

Dateline Mexico by Hugo López Ochoa

A step forward for nationalism

Socialist Heberto Castillo throws his support to Cárdenas as the July 6 presidential election approaches.

The analysts of the Mexican national political scene are beyond repair: Yesterday, they again put in circulation the hypothesis that Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas 'after all,' must be considered 'the alternate PRI candidate,' " Ernesto Julio Teissier, columnist of the afternoon paper *Opciones* wrote June 13. His brief commentary concentrates on the volatile political situation the country is entering, barely three weeks from the general election on July 6.

Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas is the presidential candidate of the Democratic National Front (FDN), a coalition of parties which nominated him after he had left the ruling PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party) a mere eight months ago. In such a brief period of time, the son of the nationalist President Lázaro Cárdenas (1934-40), has catalyzed in his favor the tremendous discontent within the base of the PRI, occasioned by the total *entreguismo* (turning over of the country) by the government of Miguel de la Madrid to the usurers of the international banking community. The PRI candidate, Carlos Salinas de Gortari, is identified by everyone as the co-author of the present economic catastrophe.

In the recent period, Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas has scored a number of campaign breakthroughs that have stirred up the country. The most spectacular was the withdrawal of the presidential candidate of the Mexican Socialist Party (PMS), Heberto Castillo, who announced June 1 that he would transfer his votes to Cárdenas.

This was immediately seized upon by the media outlet of the "free trade" mafia, Televisa, which is very satisfied with the government's economic program, to paint the FDN as "pink." But the withdrawal of Castillo expresses a truth of strategic importance for the country: The Mexican electorate wants to break with the economic policy of the International Monetary Fund and prefers nationalist candidates, not the communists. Heberto Castillo himself frankly admitted that, on the campaign trail, he realized that his potential voters "prefer to vote for Cárdenas."

On May 26, Cárdenas addressed 150,000 students at the Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), a most unusual event in that traditionally the university rejects the "interjection of political parties" into its classrooms. Salinas de Gortari couldn't have pulled this off in his dreams. The day before, Cárdenas attracted 25,000 students at the National Polytechnic Institute. Throwing in a number of other meetings in the interior of the country, he addressed in total about a half million sympathizers in just one week, something not achieved by any other candidate.

Then there was the case of a meeting in Papantla, in the highland border region of Puebla and Veracruz states, where 20,000 peasants from many neighboring towns traveled dozens of kilometers to listen to him, despite the PRI having suspended passenger bus transportation that day.

Teissier's reference to Cárdenas as

the "alternate PRI candidate," refers to the fact that, according to a number of surveys, 50% of PRI militants sympathize with Cárdenas, although they don't say this publicly. "Formally, the PRI can bring together in its meetings as many people as any other party," commented a PRI leader in the interior of the country to *EIR*, "but I see that they are having second thoughts." This development, which could be called "a conspiracy of silence," could be reflected in an upset in the voting on July 6. Although it remains to be seen if the army would back that electoral upset, the truth is that Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas is still seen as part of the "PRI family," who could govern with "the machinery of the system itself," as some of his closest aides have affirmed.

But the fact that the FDN could well establish itself as the second electoral force in the country would blow to pieces the plans of the international banks and the International Monetary Fund. The fact that the pro-IMF National Action Party (PAN) has maintained the second position, with about 16% of the electorate since 1982, has given to the De la Madrid administration the pretext to "legitimately" hand over the sovereignty of the country to the banks. And a faction of the PRI is proposing "co-governing" with the PAN.

One survey published by the newspaper *Unomásuno*, gives 30% to Cárdenas, 40% to the PRI, and 16% to the PAN. But on June 14, the pro-IMF Televisa nexus released a survey conceding only 11% to Cárdenas, 16% to the PAN, and 65% to Salinas de Gortari. These latter figures agree with what the Salinas de Gortari group has leaked as "official."

The final word will be given by the voters July 6—and by the nationalists who still remain in the PRI . . . and in the army.