

# Mexican Presidential Candidate Cárdenas: Another Salinas, in Leftist Clothing

by Carlos Cota Meza

In his third bid for the Mexican Presidency, Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, candidate of the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD), and of various allied parties in the Alliance for Mexico, is suddenly being hit with a wave of accusations of “having changed direction” and become a convert to neo-liberalism.

The furor was unleashed after Cárdenas participated in a Jan. 13 forum, organized by the Autonomous Technological Institute of Mexico (ITAM), where he declared that “no one with his feet on the ground would today propose isolationist policies or ultra-protectionism”; he declared the peso “over-valued,” and proposed its devaluation. In his proposal for the recovery of the banking system, he urged “mergers, attracting new investments, both at home and abroad, to revitalize it, opening up the possibilities for branches of foreign banks to operate here.”

In sum, Cárdenas presented as his own ideas, three of the central hobby horses of neo-liberal policy that have been applied throughout the 18 years of the last three Revolutionary Institutional Party (PRI) administrations. The irony is, that Cárdenas abandoned the PRI in 1987 because of its denationalizing policy, supposedly to “change direction.”

Cárdenas responded to his critics, stating that “there is no contradiction in my proposal . . . nor does it differ at all from what I have proposed.” In fact, Cárdenas is right, to the disappointment and disenchantment of many of his former supporters: He has *always* been a proponent of “Salinism without Salinas.” Carlos Salinas de Gortari was President of Mexico from 1990 to 1996, and allied closely with U.S. President George Bush in promoting every imaginable policy disaster: NAFTA and free trade, open door to the drug trade, uncontrolled corruption, and so on.

For years, Cárdenas has served the international financial oligarchy, which has given national and international credibility to his campaign, as a holding action against nationalist political currents which are seeking a genuine alternative to neo-liberalism and globalization.

But there is more. Cárdenas (along with Vicente Fox, the third major Presidential candidate, from the opposition National Action Party, or PAN) is militantly and systematically hostile, both nationally and internationally, to the pro-

posals of the Ibero-American Solidarity Movement (MSIA), the co-thinker group in Mexico of U.S. Presidential candidate Lyndon LaRouche. On the international level, the control exerted over him by oligarchical policy-making circles has made him — and he himself views it that way — into Mexico’s leading opponent of Lyndon LaRouche’s forecast of a systemic crisis of the international financial system, and proposal on how to address that crisis.

LaRouche’s proposal for the urgent establishment of a New Bretton Woods global financial system is widely known in various layers of the population, and is fully known by the entire Mexican political class, without party distinction. This new institution would install the best of what was applied after World War II: a system of stable parities, essentially protectionist trade and tariff agreements, encouragement of scientific and technological progress, and cancellation of International Monetary Fund (IMF) globalism.

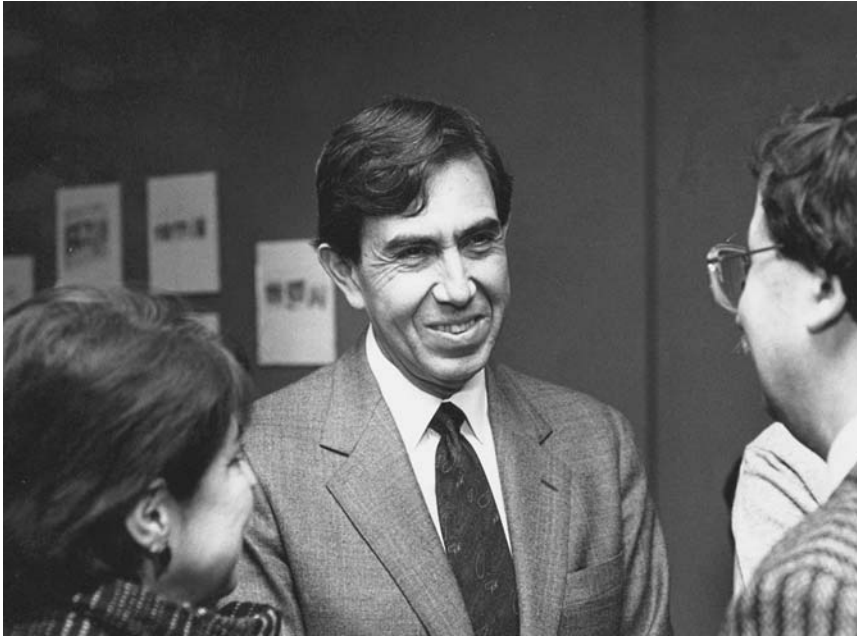
## Globalized Cárdenas

It was at the ITAM, but on Nov. 16, 1998, that Cárdenas, as Governor of the Federal District, laid out his thesis against a New Bretton Woods system. “Many think,” he said, “that the 20th century really matured once World War II had ended, when the great reforms forged in the turbulence and the penury of the 1930s yielded fruit in the economy and in society.”

