

# Mexican unemployment plan is tantamount to genocide

by Carlos Cota Meza

An intense debate has broken out in Mexico over the unemployment afflicting millions of Mexicans. The Catholic Church has called the problem “alarming, because of its high level of social explosiveness.” Practically every expert study agrees in rejecting as absurd the official unemployment figures cooked up by the Mexican National Institute of Statistics, Geography, and Information (INEGI), which places unemployment at 2.9% of an economically active population (EAP) calculated at 26.322 million, or 648,000 Mexicans out of work.

The firm International Consultants, for example, estimates unemployment at 29% of the EAP, or 7.4 million. Ciemex-Wefa estimates 8.7% for 1992. The Economic Commission for Latin America of the United Nations maintains that it is a mere 3.5%. But the Workers Congress of Mexico claims that unemployment stands at 37%, and spokesmen for the Confederation of Mexican Workers speak of between 8 and 12 million Mexicans without jobs.

A study done by the Institute of Economic Research of the Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) calculates the present unemployment at 8 million, and underemployed at 17.4 million. This gives a total of 25.4 million Mexicans without permanent employment or income, a figure not much below the 26.3 million officially estimated as composing *the entire economically active population*. The National Solidarity Program (Pronasol), the government program which is acting as the local enforcer of the destruction of Mexico's sovereign economy (see *EIR*, Jan. 29, p. 28), in one of its recent forecasts criticizing INEGI, asserted that 12% of the EAP, estimated by INEGI as 26.3 million, are unemployed, while 40% more are underemployed. Since much underemployment is actually disguised unemployment, Pronasol's figures would suggest that 52% of the economically active population is without regular employment or income.

On top of this great disparity in unemployment figures, is the fact that with the exception of the UNAM study, all estimates are based on the newly revised official population figure of 81.5 million for 1990, as established by the 1990 census conducted by INEGI. Yet in Mexico, it is universally agreed that this figure is a colossal statistical fraud, by which millions of Mexicans have been made to simply “disappear.”

A more realistic estimate of the EAP today can be ob-

tained from the figures of the National Council on Population (Conapo) by projecting their figures on population structure into the future. According to Conapo's estimates, the age bracket of the population comprising all 14- to 64-year-olds—generally considered the age range of the working population—will grow by about 1.5 million annually into the first decade of the next century. With something over 55% of that age bracket actually in the labor force, this yields an estimate for the EAP of around 830,000 net new job seekers annually.

Using this figure to adjust the last somewhat reliable estimate of EAP—around 22 million in 1980—yields an estimate of over 30 million in 1990 (instead of the official 26 million), and approximately 32 million in 1992. Using this more realistic estimate of the EAP together with Pronasol's figure of 52% unemployed or underemployed, gives 17 million Mexicans without regular employment or income. This number matches the official figure for people living in extreme poverty.

However, the comparison is misleading, since 17 million workers implies a total population dependent on those workers of around 45 million—more than half the total population, of which a very large number are no doubt living in extreme poverty. Certainly, the government figure of 17 million in extreme poverty is also a big underestimate.

Using the Mexican government's figure that only 6 million Mexicans have permanent, steady, regular paid employment, the statistic of the UNAM Institute of Economic Research comes closest to the reality: UNAM's estimate of 25 million unemployed or underemployed, plus the government's 6 million fully employed, equals almost exactly the likely true figure for the EAP. But a figure of 31-32 million economically active people is only consistent with a total population of at least 86 million—the official figure before the latest census fraud, not the new, adjusted 81 million figure.

And even 86 million may be low. If the Mexican population grew at an annual rate of 2.5% during the 1980s, it would be at 89 million today; and if it only grew at 2.2%, it would still be at least 87 million. In any case, the 1990 Census simply writes off 6-8 million Mexicans whom it considers not to exist. In 1994, there will be close to 94 million Mexicans.

## Self-serving statistics

Returning to the experts' analyses, the majority of them agree that the unemployment problem is massive, and nationwide, that the government's statistics are ridiculous, and that Mexico has no reliable unemployment figures.

