

# U.S. and Mexican Presidents join forces for the war on drugs

by D. E. Pettingell

Mexican-American friendship was strengthened with the Aug. 12-14 visit by Mexican President Miguel de la Madrid to Washington. President Reagan stated following the meeting with "my friend" de la Madrid, that the "people and the government of the United States are ready to lend a hand when and where it can make a difference," and that the relationship between the two countries was based on "respect and understanding."

This, the fifth meeting between the two leaders since 1983, was an effort to try to smooth out frictions resulting from a venomous campaign against the Mexican government waged by Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) and certain administration officials.

As a demonstration of good will, Reagan announced the lifting of a six-year embargo on Mexican tuna. But it was in the area of fighting drugs that the two governments reached most significant agreement and committed themselves to further collaboration. "What we really hoped for in this visit was a joint declaration of war against drug trafficking, and that is what you saw," a senior administration official told reporters after the meeting.

De la Madrid said that both Presidents agreed to "attack all the links of the chain—that is production, distribution, and consumption" of drugs. He praised Reagan's "very important" crusade to reduce narcotics consumption in the United States.

Mexican Attorney-General Sergio García Ramírez underlined on Aug. 11, before leaving for Washington with the President's delegation, that the next challenge facing the war on drugs is to go after those "legitimate" businesses and financial interests that profit from the narcotics traffic. "Those businesses, legitimate in appearance, but which also have an illegal, illicit origin, have to be affected, because they serve to finance drug traffic or, in any case, cause the loss of lives. . . . I believe that this is a superior and more important, stage in the campaign. . . . It is absolutely indispensable to affect the profits of the drug trade." Those involved must be punished, "no matter what level they are at—the higher they are, the worse the damage they are causing."

The meeting between Reagan and de la Madrid managed to defuse, for the time being at least, the campaign to overthrow the Mexican government. But the battle is far from over. Efforts to sabotage a positive outcome of the Reagan-

de la Madrid meeting escalated even during the Mexican President's stay in Washington.

The Mexican President took the occasion to make clear several points to the American public. First, he reiterated his commitment to fighting drugs and reported that 25,000 Mexican troops are permanently involved in the war on drugs, that 50% of the attorney-general's budget goes for drug eradication, and that over 1,000 Mexican law-enforcement agents and troops have died in the war. He lamented that in the United States, Mexico's anti-drug war is not "well appreciated."

In response to questions on "illegal" immigration, de la Madrid stated that the fundamental solution to the flow of Mexican workers into the United States, is for Mexico to grow economically and provide jobs for those jobless workers. He condemned the "physical violence" that Mexican immigrants are subjected to, because it "violates their individual rights."

De la Madrid was also queried about Chihuahua, the northern state where the National Action Party (PAN) is openly backed by anti-Vatican insurrectionist priests, as well as by numerous Wall Street-controlled media and U.S. politicians. The Mexican President explained that in Mexico, by constitutional law, the Church is not allowed to take part in politics. He further said that the Electoral College in Chihuahua had reviewed the alleged electoral "irregularities" and found nothing that justified "voiding" the elections, the demand which the PAN's U.S. supporters were flaunting all week. He reiterated that Mexicans will always reject intervention in the nation's electoral or other internal affairs.

## 'No to intervention'

Sen. Dennis DeConcini (D-Ariz.) met privately with de la Madrid on Aug. 12, to demand that the July 6 elections in the northern Mexican state of Chihuahua be "annulled," because of what the senator described as "massive vote fraud" by the ruling Revolutionary Institutional Party (PRI) against the opposition National Action Party (PAN). The PRI has governed Mexico for 60-plus years, and is virtually synonymous with the stability of the nation's institutions; the PAN is backed by Nazis, communists, drug-runners, and landlords, and is committed to dismembering the Mexican nation.

DeConcini and five Republican senators are the sponsors

of an interventionist "resolution" favoring the PAN.

DeConcini informed the astonished de la Madrid, "You cannot violate human rights" so close to the United States, and threatened to give Mexico the Philippines treatment if it did not agree to the demands dictated by the U.S. congressional group. "Ferdinand Marcos told us that it was not our business, and that we should not worry, that everything was under control"—and look what happened to him, DeConcini told the Mexican President, according to a report in the Mexican newspaper *Excelsior* on Aug. 13.

In answering DeConcini's threats, de la Madrid set the tone of his visit. "Mexicans reject any foreign intervention in our electoral process," de la Madrid said, adding that the senator's "information" on alleged "vote fraud" was "incomplete" and wrong. De la Madrid's warnings made banner headlines in Mexico City's dailies.

DeConcini was basing his allegations of vote fraud in Chihuahua on propaganda put out by the Nazi PAN and the Communist PSUM, better known as the "PANSUM" alliance, as well as PAN backers in the U.S. media and academic circles.