“Examples of this would be Roosevelt’s ‘New Deal’ in the United States, the government reforms of the Popular Front in France, or the Mexican reforms accentuated between 1934 and 1940,” Cárdenas said. And, he told the ITAM students: “That model of regulating the economy and society, whose political expression were the welfare states, is a thing of the past.”

In January 1999, as head of the Mexico City government, Cárdenas had his greatest opportunity to present himself as a Presidential candidate before figures of the international oligarchy. He was invited to participate in the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. There, Cárdenas not only held forth on his concept and acceptance of “globalism,” but even made suggestions on how to carry that oligarchic policy forward.

In a document distributed at the Davos Forum, he states:



*Mexican Presidential candidate Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas. The backing of his Party of the Democratic Revolution for free trade and globalization, is indistinguishable from the PAN's Vicente Fox, or former President Carlos Salinas de Gortari.*

“Globalization is a fact of contemporary reality, not a passing ideology or some end-of-century novelty. . . . This process has unleashed forces and tendencies which now appear to have escaped the control of societies and their institutions. . . . Globalization means much more than its passing form; [it is] a world reality, in which stability and prosperity for a few cannot be guaranteed, while fragility and misery persist for others.”

Cárdenas even stated that the depth and violence of the financial crises is one more indicator “of the irreversible reality and force of globalization.”

Cárdenas presented himself to the oligarchs at Davos as the politician who, from the “left,” would be able to use “democratic controls” to organize the “displaced,” those “less dynamic sectors and activities, with a lesser capacity to increase the levels of productivity within which they operate.” Such political control in times of crisis is, of course, of interest to his Davos sponsors.

How does he hope to achieve this? This is where his aversion to the existence of the sovereign nation-state comes in, making him the perfect agent of the international oligarchy. “We do not need to return, or take recourse, to statist dogma that we oppose, in order to understand that pluralist society can and must intervene, through its institutions, in the regulation of the erratic movements” of globalization, he said.

In his 1998 address to ITAM, Cárdenas said, “It is possible that our great task, upon entering the new millennium, is to define the norms and rules that permit the survival of civilization . . . under conditions of the globalized economy.” Since

he was saying all of this months ago, why the big fuss, all of a sudden?

### **Cárdenas, the 1994 Model**

During the 1994 Presidential campaign, and prior to the assassination of PRI candidate Luis Donaldo Colosio, the MSIA published a statement denouncing Cárdenas as the Jean-Bertrand Aristide of Mexico, a reference to the demented dictator of Haiti who had been overthrown by a nationalist military coup, and whose restoration to power through the intervention of a supranational military force had been demanded by Cárdenas.

The MSIA also warned voters that while Cárdenas had, during his first 1988 Presidential campaign, attacked the IMF and had spoken of the problems caused by payment of the usurious foreign debt, these issues were immediately forgotten. That posture was just an opportunist maneuver, because Cárdenas knew that there was a current

within the ruling PRI party that had seriously questioned then-President Miguel de la Madrid’s economic policy, and were opposed to making Carlos Salinas de Gortari the PRI’s Presidential candidate. Knowing all this, Cárdenas was trying to present himself as everyman’s leader. His 1994 campaign proved that the MSIA denunciations were on the mark.

Since then, Cárdenas has in effect proposed the same policies as Salinas de Gortari, with the sole difference that he would apply IMF policies through “democratic controls” and in the guise of “fighting corruption.”

Cárdenas said that “economies which are advancing, in any country on any continent, are moving toward globalization. . . . Given these realities, we must seek to assure that insertion of our country into the world economy is accomplished under equitable conditions.” Since then, he has argued that “we do not reject NAFTA [the North American Free Trade Agreement]. . . . We want it to improve. . . . Mexico cannot isolate itself.” He added, “We mustn’t forget that our country has joined the GATT [General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade]. . . . I think that at this time, we must maintain our membership in GATT, and therefore maintain the tendency not to raise tariffs and not put up barriers to international trade.” In essence, Cárdenas has not changed from 1994 to the present time.

