

# Salinas's 'Procampo' program for Mexico is cold-blooded genocide

by Carlos Cota Meza and Carlos Méndez

The acceptance of "secret accords" in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) by Mexican President Carlos Salinas and U.S. President Bill Clinton has given a green light for the commencement of the final phase of the so-called "Paddock Plan," that is, the elimination of 30 million Mexicans through starvation and disease—genocide.

In 1975, Rockefeller Foundation agronomist William Paddock, an outspoken advocate of population reduction, declared that "the Mexican population must be reduced by half. Seal the border and let 'em scream." Paddock's prescription that this reduction be accomplished through "the usual means: famine, war and pestilence," was denounced in 1976 by statesman and economist Lyndon LaRouche in a nationwide U.S. television broadcast. At the time, Paddock had significant input into the State Department and the White House, and helped shape global policy for Washington circles dedicated to these malthusian results.

Two elements combined are necessary to impose the genocide plan outlined by Paddock: the destruction of the Mexican farm sector and a total closing of the Mexico-U.S. border. Both of these have been set into motion with the announcement of Salinas's new *Procampo* farm program and the construction of a *steel wall* along stretches of the U.S.-Mexico border.

## A cemetery for the farm sector

Facing growing protests by farmers throughout Mexico against bankers' usury and its own agricultural and economic policies, the government attempted to calm the ferment by promising that President Salinas was preparing a global solution to the farmers' problems. On Oct. 4, Salinas announced this new agricultural program, which is called *Procampo*, a coined phrase meaning literally pro-countryside, that is, pro-farm. Its central aim is so clearly to destroy producers and production, however, that the Permanent Forum of Rural Producers (PFRP) of the state of Sonora immediately dubbed Salinas's program *Procamposanto*—*camposanto* being the Spanish word for cemetery. Alberto Vizcarra Osuna, one of the leaders of the PFRP which has been mobilizing farmers in the Mexican northwest against the policies of usury which

are crushing agricultural activity in the country, told the press, "*Procampo* would better be called *Procamposanto* because its activation will bury 60% of the agricultural producers" of Mexico.

Pro-cemetery is no metaphor, but an accurate description of the program. As explained by Carlos Hank González, secretary of agriculture and hydraulic resources, "During a transitional stage which is to last approximately one year, *Procampo* will grant more than 3 million farmers a direct subsidy of 300 new pesos [or \$100] per hectare in the fall-winter season of 1994, for those fields in which corn, beans, wheat, soy, sorghum, rice and cotton have been cultivated in the last three years. The payments will be made after *March*, and the total budget for this program will be, in 1994, 11.7 billion new pesos," about \$4 billion, (emphases added).

At the same time, all parity prices will be eliminated after April 1995, leaving "the market" to set prices for agricultural products thereafter. Until then, Secretary Hank González announced, there will be new parity prices which are 10-15% less than current prices.

This measure alone will throw hundreds of thousands of farmers into bankruptcy, thereby creating massive unemployment in the farm sector. The problem now is, where will these unemployed farmers go? With unemployment zooming in the cities also, the only possibility is for the unemployed to try to emigrate to the United States. Ah, but now a steel wall is being built along the border to keep Mexicans from crossing. Thus we see Paddock's demand, to "seal the border, and let 'em scream," made operational.

## Fostering a derivatives market

Without parity prices, and with agricultural prices left to the whim of supply and demand controlled by the international grain cartels, the only beneficiaries of the *Procampo* program are the grain cartels and the banks. As columnist M. David Páramo wrote on Oct. 6 in the newspaper *El Economista*, under *Procampo*, "it is now indeed possible to expect that an agricultural commodities exchange starts up, given that obstacles such as parity prices no longer exist." Indeed, on that same day, a top official of Hank González's agricul-

ture department, Alfredo Rojas Cabrera, declared that a commodities exchange for basic grains could begin functioning in 1995, but for that to occur, he specified that it will be necessary for *Procampo* to be consolidated and parity prices to be lifted. Unspoken was that the first step must be the destruction of Mexican farming, so that the domestic supply falls, so that imported foreign products increase.

The creation of these kinds of financial derivatives markets is in fact one of the centerpieces of the NAFTA secret accords.

