

Interview: Porfirio Muñoz Ledo



Reagan's neo-liberal policies provoked upsurge of nationalism

Minutes before President Miguel de la Madrid read his last State of the Union message to the Mexican Congress Sept. 1, opposition Sen. Porfirio Muñoz Ledo, campaign strategist for Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, granted the following interview on the floor of Congress to a small group of foreign correspondents, which included EIR's D.E. Pettingell.

Wall Street Journal: Where is Carlos Salinas? Why isn't he here?

Muñoz Ledo: I don't know, sir. Ask Salinas. He has no special right to be here. The election has not been certified, sir. . . . To public opinion and according to the figures that are available, the candidate with the most votes is Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas. The election is not certified; it is going to be certified next week. Everyone has an equal right to be here. Juridically, there is no difference between Salinas and [Gumersindo] Magaña [presidential candidate for the tiny Mexican Democratic Party, who received the least votes in Mexico's July 6 elections]. Period. . . .

WSJ: But this is the first time in many years in which the "victor" is not present at the *Informe*. . . .

Muñoz Ledo: The point is there is no "victor." To put "victor" because you want to is purely a publicity maneuver. The figures have not even been authorized by the Federal Electoral Commission. . . . They are figures of the PRI and of the government. . . . I am speaking very accurately, very precisely. There is no victor. The victor in the eyes of all national and world opinion is Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas. But he has not yet been declared President-elect. We hope that he will be.

EIR: Nonetheless, the PRI has the majority of votes in the Congress, and is the body in charge of conducting the certification.

Muñoz Ledo: Yes, but the PRI cannot confront all the people of Mexico. It is taking a very large risk. I don't know if the PRI will vote automatically. I suppose that they will comply with their duty. I cannot presume that 260 deputies

will come with the intention of violating the Constitution. It is a very risky presumption. To say that 260 deputies of a Congress come determined to violate the Constitution would be very daring. I don't believe it.

EIR: The opposition has asserted that by controlling the majority of Congress, the PRI has voted illegally and arbitrarily. What guarantees are there that it will not do the same when it comes to certifying Salinas?

Muñoz Ledo: . . . It is very risky for them to do so. Because all the people are in the streets demanding that Cárdenas be recognized. They are going to cause a serious problem in the country if the Constitution is absurdly violated.

EIR: What do you expect from this last State of the Union address by Miguel de la Madrid?

Muñoz Ledo: That it be given truthfully. It is what one expects of the President of a great nation like this one.

WSJ: This paragraph [of the address] struck me. . . .

Muñoz Ledo: It is the first time that President de la Madrid took a partisan approach. . . . If he takes sides, he is violating the constitutional mandate that he gave himself. He made a constitutional reform, giving the government, the Executive branch, responsibility for directing the electoral process. The electoral process is not over, therefore the President of the Republic cannot express himself in a partisan manner. It is a violation of the Constitution. . . . It has been many years since De la Madrid has given classes on constitutional law. That is probably the reason.

La Opinión (Los Angeles): Why do you think that his address barely touches on the electoral process?

Muñoz Ledo: I haven't read it. They haven't given it to us. The representatives of the nation do not have the privileges of the foreign press. How does one jump over an abyss? As quickly as possible. It is obvious that he wants to avoid the theme as much as possible. The more one extends oneself, the more vulnerable one is.

EIR: What do you think of the way in which the foreign press, particularly the U.S. press, describes the Cardenista movement in Mexico as leftist?

Muñoz Ledo: I have spoken with U.S. experts, and they tell me that it is new, that it is over the last month or less, and that it is deliberate, calling us "leftists," "leftists," "leftists," "leftists."

EIR: To what purpose?

Muñoz Ledo: To discredit us. I said it in the Senate, commenting on Jesús González Schmall [the PAN senatorial candidate who challenged Muñoz Ledo's victory] who virtually accused us of being communists. I said that he was following the editorial line of the major U.S. newspapers. That when democracy stems from the PAN, Hurray! Hurray! Hurray! But when it comes from a nationalist force, then they no longer like democracy.

It is the great Reaganite trap. Reagan fell into a huge trap, for lack of reasoning and due to an excess of arrogance in believing that one could . . . impose on Latin America a neoliberal economy, forcing it to pay the debt, punishing wages, halting production, and triggering recession while at the same time believing that one could encourage democratization. . . .

There is an incompatibility between the attempt to win economic hegemony and the attempt to win political hegemony, that can already be seen. The more Reagan forced his hand in economic matters, the more he spoke of democratization, the more a nationalist and progressive democratization emerged. Throughout Latin America the nationalist and popular forces are winning. But despite the fact that the party of Rodrigo Borja in Ecuador calls itself Democratic Left, they don't call it "leftist." . . . Despite the fact that Jaime Paz Zamora in Bolivia has been a member of the left for 25 years, they don't call him "leftist." They call us "leftists." . . .

EIR: Regarding Kissinger, what do you think of his recent commentary about Salinas?

Muñoz Ledo: Well, that he should love him very much.

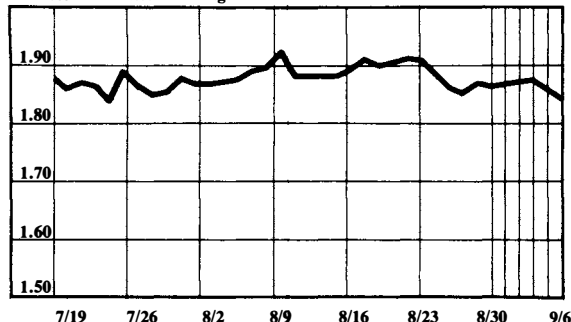
EIR: But do you believe that the banks have the luxury of giving Salinas a respite in debt payment, for political purposes?

Muñoz Ledo: For the banks it is not a luxury. It is a necessity. It is an enormous problem for the international banking system to continue financing unpayable debts. It is much better to turn them into non-performing assets, with the support of the international financial institutions and of governments, something we proposed seven years ago at the U.N., which is approved in all the resolutions, and which they haven't wanted to do because of the stupidity of the Baker Plan, which is nothing but a way of using the debt for political ends.

Currency Rates

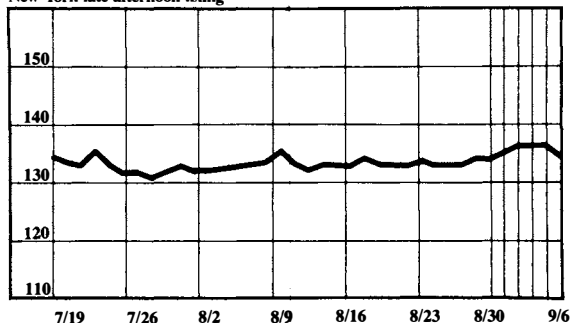
The dollar in deutschemarks

New York late afternoon fixing



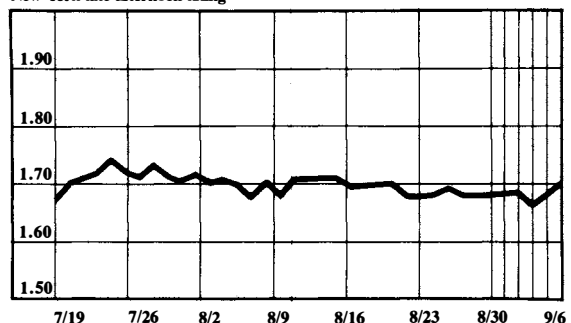
The dollar in yen

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The British pound in dollars

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The dollar in Swiss francs

New York late afternoon fixing