### **Cárdenas, the 1997 Model**

During the 1997 campaign for the first-time election of a Governor for the Federal District, the MSIA was the only

political movement in Mexico to oppose Cárdenas's proposals, and to denounce them in a statement entitled: "Neo-Cardenism: A Higher Phase of Salinism. Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas's Fascism with a Democratic Face."

This was on the mark. During his May 6, 2000 presentation to the New York Americas Society, Cárdenas told the same audience before which Vicente Fox had proposed the privatization of Pemex: "We believe in the free market. We do not want to control the economy or have government intervention in economic life. What the PRD is proposing is closer to the Chilean model than any other."

Why the scandal in the year 2000, if Cárdenas has been saying since 1997 that he likes Pinochet's Chile, only "democratized"? What is the difference, then, between Fox, Salinas, and Cárdenas?

In the 1997 statement, the MSIA also warned that should Cárdenas become the regent of the Federal District, "he will sink not only Mexico City but the entire country into chaos and violence, with his armed wing the EZLN [Zapatista National Liberation Army], and his Jacobin mobs of the Urban Movement, MPI, Superbarrio, Grupo Pancho Villa, ex-Ruta 100, and so on, all deployed as shock troops against their opponents. . . . Don't forget that these groups were financed by Manuel Camacho Solís when he served as regent."

The culmination of Cárdenas's short two-year regency in the Federal District was the lunatic "strike" of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). In the same way as he opposed nuclear energy, Cárdenas has furiously dedicated himself to dismantling the country's most advanced center of studies. No one can deny that the "university movement" encouraged by the Cárdenas government in the Federal District is merely an urban extension of the Zapatista movement in Chiapas, which, starting in 1994, has sought the dismemberment of the federal pact by the most violent of means.

When, in 1997, with practically no opposition due to the pusillanimous campaign run by the PRI, Cárdenas won the Federal District governorship, and his party, the PRD, won an absolute majority in that city's Legislative Assembly, the oligarchy jumped for joy. Former U.S. Treasury Secretary and Secretary of State James Baker III, a prominent member of the George Bush league, wrote in the July 20, 1997 *Washington Times*: "Political reform is a necessary precondition for deepening the economic reform as a sequel to the peso crisis. Opening up the political system could persuade the public in general to back painful economic reforms, when these are proposed by politicians in whom they can believe."

"Some have said that while the election is a victory for democracy in Mexico, this occurs at the expense of free market reforms, since the great victor is the party of the left. However, Mr. Cárdenas, as the opposition's most important

figure, has in recent years greatly modified his positions, and during the campaign, did not offer an alternative economic view nor criticize the current economic system in Mexico, except that it should be more transparent and equitable. . . . There was no evidence of a popular desire to overturn NAFTA or the so-called neo-liberal economic model begun by Salinas."

Baker was a close ally of Salinas de Gortari. Can there be any doubt as to whose interests Cárdenas serves?

### **Cárdenas and Bush's Iran-Contra Operation**

Baker's satisfaction with Cárdenas could not be more eloquent, but there is still another element to consider, which Cárdenas has never clarified.

In the middle of the 1994 campaign, there circulated inside Mexico a book by Terry Reed, *Compromised: Clinton, Bush and the CIA* (New York: Shapolsky Publishers, 1994), which detailed the Iran-Contra operations mounted by the drug-trafficking mafia of George Bush and Oliver North. As is documented in detail, Bush and North trafficked weapons for the Nicaraguan "Contras," which were financed through the sale of Colombian cocaine introduced into the United States. This scenario was responsible for unleashing a mortal epidemic of "crack" consumption in the United States.

Independent research has established, with the certainty of court-admissible evidence, that it was Bush, as both Ronald Reagan's Vice President and then as President of the United States, who handled the weapons-for-drugs policy, under Executive Order 12333.

Reed, one of those implicated in the Iran-Contra operations, details how he met with Cárdenas, then Governor of Michoacán state, at the Lake Zirahuén beach resort, and that introductions were handled by CIA agent and direct Bush employee Félix Rodríguez, who was operating under the pseudonym Max Gómez.

In Chapter 25, entitled "Project Z" (p. 323), Reed describes how Max Gómez told him: "Look, let me introduce you to Mr. Cárdenas. . . . He is a very important man in the Mexican government. His father was a President of Mexico. But don't forget, we have him in our pocket. I am personally paying him a lot of 'agency' money to make this project work. Don't pay attention to his royal airs during today's meeting. He's ours."

