

Cárdenas: Mexican regime throws provocateur bombs

by Hugo López Ochoa

Cuahtémoc Cárdenas, the presidential candidate of the National Democratic Front, is preparing to lead millions peacefully marching on the capital from all corners of Mexico in early September, when the new Congress renders the final verdict on who won the July 6 general elections. The regime used massive vote fraud to steal the elections from Cárdenas and his FDN coalition. Cárdenas, however, has a chance of being sworn in as President in December, not merely because he won an honest victory at the polls, but because he is mobilizing the mass forces to make the vote stick.

The ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) machine, which has brought starvation back to Mexico in order to service the foreign debt, is strongly suspected of planting bombs at stock brokerage houses to give credibility to its accusation that Cárdenas is "making the country ungovernable." It is the PRI's attempt to "usurp" power and rob the people of their suffrage, Cárdenas repeats at every stop, which could "make the country ungovernable."

By confronting the political machine which has monopolized power in Mexico, Cárdenas is taking a big risk. Those in power—egged on by the banks that dictate economic and foreign policy in Washington—could trigger serious violence and even civil war, rather than yield to majority rule. But a continuation of policies which have reduced Mexican living standards by 60% in the past six years, including 15% in the past year, would eventually lead to a violent breakdown of society in any case. The Cárdenas movement is acting responsibly, as Mexico's last chance for a peaceful solution to its grave problems.

A new political earthquake is about to shake Mexico. On July 30, Cárdenas will visit the La Laguna region of the state of Coahuila, where his supporters are preparing a "monstrous rally." Their mobilization is to protest the massive vote fraud the regime perpetrated against Cárdenas and his ticket in the July 6 elections.

At the beginning of February, La Laguna was the locale where Mexican patriots demonstrated for the first time their anger and their willingness to fight to stop being treated like slaves by the foreign creditor banks and their accomplices in the Mexican government. More than 100,000 peasants met there, in what was described as the "Waterloo" of the sys-

tem's presidential candidate, Carlos Salinas de Gortari. Salinas was officially declared to have won the July 6 elections.

The real returns, according to figures presented by Cárdenas and checked with sources inside the government, gave about 38.8% of the national vote to Cárdenas, 32.69% to Salinas, and 25.19% to Manuel Clouthier, candidate of the National Action Party (PAN).

The day after the vote, the press reported that people in La Laguna voted 1,000 to 1 for Cárdenas; but the official totals gave the victory to Salinas's Institutional Revolutionary Party! The people are furious there and in other states where Cárdenas is protesting similar frauds. Almost everywhere he goes, Cárdenas is drawing more supporters to his rallies than before the elections. On July 16, in Mexico City, 400,000 came out for him. Then, in his whistle-stop tour through the states of Guerrero, Morelos, Veracruz, and Puebla, July 20-24, more than 150,000 filled the plazas. In each of the capital cities, 20-50,000 supporters pledged they would continue to fight to defend their votes and win economic changes.

But this is only the tip of the iceberg. As he passed through smaller towns, 4,000-5,000 people come out to greet him. Peasants stood for hours along highways to cheer him as he passed, waving their fists in the air. The same sign came from truck and bus drivers, the daily *Unomásuno* reported July 24. Many observers compare the response Cárdenas is getting with that evoked by Pope John Paul II during his 1979 visit to Mexico.

In Acapulco, Cárdenas claimed that 8 of the 10 deputy seats and both senate seats were robbed by the PRI. In Jalapa, Veracruz, he accused the government of only recognizing the victory of his FDN ticket in "one of the 12 districts won by the FDN." He also charged the government had robbed the senate seats won there by his running mates. And in Puebla, he said he could prove that at least 50% of the votes in that state were for him, despite the government's only recognizing 17%.

Oligarchic terrorism

The oligarchy of former bankers, inside and outside the PRI, panicked at the prospect that Cárdenas would force their

fraud to be reversed.

Starting with the Televisa TV monopoly founded by the late President Miguel Alemán, they spent millions on propaganda to threaten Cárdenas. "Cárdenas is making himself anti-democratic and on the edge of illegality," asserted Guillermo Fonseca, a tool of Interior Secretary Manuel Bartlett. Fonseca lied, accusing Cárdenas of "inciting his partisans to the use of violence." Fonseca is a boss of the National Confederation of Popular Organizations (CNOP), the grab-bag wing of the PRI which encompasses all those who are not workers and peasants.