*Procampo* functions such that a lower price is paid per ton, the greater a farmer's productivity per hectare—a measure which can only be understood as deliberately designed to destroy production. Let's look at this. In the state of Sonora, an average of five tons of corn are produced per hectare. Thus, five tons of corn sold for 650 new pesos results in earnings of 3,250 new pesos. Adding on the 330 new pesos per hectare from the government, brings a total of 3,580 new pesos. Divided by the five tons, Sonoran farmers will make 716 new pesos per ton of corn. But in the state of Sinaloa, average productivity is eight tons per hectare. So, eight tons sold at the 650 price yields 5,200 new pesos, plus the 330 in subsidy for that hectare, brings a total of 5,530 new pesos, or 691.1 new pesos per ton—lower than that earned in Sonora.

The same scheme applies for beans, wheat, and other supposedly "protected" crops.

It is said that this "penalty" for the price of corn is applied because this crop gains higher profits with respect both to other crops and to world market corn prices, and that this led to an explosion of lands planted with corn which should have been dedicated to other uses. What the authors of *Procampo* do not say, however, is that for three years in a row, the government itself presented "record harvests" of corn and increases in those of beans as both a product and proof of an alleged "farm recovery." Now what will happen is that the production of corn will fall drastically, and the harvests of other crops (wheat, soy, sorghum, rice, etc.) will continue to be depressed by their low prices, thus "forcing" an increase in imports of all these.

A book by investigator José Luis Calva, *Probable Effects of a Free Trade Accord on Mexican Farming*, conclusively demonstrates that of all the Mexican farmers now dedicated to growing corn and beans, only 5% can survive under NAFTA. Calva's statistics show that under the free trade accord, only 19,273 of the 3,161,796 Mexican families who grow corn and beans have sufficient technological capability to be competitive.

The worst of it is that *Procampo* is designed to eliminate precisely those 19,273 more technologically advanced farmers. As presidential candidate Adalberto Rosas López, one of the leaders of the Sonoran PFRP, said, "*Procampo* is a hoax and a betrayal of the Mexican farmer, which will give the *coup de grace* to farming because it does not raise the prices of the crops, and in some cases, such as corn, the price

per ton was reduced from 750 to 659 new pesos."

## No solution for overdue debts

As for the problem of crushing debt arrears, a crisis which has stirred up unprecedented mobilizations by farmers against the banks, Salinas simply answered that "the arrears of individuals involved in farming make up less than 10% of total outstanding debt, and those with commercial bank loans have a lower percentage." That is, there will be no solution offered to farmers who have been forced into bankruptcy by the combination of the government's economic policies and the usury practiced by the banks.

PFRP spokesman Alberto Vizcarra told *El Financiero del Norte* on Oct. 7 that "agricultural non-performing debt now stands at \$4.5 billion, and the 11.7 billion new pesos offered by President Salinas to reactivate the countryside represents only \$3.5 billion, which does not even represent the aspirin for which many farmers were hoping."

If the failure to resolve the problem of debt arrears and the lack of new credits is added to the fact that the first subsidies for being unproductive will begin to be handed out in March 1994, it becomes clear that the majority of the winter season crops this year simply cannot be planted.

In addition to the economic disaster that this creates, the government gets a double benefit: The subsidies for being unproductive also serve to buy votes for the candidate of Salinas's Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) in next year's presidential elections.

## A steel curtain

The gravestone for *Procamposanto* is the steel wall which the United States is building along the border with Mexico. This wall is being constructed out of the large metal sheets used as runways by the U.S. military in its war against Iraq so that military planes could land in the desert. So far, almost two miles of this steel wall have been built along the border with Agua Prieta, Sonora, with another seven miles constructed along the border with Tijuana, Baja California, all to the purpose of stopping illegal immigration into the United States.

As if that were not enough, on Oct. 5, Pete Wilson, governor of the border state of California, signed into law a bill which prevents illegal immigrants—estimated at 2 million people in this state, the majority of them Mexicans—from receiving any state medical services. According to a report by Spanish news agency EFE, after signing the law, the governor's office issued a press release stating that "this law sends a clear message to the federal government that we are taking decisive action to prevent illegal immigration. It is time that Washington officials do likewise."

The closing of the border and policies such as that of Wilson will generate a greater crisis in which violence and racism will flourish, as already occurs in western Europe against immigrants.