What none of them indicate, however, is the true reason why the government of President Carlos Salinas de Gortari maintains the demented position that unemployment affects only 2.9% of the economically active population. In the National Development Plan 1989-94, signed by Salinas de Gortari, it says: "Due to the high birth rates that prevailed before 1975, and to the high rate of population growth which resulted from the divergence between falling death rates and high birth rates, never in the demographic history of the country has the working-age population grown so rapidly as in the decade of the 1980s."

The message here is clear: The crisis is due to the "divergence" between birth and death rates, or—what amounts to the same thing—the crisis is due to the existence of Mexicans; therefore, the solution is that some Mexicans must cease to exist.

The government of previous President Miguel de la Madrid (1983-88) had already established the *necessity* of im-

posing a *process of gradual aging of the population*, in keeping with the malthusian policies of the international financier circles around the International Monetary Fund. Reflecting this process, figures from Conapo for 1989 show a population pyramid with 33 million people under age 15 (38%), 50 million between 15 and 64 (58%), and 3.4 million over 65 (4%). This reflects the success of the De la Madrid government, as it was described then, in having reduced the traditional Mexican figure of 50% of its population under the age of 15, down to 38%, as a result of decreased birth rates.

The result is that from 1980 to 2000, the number of children will actually decline in absolute numbers, despite the continued rise of the overall population, so that by 2000, this age group will be under 30% of the total. The working-age population will soar, and by 2000, the over-65 age bracket will also begin to increase rapidly.

This latter fact means, of course, a large increase in the number of retired persons. According to the Unified Movement of Retirees and Pensioners (MUJP), there are at present 2 million old people, nearly two-thirds of the total, who have insufficient income to live in dignity. By the beginning of the next decade, the growth of this sector will be rapid, and

## GATT woos Russia as food production plummets

As if Russia did not already have enough problems feeding its people, the international financiers are now trying to draw it into the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), a move which would require eliminating subsidies to agriculture.

Arthur Dunkel, the director of GATT, was in Russia the week of Feb. 1. At a press conference in Moscow, he played his negotiating cards close to his chest; but he did warn Russia that "the real world itself makes things more difficult than you think at the start," and that reform was "not a very easy process." He emphasized the "denationalizing" effect of GATT, a one-world institution linked to the United Nations.

Since a meeting of the Davos World Economic Forum in Switzerland at the end of January, which was attended by a hefty Russian delegation, there has been a marked push to bring Russia into GATT.

But recent decisions by Russian economic officials would come into conflict with such a policy.

On Feb. 4, Agriculture Minister Viktor Khlystun announced an emergency decree for the agro-industrial sec-

tor, which includes protectionist measures to guard against the decrease in livestock which came about last year, partially as a result of the enforced export of meat under the International Monetary Fund's "export-earning" conditions.

At a press conference, Khlystun described the desperate situation the nation now faces: "There was a substantial slump in livestock output. Meat and dairy production fell by 18%." He enumerated some of the causes for this slump: "A chronic shortage of fodder, the price disparity, making livestock breeding an unprofitable business—it is easier to sell grain than to feed it to cattle and produce livestock. Costs involved in livestock production considerably outweigh the benefits. . . . Generally, meat production in Russia proved to be loss-making. . . . Poultry production has also been money-losing. The profitability of milk production is very low, approximately 26%. Egg and wool production profitability margins are also very low. A situation emerged at the end of the year when the overall debt amounted to 50 billion rubles. . . . In order to conduct this year's spring planting campaign, at least 600 billion rubles is needed."

Khlystun said that the Russian government was going to continue to subsidize agriculture, through the introduction of "mechanisms of guaranteed protectionist prices, with gradual scaling down of subsidies."

—Denise M. Henderson

its death rate will be prodigious.

In fact, the problem will be worse than anyone can imagine, precisely because of the conditions of unemployment and underemployment today. With the shrinkage of regular employment, with its attendant benefits such as social security, pensions, and health care, and its replacement with informal, daily catch-as-catch-can grubbing for an income, millions of Mexicans are now going to face retirement age with absolutely nothing to fall back on—not social security, nor anything else. They will face the prospect of having to work until they die, i. e., they are expected never to retire at all, or to die soon after retirement from starvation or disease in the absence of any source of retirement income.