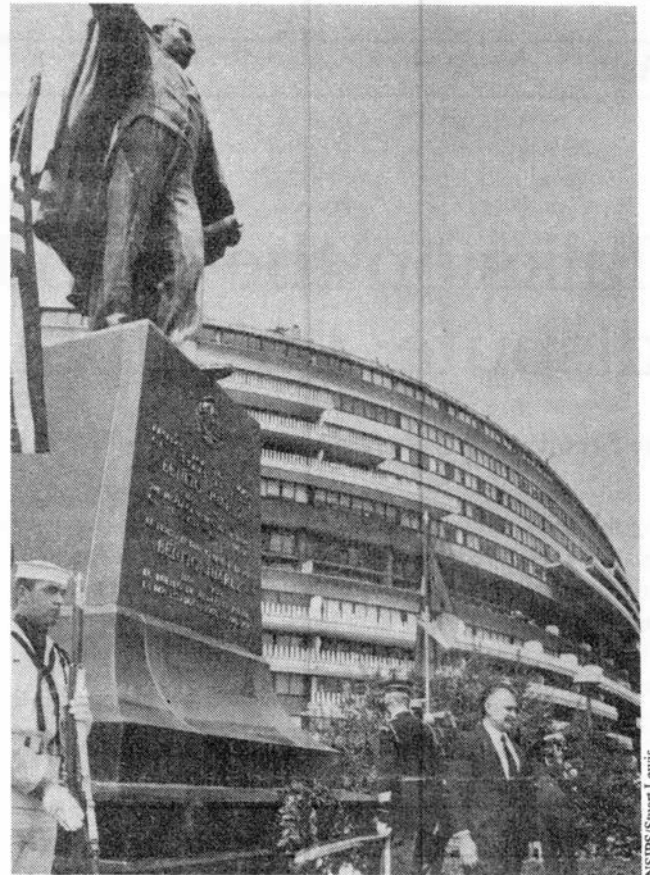
The PANSUM's U.S. political and financial backers decided to bring a group of PAN members to back up DeConcini and Senator Helms's attacks against Mexico during de la Madrid's visit. The group was led by PAN leader Alfredo Corella, from Monterrey, Nuevo León, who arrived in Washington a few days before the presidential visit, to hand out videocassettes to legislators, academics, and the media, on the "electoral atrocities" against the PAN in Chihuahua.

Georgetown University's Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) acted as the public relations firm for the PAN group. Delal Baer, who heads CSIS's "Mexican Project," met with the visiting PAN members and put them in touch with legislators and television networks. Baer is the author of several pro-PAN "study papers" on the "lack of democracy" in Mexico.

On Aug. 13, the Council for Inter-American Security, headed by Lyn Bouchey, paid \$50,000 to publish a full-page ad in the *Washington Post* calling on de la Madrid to "Void the Chihuahua Elections." The text consisted of a reprint of ads published in the Mexican press by three Catholic bishops of Chihuahua, a group of "opposition" parties led by the PANSUM, and a group of "intellectuals" including "Aztec fundamentalist" writer Octavio Paz.

Senator Helms, who gets his information against the Mexican government from the PAN, invited the group of PAN fanatics to "make their point" in a hearing room at the Senate. Alfredo Corella denounced the Mexican system as a "soft dictatorship" and lied that de la Madrid had never met with the "opposition." Corella accused the small group of reporters that attended the event of being agents of the Mexican government, including this writer!

An hour later, the group of provocateurs, who are unable to spell the word "Mexico" (they write it with a "j" instead of an "x"), moved to the National Press Building, where de la



Mexican President Miguel de la Madrid in Washington, after laying a wreath before a statue of Benito Juárez, Mexico's founding father.

Madrid was the guest of honor of a well-attended press luncheon.

In a final attempt to try to sabotage joint U.S.-Mexico efforts against drugs, the *New York Times* on Aug. 14, the day de la Madrid left Washington, published a front-page article lying that Mexico may allow American aircraft to fly over the border to chase drug-trafficking aircraft.

In his appearance at the National Press Club, de la Madrid denied that claim. "There is no basis for such information," he said. "Agreements on cooperation that both governments have made are based on the principle that each one of the governments must assume within its own territory, with its own elements, the fight against drug-trafficking. We are convinced of the need of more effective cooperation, but with full respect for the sovereignty and the right of each nation, and without allowing the public forces of another country to go into the other country when waging this battle."

Attorney-General Ed Meese, in a press conference announcing a new interdiction program along the U.S.-Mexican border called "Operation Alliance," echoed the Mexican President and explained that in his talks with his Mexican counterpart, they agreed that Mexican aircraft will patrol their side of the border, in close coordination with their American counterparts.