.

Carlos Hank is barred by the constitution from becoming president—his father was foreign-born—so his next best strategy is to force an “Italian style” figurehead president into office when José Lopez Portillo’s term ends next year; change the constitution; and run himself in 1988.

As I told you, some well-placed officials here see one of Hank’s major weapons being terrorism. A sudden spurt of terrorism last week lends new weight to this analysis.

First, three “students” (whose ages varied between 35 and 45 years old) wielding machine guns took over the office of the president of National University. Originally forgetting to specify any demands, the trio later asked for more money for the high schools run by the university. After holding the president’s personal secretary hostage for 16 hours, the terrorists moved to the home of one of Mexico’s most notorious terrorist controllers, Fausto Trejo. After additional negotiations, the three were allowed to fly out of the country to an unspecified European country in exchange for releasing the hostage.

The dissident movement in the national teachers union (SNTE), which I have exposed in other col-

umns as a creation of the Jesuits and a gaggle of left sects grouped around the Mexican Communist Party, suddenly began a series of “flying rallies” on the premises of the major embassies, under the ridiculous pretext of “letting teachers in other countries” know of the Mexican teachers’ plight.

Simultaneously, a PCM-coordinated group from Oaxaca showed up to occupy the Indian and Guatemalan embassies. After a few tense hours, they were dislodged by the police.

To top it off, an attempt to seize the armory of a centrally located bank security office was identified as possibly the work of a revived offshoot of Mexico’s most famous terrorist outfit of the early 1970s, the 23rd of September League.

In the four years of López Portillo’s term, terrorism has been largely quiescent; but it plagued the country from 1968 to 1976. It is taken for granted here that last week’s sudden outbreak is someone’s message.

A high government official insisted to me this week that Hank González’s control over the PCM-pivoted left-Jesuit apparatus is much more extensive than generally realized. “It’s true that he knows nothing of economics or science, but he’s a first-rate psychologist and knows very well how to manipulate people,” he commented.

The official warned that Hank is putting his bets on three candidates

as his frontmen, and will stop at nothing to see that one of them gets the nod.

But observers here are giving special importance to Hank’s slip-page in control of his home state two weeks ago as a likely trigger to the “message.”

The state of Mexico, which Hank governed from 1969 to 1975, is one of the richest in the country. For almost 35 years it has been a political bastion of Hank González’s mentor, Gustavo Baz, and then of Hank himself.

The question of whether Hank had the strength to impose yet another of his close group as the governor for the 1981-1987 term was seen as an important indication of his power to determine the presidential sweepstakes.

And as of the first week of February, when it became known that a person not directly to Hank’s liking, Alfredo del Mazo, had received the nod from the ruling PRI party, political analysts began putting out the word that some response from Hank could be expected.

Security officials here are privately keeping their eyes on one additional element of the picture, one Mr. Henry Kissinger. Henry, who knows even more about how to manipulate terrorism than Carlos Hank, was in Oaxaca at the time the Oaxaca terrorists headed off to their violent rendezvous at the Mexico City embassies. He was also in Oaxaca the last time the group erupted along a terrorist profile. And now Henry is completing his traditional one-month winter vacation in Acapulco in the company of precisely the “jet set” offshoots of European nobility who dot the dossiers of European antiterror security investigations.