These projections show beyond a doubt that it is not an honest error which leads the Mexican government to claim there is no unemployment. It is simply reaffirming its policy of genocide.

### Employment crisis, or population crisis?

Mexico's economic problems are not the population's fault. These problems stem from a top-down decision, made back in the mid-1970s, to impose the dogma of malthusianism, ostensibly as a factor of development and social stability. In 1975, for example, William Paddock, author of *Famine 1975! America's Decision, Who Will Survive?* stated bluntly that all efforts to increase Mexico's food supply would only "increase future suffering, because there will be more people. . . . Mexico simply can't handle 60 million people." Since that time, successive Mexican governments have been operating under the assumption that they cannot accept, or cannot maintain, a population greater than 100 million by the year 2000. Mexicans "in excess" of this figure must perish.

These malthusian policies generate a universal equation, and its results are the same, whether for a developed or an underdeveloped country: The low end of the population pyramid is reduced, the middle segment of working-age people grows for a while, and the high end of the pyramid also expands rapidly, until premature death overtakes it.

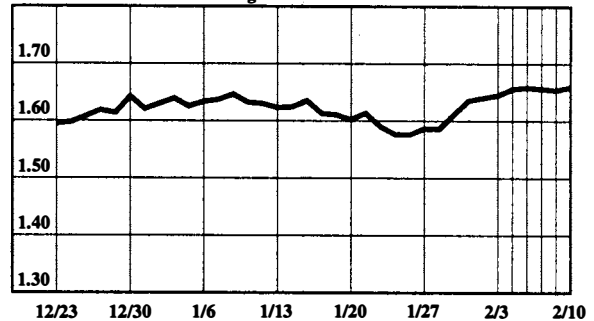
The present employment crisis, combined with the growing number of Mexicans living in extreme poverty, the millions of peasants who emigrate yearly in search of work, the children dying unnecessarily, are nothing but the conclusion of 25 years of population control policies that have been applied, and are being applied, supposedly so that by the end of this century, the Mexican population will not be living with the problems they now suffer.

But the tragic demographic reality is that if these malthusian policies are pursued any further, Mexicans will either be dead or suffering far worse than ever before. Mexico has now reached the point beyond which millions will begin to die of a combination of undernourishment and communicable disease, just as they began to die in droves a decade ago in Africa.

## Currency Rates

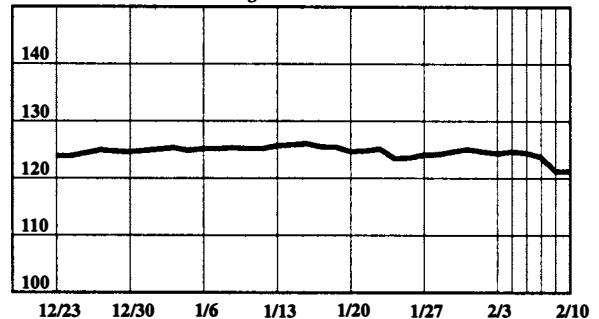
### The dollar in deutschemarks

New York late afternoon fixing



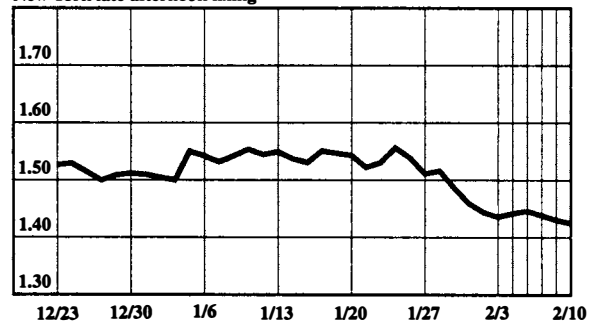
### The dollar in yen

New York late afternoon fixing



### The British pound in dollars

New York late afternoon fixing



### The dollar in Swiss francs

New York late afternoon fixing

