

Dateline Mexico by Carlos Cota Meza and Dennis Small

Brits go back to the drawing board

Despite the efforts of British intelligence, Mexico's political institutions are still standing. But now there are two new scandals.

Much to the dismay of City of London and Wall Street financial interests, Mexico's political institutions have not yet crumbled under three or four deadly assault waves launched by British intelligence circles. These waves—the murder of Cardinal Juan Jesús Posadas Ocampo in May 1993; the violent Zapatista uprising in Chiapas in January 1994; and the murder of PRI presidential candidate Luis Donaldo Colosio in March 1994—were intended by the British to culminate in the August electoral victory of Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, the Zapatistas' favorite, for President.

But they did not.

Instead, PRI candidate Ernesto Zedillo won over 50% of the vote, with a whopping 77% voter turnout. So, over late August and early September, British intelligence and financial interests scrambled back to the drawing boards, to try to draft a plan to contain the incoming Zedillo presidency, and make sure it continues with Salinas' neo-liberal economic policies.

In an intensification of the campaign to destabilize Mexico, on Sept. 28, the nation was again shaken by another political assassination, this time of José Francisco Ruiz Massieu, secretary-general of the PRI party. Ruiz Massieu was slated to play a crucial role in the government of Ernesto Zedillo, and was close to both the President-elect and outgoing President Salinas. His murder represents another blow to Mexico's political system, at a time when British-allied circles are promoting outright warfare

in the southern state of Chiapas.

These same circles have also encouraged two political scandals, each designed to weaken Zedillo and the old-line PRI party machinery, known as the "Dinosaurs," which continues to stand in the way of the British gameplan for national disintegration.

Scandal #1 is being played off the so-called Cabal Peniche case, in which Mexican finance authorities intervened against the top leadership of the Financial Union group headed by Carlos Cabal Peniche. The significance of this case is that it reflects the fact that the Mexican financial system is bankrupt and in urgent need of top-down restructuring. But beyond this, the scandal, involving major doses of corruption, has been used by the British and their local friends to target the PRI Dinosaurs.

As both domestic and foreign press accounts have it, the Dinosaurs are headed by current Agriculture Secretary Carlos Hank González, and they are in mortal combat with the "modernizers," the group of young technocrats trained abroad who owe their political posts to outgoing President Carlos Salinas de Gortari. It is said that this group is led by Finance Secretary Pedro Aspe and Trade Secretary Jaime Serra Puche.

Based on this political equation "à la Mexico," the scandal has been used to expose the fact that Cabal Peniche is allegedly an associate of Hank González through Tabasco Gov. Manuel Gurría Ordoñez, as well as through Mexico's Secretary of Communications and Transport Emilio Gamboa

Patrón. According to the London *Financial Times*, Ernesto Zedillo's electoral mandate "has been damaged by the arrest order against Cabal Peniche."

The *Financial Times* has also played a prominent role in promoting Scandal #2, also targeting the Dinosaurs. This is the case of the "revelations" made by former Mexican government official Eduardo Valle, regarding alleged drug-running activities of prominent officials—all of them, curiously, Dinosaurs. According to the *Time's* Demian Fraser, Valle's exposés "surround the Cabal case" and "have divided the Salinas administration."

According to the *Wall Street Journal*, the "young dinosaur" Gamboa Patrón—a main target of Valle's charges—is being sacrificed by the Salinas government because he "is resisting the political reforms as much as the old members of the PRI." Reuters news service reports that Gamboa "is not well regarded" by Pedro Aspe and Jaime Serra Puche, "who supposedly consider him a roadblock to many reforms. Gamboa is said to be allied with old-line PRI members and government officials who disagreed with Salinas's modernization programs, and whom many here in Mexico blame for Colosio's death."

Until recently, Valle served for 18 months as special anti-drug adviser to then Attorney General Jorge Carpizo, today Government Secretary. The information on drug trafficking that Valle is using to expose some "narcopoliticians" was taken from classified files of the Attorney General's office, and it is still not known if that information had been investigated, taken as valid hypothesis, or discarded as evidence. According to some rumors in Mexico, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration had already examined the information and rejected it.