

Dateline Mexico by Josefina Menéndez

PAN moneybags threaten civil war

The "nationalized businessmen" have allied with the PAN and called for confrontation with the government.

For the first time in his term last week, President Miguel de la Madrid made a wisecrack about Mexican businessmen. Our hearts sank into our stomachs to think that, at such an early point, de la Madrid is following the same course to which [former Presidents] Echeverría and López Portillo so often resorted—seeking scapegoats. They ended up on the precipice with a large section of our battered Mexico.

"The day in which the demagogues encrusted in power decide to put Mexican free enterprise to sleep forever, on that day we will hear the requiem of all of Mexico, and that day we will split apart. Effectively, we will split into two: Southern Mexico, controlled by the Russo-Cuban guerrillas of Central America, and Northern Mexico, under the direction of the northern cousins. . . ."

The preceding scenario for dividing Mexico and unleashing civil war was written by José Alberto Healy, director of *El Imparcial*, a very influential magazine of Mexico's financial oligarchy in the capital of the state of Sonora, Hermosillo. The threat is not idle, because such "businessmen" are now openly aligning themselves with Mexico's Nazi organization, the National Action Party (PAN), whose trademark has been violence in the streets.

El Imparcial was responding to charges by Mexican President Miguel de la Madrid against the "nationalized" businessmen—the unscrupu-

lous speculators against whom then President López Portillo cracked down with private-bank nationalization in the fall of 1982.

De la Madrid took the occasion of a meeting with nation's governors to call for a closing of ranks around the nation-state, and to attack the enterprising fervor of those "businessmen" who would like to see Mexico submerged in chaos and civil war. He called such businessmen "greedy" and selfish, and made clear his determination to ensure that they will not succeed in their aims.

These unusual words from Mexico's head of state drew an avalanche of reactions from those responsible for the practices of flight capital and subversion which prompted his strong words.

Alfredo Sandoval, the president of Coparmex, the ultra-reactionary employers' confederation, called a press conference to declare that Coparmex is fighting for a Mexico in which citizen participation is encouraged, and the freedom to express one's views, to make policy recommendations, and even to dissent is respected. Sandoval loudly protested that Coparmex has no aspirations to political power, nor does it represent any particular group.

Days earlier, Adolfo Lugo Verduzco, president of the government party, the PRI, had charged that Coparmex was acting as a political entity within the private sector and should be stripped of its charter to operate as a "business" association.

This confrontation between government and "business," which had been submerged since the last days of López Portillo's presidency in 1982, is now public again because the monetarist-business sector has decided to break with the government and the institutions and openly play with the opposition political party of clear fascist imprint: PAN.

Such "businessmen" are not to be confused with honest industrial capitalists. The group is controlled by an oligarchy of ex-bankers and gangsters of the tourism world. They know that this electoral year will be decisive for Mexico, and that if there is not a real change in economic direction, the government will lose credibility. They will then be able to use governmental and congressional elections to impose the ideology of "free enterprise" as a cover for more crime and usury.

A few hours after the national press printed the accusations and counter accusations, in the midst of a political climate made white-hot by the various gubernatorial *destapes* (announcements of official PRI nominees) and violence unleashed by the PAN in Coahuila, the PAN decided to announce the list of *its* candidates for various elected offices. First they announced the formal affiliation of Manuel J. Clouthier, ex-president of the Business Coordinating Council, and his possible candidacy for governor of Sinaloa. A series of other names appeared in print, from Emilio Goicoechea Luna, to José Luis Coindreau, José Ma. Basagoiti, Carlos Amaya Rivera, Alejandro Gurza, and Eugenio Elourduy—all prominent bankers and ex-presidents of "business" groups!

One newspaper, *El Día*, also listed the name of the ex-owner of Bancomer and internationally notorious mafioso, Manuel Espinoza Yglesias, as a PAN candidate.