According to Reed's narration, the meeting dealt with the establishment in Michoacán of the company Maquina Internacional, which was a front for arms trafficking. On April 12, 1994, the MSIA issued an open letter to Cárdenas, demanding a public clarification of Reed's charges. In response, the MSIA received a threat from Cárdenas, to sue it, and also Lyndon LaRouche, whom Cárdenas judged to be involved in the affair, for defamation. The MSIA is still awaiting either the suit to be filed, or a response from Cárdenas to the question posed.

## Cárdenas and the São Paulo Forum

It is relevant to undertake a brief review of the last decade, and to follow Cárdenas's footprints in it.

Cárdenas and his PRD are founding members of the São Paulo Forum, created in 1990 at the behest of Fidel Castro and his Cuban Communist Party. Castro has remained in power following the disintegration of the Soviet Union beginning in 1989, thanks to his recognized abilities as a political chameleon. The financial support from the Soviet Union and East Germany that was lost, has been replaced by money from the drug trade. Politically, he represents the "left wing" of radical free-market Thatcherism, offering the organizations that make up the São Paulo Forum as the most viable instruments for continuing the policies of "globalization." This was one of the reasons why Bush errand boy Salinas de Gortari was protected in Cuba in 1995, when he fled Mexico. Since that time, Cárdenas has abandoned all "nationalist" coloration, and has embraced "globalization" fully.

The member groups of the São Paulo Forum which have come to power include the Lavalas Movement of Jean-Bertrand Aristide in Haiti, the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, the MBR-2000 of Hugo Chávez in Venezuela, and more recently, the Alliance for Argentina of President Fernando de la Rúa, and Ricardo Lagos's Socialist Party in Chile. And what have they done? Each and every one of these "leftist" movements have accepted the policies of the IMF, and have become militants of the "economic globalism" of the "New World Order," which the Thatcher-Bush "special relationship" imposed on the world.

In Haiti, the "democratic experiment" of the demented Aristide turned that country into a hell. In Nicaragua, the Sandinistas, with their "leftist" version of IMF policies, caused more destruction than their own war against Anastasio Somoza, something which none of the new governments of the "right" have been able to match. In Colombia, under the liberal government of César Gaviria (now Secretary General of the Organization of American States), the M-19 established a "successful pacification" agreement, through which it won a majority in the National Congress, only to impose, together with the "extraditable" drug traffickers of the Cali and Medellín Cartels, a new Constituent Assembly in 1991, which led directly to the narco-government of the Liberal Ernesto Samper Pizano, and to the current "Conservative" government of Andrés Pastrana. The result? The surrender of half of Colombia to the narco-terrorist FARC.

In Venezuela, with his new Bolivarian Constitution, President Chávez has set himself up as a dictator, prepared to change the political map of the neighboring countries. Article 14 of the new Chavista constitution, for example, dictates: "The law will establish a special legal regimen for those territories which, through the self-determination of their inhabitants and with the approval of the National Assembly, join the Republic."

What territories could join Chávez's "Bolivarian" Republic, except those Colombian territories handed over to the FARC by the Pastrana government, with the blessings of the U.S. State Department?

Surely, this interpretation of the new Venezuelan Constitution calls to mind the way that Adolf Hitler appropriated the Sudetenland from Czechoslovakia.

Cárdenas's accession to power in Mexico City in 1997, is part of this same tendency. Before the collapse of Salinas de Gortari's "Mexico model" in December 1994, Wall Street and London promoted the so-called "Third Way," to continue the same globalist-fascist policy, but with a "human face." Thus, in Britain, for example, Tony Blair was brought to power, after the fall of Thatcherism.

The ascent of the São Paulo Forum in Mexico was orchestrated through a corrupt campaign in the national and international media, which presented Cárdenas as a "nationalist" victim of Salinism (while Salinas was taking refuge in Havana!), who now "deserved to govern."

Cárdenas's relation with Castro is another important element to consider in analyzing Cárdenas's supposed "turn." Cárdenas told an interviewer: "I have had the opportunity to have a personal relationship with Fidel Castro . . . more or less [since 1975]. . . . We have very defined positions with respect to Mexico, and with respect to Cuba. . . . They are in agreement. . . . Our possible differences have never been discussed, because there is no reason to discuss them. . . . In that sense, there has been a very broad friendship, in which each is open to share what he knows, what can be done, what can be given." It certainly can't be said that Cárdenas is unfamiliar with Castro's political orientation.

