

gating the Salinas administration from the beginning, because it considered that there were officials in it involved in the drug trade, but that in 1990 things “took an unexpected turn; Salinas said that he wanted to negotiate the Free Trade Agreement and the Bush administration was happy. Salinas at that point became not only the best friend of Bush in Latin America, but the ‘golden model’ for developing countries. Corruption and the war on drugs went into the background” (quoted in *El Financiero*, Mexico City, March 28, 1995.)

Although drug trafficking started to grow at a dizzying pace under President Miguel de la Madrid (1982-88), it was the Salinas-Bush free-trade economic model which pushed the drug trade in Mexico toward its apogee:

- Hot money started to arrive by the truckload and drug-money laundering turned into an everyday affair.
- Overnight, multimillion-dollar fortunes arose, without anyone being able to explain where they came from or how. In statements made to the Mexican magazine *Proceso* (No. 855, March 22, 1993), Manuel Espinosa Yglesias, who was the main stockholder in Banco de Comercio, said, “There is no doubt. In the last six years fortunes have been created in Mexico which are bigger than many in the United States . . .

and they have been created fast.”

- Criminal activity grew, and some high-level officials and many lower-level ones were part of it, to the point of political assassinations, as in the cases of presidential candidate Luis Donaldo Colosio and party Secretary General José Francisco Ruiz Massieu, both of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI)—killings in which the drug mafias very probably took part, as instruments.
- Violent actions were unleashed by narco-terrorist groups clearly tied to the international drug trade, as is the case with the EZLN “liberation army” in Chiapas.
- Deep operational ties were developed between the Mexican cartels and the Cali, Colombia cartel. This went so far that Boeing 727 jets were used to carry drugs from Colombia to Mexico, to be passed on into the United States.

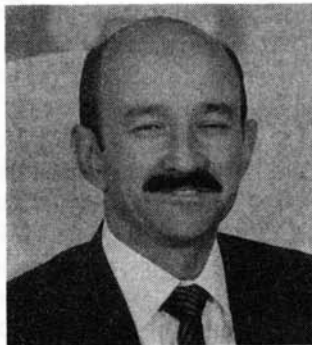
Salinas leaves, and fresh air comes in

With the departure of Salinas de Gortari from the presidency in December 1994, and from the country later, it became possible to reverse all this and rebuild the nation under the new President, Ernesto Zedillo.

- In February 1995, the authorities arrested Raúl Salinas

Carlos Salinas de Gortari

Harvard-trained Carlos Salinas de Gortari became the President of Mexico in 1988, following elections universally viewed as fraudulent. That stain did not prevent him from becoming George Bush’s “golden boy,” however, especially when Salinas made it clear that not only would he continue his predecessor’s free-market proclivities, but that he had every intention of turning Mexico into a continental showcase for the British free-trade “ethic” that Bush embraced.



With the abandonment of nearly all restrictions on foreign involvement in the Mexican economy and banking system, the drug economy that had begun to flourish under President Miguel de la Madrid took off like a rocket. New millionaires began to surface daily, and the corruption spread deep into the ruling institutions. Passage of the Bush-Salinas package known as the North American Free Trade Agreement, dramatically accelerated the process.

Salinas’s rise was accompanied by that of his thuggish brother Raúl, who was given “technical” charge of that vast slush fund known as Pronasol, and rapidly turned it into private fiefdom run by an army of “ex”-communists and “former” terrorists. Through Pronasol, a *Salinista* political machine parallel to the ruling PRI party was created, and money was poured into groups like Peasant Torch, an armed Marxist-Leninist organization with all the characteristics of a “Shining Path North.” It was these networks that provided the support for British intelligence’s Zapatista project in Chiapas, in 1994.

While George Bush was busy holding up Salinas’s “Mexican miracle” as a model for the continent, the narco-terrorist core of that “miracle” was deployed, at the behest of foreign interests behind the Salinas brothers, to assassinate anyone who stood in their way, from Cardinal Juan Jesús Posadas Ocampo to PRI’s presidential candidate Luis Donaldo Colosio and Secretary General José Francisco Ruiz Massieu. When Salinas’s “miracle” collapsed in late 1994, so too did his “golden boy” image. Raúl is today in jail, accused of orchestrating the Ruiz Massieu assassination, and Carlos Salinas is in de facto exile, suspected by the majority of Mexicans of being the mastermind behind the terror. Carlos Salinas’s own incarceration is no longer a question of evidence, but of political will. It is not surprising that his chief defenders abroad have been the *Wall Street Journal*—Salinas is on the board of directors of Dow Jones and Co.—and Alan Stoga of Kissinger Associates.