

Immigration policy: a new start for U.S.-Mexico relations?

by Dennis Small

The assassination attempt against President Reagan has made it impossible to hold the López Portillo-Reagan summit meeting, planned for April 27, in San Diego and La Paz. Over the past week, however, both the U.S. and Mexican governments have given signals of good will and underlined once more the importance they place on the summit talks. Mexico's foreign minister stated on April 14 that President López Portillo is willing to travel to Washington on the scheduled date, if that would best suit the convalescent American President. And a White House spokesman also left the door open to a late-April meeting in Washington.

The agenda for the summit, like the date and place, is

up in the air as of this writing. The best indication of what should be expected came from the head of the Mexican House of Representatives, Luis Farfás, who told the press last week that he was "terribly interested" in the outcome of the meeting, and declared that the two principal agenda items would be bilateral trade and migrant labor.

Regarding the first item, what is notable is the Mexican emphasis on *bilateral* accords with the United States, possibly including the oil-for-technology framework outlined by *EIR* founder Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., as opposed to the *multilateral* proposals, such as the North American Common Market or Accord, being foolishly

LaRouche talks about the Mexico potential

The following remarks were made by NDPC Advisory Board Chairman Lyndon H. LaRouche, in response to a question put to him on March 19, 1981 at a conference in Washington, D.C. on U.S.-Mexico relations.

I support entirely the legislation sponsored by Sen. Harrison Schmitt, which would provide a visa to all undocumented workers who wanted to come over and work. I would also support, however, the aspiration of our law enforcement officers [to] increase our border patrol and other authorizations to control the gun-smuggling, the terrorists, and the drug traffic between the two countries. It is a problem for both countries—for the Mexicans, who are just as desirous of controlling these problems as we are, and perhaps more so.

Therefore, we should increase the intelligence and law enforcement capabilities against categories of criminality at the same time that we open the door.

This is most probably the area that President

Reagan will have the least differences with President López Portillo. They are both just as concerned as I am with the human rights of the individual Mexican who has come here because our employers want them. I don't want them ripped off, robbed and so on, while they are here, just because they are here illegally.

I would seek to set a precedent with the Mexican president on one clearly defined area, and then work with him to determine what is comparable to and not comparable to it in other areas. I wouldn't try to bite off too much at this time. . . .

Nationals from other countries who come here to work should have the right to legal constitutional protection while they are in this country.

Therefore, so long as an adequate consular program is set up to work with the soon-to-be documented workers, we can deal with that area satisfactorily.

The other thing we have to do is set up a policy perception of how we will deal with overall bilateral relations. We are putting the first brick in there, and trying to add an amendment onto the Schmitt bill concerning increased support for Mexico on other questions. But don't make the first issue too complicated so that we lose all we seek in a morass of complications.

floated by administration officials like Reagan adviser Richard Allen and others.

On the migrant labor question, in recent weeks there has been motion in the United States, particularly in Congress, to put together a viable package that the Mexicans will also find acceptable. This point could well be one of the first on which the two heads of state are able to reach substantive agreement.

There is, however, a tremendous difference in approach between the various proposals thus far put forward. The most provocative one comes from the Hesburgh Commission established by President Carter in 1978, whose modified legislative version was submitted to Congress by Sen. Walter Huddleston, a Kentucky Democrat. The premise of this approach is that the United States is in irreversible economic decline, lacking in resources, and therefore unable to maintain its traditional policy of welcoming immigrants into the American "melting pot." The Hesburgh proposals are coherent with—and in some respects actually drafted by—the authors and proponents of the Malthusian *Global 2000 Report*.

A second group of proposals goes at the problem from the opposite standpoint: that Mexico is our friend and ally, that we must aid its economic development, and that it is in America's national interest to establish some kind of "guest-worker" program for Mexican migrant labor in the United States.

A task force composed of the secretaries of Justice, State, Health and Human Services, and Labor is expected to issue a formal recommendation some time in May, but everything indicates that President Reagan favors the latter approach.

In a recent interview with CBS's Walter Cronkite, Reagan said, "Remember that Mexico is our neighbor and friend, and that it has a very high rate of unemployment. If we close the border, we will obstruct the only escape valve, which we call illegal immigration. If we close off that escape valve we could destabilize Mexico, and in any case it's not in our own interests."

The two "guest-worker" bills now before Congress, one sponsored by Republican Sen. Harrison Schmitt of New Mexico, the other by California's Sen. S. I. Hayakawa, share this orientation and are very similar in other respects. Both senators are politically close to Reagan and to Reagan intimates like Sen. Paul Laxalt, a Nevada Republican.

The shortcomings and inadequacies in these two bills are addressed in a detailed evaluation and policy proposal issued by the National Democratic Policy Committee (NDPC), whose advisory board is chaired by Lyndon LaRouche. We reprint the entire NDPC document below, along with a summary of the various proposals dealing with the labor question.

NDPC PROPOSAL

'No migrant law will work without a growth approach'

The following policy statement on immigration was released on April 13 by the National Democratic Policy Committee.

With the second summit meeting between Mexican President José López Portillo and U.S. President Ronald Reagan on the agenda for later in the spring of this year, the issue of immigration into the United States—and in particular of undocumented workers—is receiving important attention from legislators in Washington, D.C. and the public at large.

This long-standing bone of contention between the U.S. and Mexico actually offers the opportunity to take a long step in the direction of establishing an overall positive bilateral relationship with our neighbor to the south, which—centered on cooperation for the rapid, high-technology industrialization of both countries—can serve as a model for North-South relations as a whole. It is toward this end that the National Democratic Policy Committee (NDPC) has elaborated the following policy proposal.

The constitutional question

At the heart of the immigration issue is nothing less than the constitutional purpose for which our nation was founded. As established by our Founding Fathers in the Constitution, America was created as a temple of liberty committed to the continuous industrial progress of its people. We not only welcomed the world's "tired, poor, and hungry" to American shores; we quickly absorbed them into the mainstream of our booming economy, an economy which they in turn helped develop through their applied skills.

There isn't an American today who isn't the descendant of an immigrant from one country or another. This "melting pot" approach—premised on a constantly growing economy—is the American way.