## Cárdenas, Model 2000

And so, we come to Cárdenas's latest Presidential campaign. One scandalous aspect of the 2000 campaign is that Cárdenas has said that he would accept private investment in the electrical energy industry. Once again, those who claim to be surprised by Cárdenas's "change of heart" remind us of those who claimed to be "fooled" by Salinas de Gortari, when he handed over an economy in ruins.

In his March 1999 speech in commemoration of Mexico's oil expropriation, Cárdenas said: "There exist under the law, ways in which private investors can participate in electricity generation. If it turns out that any of these schemes gets in the way of private investment, the law can be revised." He then asks that the "experiences" of Argentina and Chile, where privatization was total, be studied.

Fiercely opposed to the industrialization of the country, Cárdenas added that the Laguna Verde nuclear power plant "should have stopped operating some time ago," because its contribution to the country's energy demands "is minimal" — a flat-out lie, both quantitatively and, most especially, in terms of its technological contribution to the country's progress.

However, the real novelty of Cárdenas's latest electoral campaign is that, if he wins, "he will promote a Constituent Assembly." This means that a President Cárdenas would ignore the electoral process by which he was voted in, and would dissolve the National Congress. To put it plainly, Cárdenas is proposing a coup d'état. This aspect of his program is closely tied to his relationship with the Zapatista ideology, and the policy of the São Paulo Forum for the entire continent.

In his interview with a journalist by the name of Forston, Cárdenas says that his relation with the Zapatistas "has been necessarily very occasional. I have intervened with Subcommander Marcos and with the government of the Republic, to seek possibilities of understanding. . . . [In this], my sons Cuauhtémoc and Lázaro, respectively, have participated and played a very important role, never seen before. They have served as contacts. . . . I want to think that Marcos and the Zapatistas have understood that the role I would like to play in that situation and in that relation, is that of effectively helping the conflicts to be resolved in a dignified way for everyone involved."

This statement is the height of hypocrisy. As the majority of Mexicans are aware, the EZLN is a foreign occupation army, directed from abroad by the multinational cartels that finance the non-governmental organizations, and which

would like to see the Mexican southeast secede, the better to appropriate the oil, among other things.

It has been Cárdenas and the PRD congressmen who have demanded that the Zapatista version of the San Andrés Larranizar agreements be converted into constitutional law, in order to give legal standing to the so-called "autonomous indigenous" zones. For his part, Subcommander Marcos recognizes that these agreements are just the beginning of territorial partitioning. In 1995, Marcos declared that "the borders multiply and the armies split into many parts. You have the case of Yugoslavia. . . . In the case of the Mexican Army, it could be more dramatic, because perfectly distinct regions of Mexico can be distinguished as if they were national states."

Cárdenas has never objected to this Zapatista threat. On the contrary, he has stated that if elected President, he would name a "civilian secretary of defense," as the beginning of the process of "demilitarizing" Chiapas, and dismantling the Armed Forces.

Former Bishop Samuel Ruiz, the true "commander" of the Zapatistas, has been very clear in stating that indigenous autonomy includes "the use and enjoyment of resources." Says Ruiz, "In the Mexican Constitution, it is said that resources belong to the nation. That is, that if there is oil under the land that you bought, that is the national patrimony, not yours. Of course, that is not the only solution possible. . . . In the matter of the use of resources, there is a situation which still remains to be legally clarified."

Cárdenas has added to this proposal for constitutional dismantling of the nation. In his 2000 campaign, he says that he would now accept a "popular referendum," so that Mexicans can decide what to do with Mexican oil. When the people decided in 1938, the oil was nationalized!

Regarding the so-called UNAM "strike," Subcommander Marcos declared in one of his support statements: "Chiapas was a symptom, the UNAM is another. More will come. And all the movements and unrest will become more and more radical, or 'ultra'. . . . Look, it will become increasingly difficult to open channels for dialogue with them."

Before the 1997 elections, when he was asked about the possibility of election fraud against him, Cárdenas responded: "Today we have the ability to reverse the fraud. And you'll find us in the streets, ready to go all the way."

### **Salinas, Fox, and Cárdenas: Polymorphously Perverse Symbiosis**

At the conclusion of the past 20 years, we have reached an ironical political situation: Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, Vicente Fox, and Carlos Salinas de Gortari represent precisely the same political project for the country.

