

López Portillo's trip to Asia prepares 'Pacific Basin' development region

Cynical observers in the United States, Great Britain, and even in Mexico who had predicted that little would result from Mexican President José López Portillo's just-concluded trip to Asia were in for quite a shock. The trip led to the consolidation of significant agreements with Japan for the exchange of Mexican oil for technology. But, as the Mexican President stressed, he is "not an oil salesman." Most broadly and importantly, López Portillo's trip can be credited with providing a key link in the chain of long-term international agreements for development which stretch forward from the historic Schmidt-Brezhnev economic cooperation treaties in May and the Bremen meeting of European leaders in July.

The stage for the successful outcome of López Portillo's trip had been set two weeks earlier during the visit to Japan by West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, which furthered coordination between Japan and the European Monetary System, consolidating the

Tokyo capital markets as the "Bremen East" of the emerging new economic order.

Mexico will now link its Pacific strategy to new advances in its previous Atlantic focus, bringing the arrangements full circle. Visits to Mexico by Spanish King Juan Carlos later this month and French President Giscard d'Estaing in February will further consolidate Mexico's role as a leading Third World participant in this "Grand Design."

China cannot live behind a wall

During López Portillo's six-day visit to China, the first stop on his two-week tour, the Mexican President repeatedly discussed and explained the importance of the "Pacific Basin" — because of its vast population and immense natural resources — for world development efforts in the decades ahead.

The response to the trip within Mexican progressive circles is evidence of its overall success. In a state-

Mexican legislator ties nation's growth to EMF

Mexican Congressman Julio Zamora Batiz called for Mexico to base its economic development strategy on the developments centered around the European Monetary Fund and the Soviet Union, in a speech before a political rally Nov. 6. Zamora, who doubles as President of the League of Revolutionary Economists, also blasted U.S. Energy Secretary James Schlesinger, according to the daily Diario de Mexico, which reported:

Julio Zamora Batiz called upon Mexico to make a 90 degree turn in its economic policy, in light of "the contacts that have been established with the Soviet Union, with the development of the European Monetary Fund, (and) the strengthening of relations in general beyond the treatment being shown by the United States to our country and its oil."

Zamora Batiz further referred to "the various

pressures that the United States government has exerted to prevent Mexico from embarking on a course of full industrial development." As proof, the congressman stated, "the recent statements of James Schlesinger, a secretary in the U.S. cabinet, to the effect that his country will not accept another Japan south of the border, are clear in this respect."

Zamora continued by formulating a policy of unity through the Pacific basin, the development of the European Monetary Fund, through the contacts that Mexico has established with the Soviet Union, and through the strengthening of relations with France, which are underlined by the coming visit of the French president to Mexico. "A whole new game of international politics is taking shape, and it is one in which Mexico, for the first time in many years, is playing a protagonist's role on the international level."