

Dateline Mexico by Josefina Menendez

A new environmentalist cult

Mexico has shown a healthy immunity to the environmentalist disease, but last week's event in Cuernavaca shows that the greenies may yet spread their contagion.

We headed out to Cuernavaca this weekend to find out what the "Association of Adequate Technology, Inc." (ATA in its Spanish acronym), holding its second national meeting, was all about. We can report the usual environmentalist brainwashing, but with an important twist. There was significant government participation, and the sponsoring institutions are functioning directly out of the international "Aquarian conspiracy" of the Club of Rome and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR).

Leaders of both industry and government in Mexico, with the exception of Mexico City mayor Carlos Hank González, have rarely given environmentalism the time of day. The Cuernavaca antitechnology fest confirmed that the greenie movement is making important inroads.

The godfathers of ATA are the Center of Economic and Social Studies of the Third World (CEESTEM), directed by former President Luis Echeverría, and the Colegio de México. Just the week before, the CEESTEM officially cosponsored a "New Regional Economic Order" conference at the U.N. with the Club of Rome and UNITAR. Three days after the Cuernavaca fling, it was up in Buffalo, New York, cosponsoring a conference on how to unite Mexico, the United States and Canada into a regional zero growth eco-

nomic bloc. The director of the Colegio de México is Victor Urquidi, the sole Mexican member of the Club of Rome.

In the first rows of the several score participants were representatives of the Ministry of Housing and Public Works (SAHOP). Under the directives of Pedro Ramírez Vázquez, the SAHOP has taken the lead in promoting solar and wind power swindles and labor-intensive public works projects. The Arias Chávez brothers, whose book *The Ecologically Self-Sufficient Habitation* is ATA's bible, wrote extensive sections of SAHOP's programs as official ministry employees.

There were also representatives of the Agriculture and Water Resources Ministry, under the charge of Merino Rabago, and of the National Council on Science and Technology (Conacyt).

The major drawing card was Ivan Illich, international guru of "deschooling" and the abolition of medicine, who made his name with the CIDOC center in Cuernavaca before handing his library over to the Colegio de México.

Not far behind Illich in his panegyrics against industrial progress was Father Jesús Quiroz, S.J., professor at the Ibero-American University. The Jesuits have incorporated extreme environmentalism into their "Theology of Liberation" across the continent. Cuernavaca is one of their strongholds;

and not surprisingly, we discovered that the British-run prototerrorist "Friends of the Earth" scetlet has its Mexican mailing address in the resort city.

From the moment of its founding at a Jan. 26 private meeting at the CEESTEM, the ATA has defined its mission not only in terms of spreading the concept of "adequate technology," but of doing so "independently" of the "imperialist" organizations based in the U.S. and Britain purveying the same outlook. "Our objectives have nothing to do with the projects of the World Bank or the U.S. Senate," organizers stated in Cuernavaca; the plans of these institutions are "vertical, they come from above ... ours are a social project and are participative."

This aversion to publicly recognizing the origins of their ideas cannot hide the direct links identified in their own publications to the Intermediate Technology Development Group in London, created by *Small Is Beautiful* author E.F. Schumacher.

Currently the ATA is in a stage of "consolidation" and "recruitment," according to the conference organizers. They believe that before "going big," they have to build sufficient cadre to staff their expansion into regional offices across the country.

The goal: "Form a new futurology which, armed with the methodological instrument of our time, plays the role of sorcerer's apprentice."

ATA's irrationalist sorcery, while unlikely to make spectacular gains soon, nevertheless can create problems for the industrial development projects of the López Portillo government.