Cárdenas appears as an open promoter of the very globalization and neo-liberal policies that the last three PRI governments have imposed, and which the PAN candidate Fox would only want to pursue with greater zealously. But

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that's not all. Fox also agrees with Cárdenas with respect to the Zapatista policy of territorial partitioning, and in their opposition to the nation's Armed Forces. Also, Cárdenas accepts the PAN's anti-constitutional proposal, and that of the Ernesto Zedillo government, to modify Article 27 of the Constitution—which proclaims the mineral and other resources on national territory to be property of the state, i.e., of all Mexicans. Zapatista former Bishop Ruiz also shares this view.

Nor is Cárdenas's relationship with Castro especially unique, because Fox recognizes an open similarity with Castro due to their common Jesuitic education. And, of course, Castro declared himself both friend and protector of Salinas de Gortari, during the first stage of his self-exile. What's going on here?

All this can be explained. In the current crisis, the strategy of the oligarchy includes dismantling the institutions, and dismembering the territory, of nations such as Mexico. To understand the apparent mish-mash, one must remember the historic roots of the formation of the modern republican nation-state, something to which Mexico aspired years ago, but which in the last few decades, it has abandoned.

For the first time in all of recognized human existence, Christ's ministry gave reality to the Mosaic principle that all people are equal, in that all men and women are made in the image and likeness of God. Beginning with 15th-century Europe, there emerged a new anti-feudal form of society, the sovereign nation-state, consecrated to the Christian principle that there are no races.

We are all equal in our nature and needs, by virtue of the divine spark of cognition, and it is that capacity to make validatable creative discoveries which sets us apart and absolutely above lower forms of life.

This new form of renaissance government of the 15th century demonstrated how, by their very nature, slavery, servitude, and, therefore, free trade, are Satanic. The oligarchic forms of government, in which there are no citizens, only subjects, base themselves in their battle to rule, on promotion of forms of pagan religions as instruments of mass manipulation. In the oligarchic model, these are called low churches, and in the case of Samuel Ruiz, with his autochthonous church and his Zapatistas, they are very, very low.

This is the key to understanding the perverse symbiosis of Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, which runs parallel to that of the Jacobin Fidel Castro, which pairs him with the autochthonous church of Samuel Ruiz, and which unites him to the right-wing Jacobin rapture of Vicente Fox. They come together to promote the disintegration of the Mexican Republic under the slogan of "let's destroy existing society," for the benefit of the oligarchy. If Cárdenas were to reach the Presidency of Mexico, he would do as much damage in 18 months as the last three PRI government's have done in the past 18 years.

## Balkan Intrigues Raise Threat of Renewed War

by Umberto Pascali

"Milosevic should be gone within five days from now!"

This concise, clear-cut statement appeared on May 29 in the leading Italian daily *Corriere della Sera*. Its author was not some minor member of the Serbian opposition to President Slobodan Milosevic, but rather, it was one of the most influential and powerful among the Western diplomats dealing with former Yugoslavia: United Nations Balkans envoy Carl Bildt. Why is Bildt so confident in his expectations? The main reason, he explained, is that "Moscow is not in love with Milosevic."

In fact, "the relations between Russia and Serbia have changed," and thus it is now just a question of time, and above all, of obtaining a clear "signal" against Milosevic from Russian President Vladimir Putin, and the deal would be done, Bildt said. "Russia is skeptical about NATO unilateralism, but if Putin gave a signal, the impact would be strong."

Bildt went on to detail what appears to be a quite precise scenario of what is supposed to happen in Serbian Montenegro and Kosovo. "It is necessary to arrive at a confederation between Serbia and Montenegro: It is the only way to prevent a new war. The same is true for Kosovo—we are not talking about independence, this must be clear, but an intermediate solution," he said.

This whole "offer," however, is predicated upon a condition: a "signal" from Putin, and the unloading—through exile or some other way—of Milosevic.

### Yugoslav End-Game?

Bildt's initiative was worked out to a very precise deadline: the June 4 summit in Moscow between Putin and President Bill Clinton. Britain's *The Economist* magazine was explicit: "When Mr. Putin holds his first summit meeting with President Bill Clinton on June 4th, both sides will be conscious that Russia will be very helpful—or unhelpful—in what could turn out to be the Yugoslav end-game." There is no doubt that one of the key issues discussed at the summit will be the Balkan situation, and in particular, the destiny of Milosevic.

Well-informed sources have stressed that, despite all the propaganda to the contrary, Moscow's influence over Belgrade remains "huge," and that the Russian leadership could