

Dateline Mexico by Josefina Menéndez

Naming names

The neo-fascist clique behind a speculator's protection racket called "Mexico in Liberty" has met with some surprises.

Things are pretty grim these days in Mexico, as everyone knows. One of the few things that provides relief to Mexicans is the spectacle of the vast oligarchic business and latifundist interests who took upwards of \$20 billion out of Mexico, now coming bitterly complaining to the government that they have no dollars to pay for imports—"because of government corruption and malfeasance."

The neo-fascist clique that is preparing a "civic insurrection" for next year (see *EIR* Nov. 2) has been organizing a traveling roadshow called "Mexico in Liberty" to unite the complaining business, middle-class, and student forces in six key states.

President López Portillo, starting the last week of October, embarked on a series of lightning trips of his own around the country, to counter this shock troop organizing effort by maintaining the morale of the population and the momentum of his Sept. 1 emergency economic decrees.

In the central state of Guanajuato the President delivered a stinging attack Oct. 31 on those who demand "liberty" only to be able to "continue looting the country."

Six days later, in the capital of the southern state of Guerrero, the President scored those who, "with reactionary cynicism, demand foreign currency from the Mexican state, complaining about the situation, when they have currency stored away on the other side of the border, and at the service of a different allegiance."

On Nov. 6, in the Pacific state of

Nayarit, it was the "minority forces which claim their organized functions of egoism and rapaciousness as a right" which came under the President's attack. "We categorically reject the right of egoism to usurp the state's sovereign power to declare what is in the general interest."

Manuel Buendía, a Jack Anderson type here who writes for *Excelsior* and maintains high-level government contracts, praised the President's tour as well and good, but insufficient; now we must name names, he said.

Not one to hang back, Buendía started himself with the corpulent, bearded ex-latifundist, Manuel Clouthier, who currently heads the "Mexico in Liberty" speaking circuit and directs a group of speculators controlling the Businessmen's Coordinating Council (CCE).

Clouthier had heightened his war of words with President López Portillo at a Sinaloa "Mexico in Liberty" session Nov. 8, where he stated that "we, like López Portillo, are opposed to the egoists and rapacious ones"—but also "to the demagogues and the opportunists, the paternalists and the infantile ones" in government who have wrecked the economy.

Buendía revealed that Clouthier's rice-processing company is heavily indebted in dollars—at the same time Clouthier has personal dollar accounts abroad, one with \$460,000 on deposit. Another case of "failing business, rich businessman," noted Buendía.

The next stop in the President's itinerary was Sonora, where he ar-

rived Nov. 10. The governor of the state, Samuel Ocaña, also has begun to name names. In an explosive interview in the weekly *Siempre*, he documents what *EIR* first published last summer: that the local U.S. consulate; the archbishop of Sonora, Quintero Arce; and border assembly plant personnel collaborated in shunting votes to the opposition PAN party in July national elections, in an effort to discredit the ruling PRI party.

Ocaña charges that U.S. Ambassador John Gavin, part of whose family comes from Sonora, and who is visiting Sonora himself Nov. 12, was privy to the pro-PAN operation.

The arrival of the "Mexico in Liberty" roadshow to Sonora Nov. 23 should continue the fireworks. Already public documentation by the Mexican Labor Party (PLM) of the fascist connections of the meeting's promoters prompted the local organizer, Sonora Chamber of Commerce director Guillermo Tapia Calderon, into a serious page-one defense of the event and attack on the PLM.

One of the great shocks for the "Mexico in Liberty" crowd, and such foreign sponsors as John Bircher Rep. Larry McDonald (D.-Ga.), was President-elect de la Madrid's appearance Nov. 9 at a ceremony at the Cuban embassy in Mexico City, where former Mexican Ambassador to Cuba Gonzalo Martínez Corbalá was honored with a medal presented by Cuban Vice-President Carlos Rafael Rodríguez. On hand for the splashy event was not just de la Madrid, but also López Portillo and former President Luis Echeverría—a threesome that *nobody* expected to see, ever, in the same public room. Back to the drawing boards for anyone who doubted de la Madrid's commitment to Mexico's traditional "detente" posture toward Cuba.