"Coincidentally," the next night a bomb went off outside a stock brokerage in Mexico City. The bomb was carefully crafted to make a big noise and shatter a few windows, but not to cause any injuries. A pile of leaflets left on the site was signed by one "Emiliano Zapata Revolutionary Commando," was a compendium of stilted anarchist clichés more likely penned by a police provocateur than by a radical student. This is the first time in more than a decade that a terrorist group has surfaced in Mexico—if the act was not done by the same government goons who assassinated Cárdenas's top vote fraud coordinator four days before the election.

Cárdenas himself explained July 27 that the bomb was a crude effort to provoke his people to violence: "Government forces want us to go outside constitutional limits, the ground on which we are winning, [then] to dismember and destroy the strong movement created during the election campaign and which shows Mexico's refusal to continue being governed by a tiny group of 300 men." This "tiny group" is the crowd around Agustín Legorreta and Juan Sánchez Navarro, the speculators whose banks were nationalized in 1982.

Cárdenas added, "The provocateur actions of the supposed Gen. Emiliano Zapata Revolutionary Commando and the CNOP declarations coincide with the drive to demobilize the people and provide the government with pretexts for a political shutdown."

Cárdenas again called on his supporters to "keep yourselves inside legal channels . . . because the Constitution and political truth are on our side." He also charged that many of the 40 mysterious assassinations of journalists in various parts of Mexico in recent months "are actions tending to instill fear in journalists not to write about violations of the law." He named some of the dead journalists.

'System' won't yield on economics

The only way the "system" might pacify the majority Cárdenas is mobilizing, would be to do an about-face away from austerity policies. But, if De la Madrid and Salinas were tempted to coopt the opposition by ending their own murderous economic policies, they have strict orders from Wall Street and the crowd that educated them at Harvard not to yield an inch. Boston's *Christian Science Monitor*, for example, warned Salinas July 27: "He can't afford to do anything that would threaten the availability of commercial cred-

it for his country."

Thus, while unyielding in the economic realm, Salinas de Gortari and President Miguel de la Madrid made two moves the last week of July to try to prevent another big section of the PRI party from going over to Cárdenas. On July 26, the PRI hurriedly announced Guillermo Cosío Vidaurri would be its candidate for governor of Jalisco in December's state election there. He was named as soon as the rumor came out that his protector, Javier García Paniagua, a powerful PRI chieftain in that state, was talking with Cárdenas's FDN about being their candidate.

The second "negotiating" move by Salinas de Gortari, was the naming of Emilio M. González, the number-two man in the PRI's labor wing, the Mexican Confederation of Workers (CTM) as PRI leader in the next Senate, starting September. *EIR* has revealed Salinas de Gortari's plot to destroy the PRI unions (*EIR*, July 22, 1988). Ironically, many of the CTM leaders running for Congress on the PRI ticket lost, even in the official count, to Cárdenas's FDN ticket, despite their secretly agreeing with him on the need for less abusive conditions on Mexico's foreign debt. They lost in Mexico City and elsewhere, because they never dared to go to the public with such platforms. Instead, they embraced the government's Economic Solidarity Pact, the Mexican version of the Nazis' economic shock program.

Thus, Emilio M. González has become PRI chief in the Senate *not* as a result of any CTM show of force against Salinas, but because of the vote in favor of Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas in the July 6 elections! On July 27, González insinuated that the future could hold alliances between the PRI and Cárdenas around economic demands, but he refused to say a word about "going to the street" to force a policy shift.

The pathetic situation of PRI union leaders was reflected in handwringing over their defeat. One moaned, "You have to be radical. . . . The workers shout at me to go to the market to see reality." He was referring to the pact which froze wages, but did not really freeze prices. Another one noted, "Eight months of the pact are enough to put the lie to the story that inflation is caused by wage increases."

But, despite the belly-aching, most PRI labor leaders remain immobilized. They have not yet dared to publicly disobey President De la Madrid's desires to keep up the shock program until he leaves office in December. They profess to believe the myth that Salinas will cut a deal with the FDN to change economic policies *if* Cárdenas were to concede defeat and demobilize his supporters. But Salinas is showing he would be at least as destructive to Mexico's economic progress as his predecessor has been. Right after the elections, one of his top strategists, Urban Development and Ecology Secretary Manuel Camacho Solís, announced the near-complete Laguna Verde nuclear power station would be "indefinitely" postponed. That shows what Salinas really means with his rhetoric about "modernizing" and "raising productivity" in Mexico.