

## Mexico's Cárdenas claims presidential victory

by Hugo López Ochoa

Presidential candidate Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, speaking to about 400,000 sympathizers rallying in the Plaza of the Constitution (the Zócalo), in front of the presidential palace in Mexico City, July 16, blamed President Miguel de la Madrid for the massive vote fraud perpetrated during the July 6 elections not only against Cárdenas himself, but also against dozens of candidates running for congress on his National Democratic Front (FDN) ticket. "The government, the President of the Republic, had offered clean elections, respect for the popular will. Since July 6, they have been assaulting the people, violating legality and today they are in the final phases of consummating a great electoral fraud. . . . They broke their promise."

The official final returns were only released 10 days after the elections. They gave the victory to the candidate of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), Carlos Salinas de Gortari, with 50.36% of the total vote. They gave Cárdenas 31.12% and Manuel J. Clouthier, the candidate of the monetarist National Action Party (PAN), 17.07%. But, according to the figures presented by Cárdenas, which were checked with sources inside the government, the real returns were on the order of 38.89% for Cárdenas, 32.69% for Salinas de Gortari and 25.19% for Clouthier.

In the July 16 Mexico City rally, Cárdenas outlined his presidential platform. It centers around taking "joint actions" with the rest of Ibero-America to impose just conditions on servicing the foreign debt and to "economically integrate" the continent. This program against the brutal looting of Mexico imposed by the International Monetary Fund during

the past six years was what won Cárdenas the population's confidence (see excerpts on page 43).

Cárdenas also made patent that Miguel de la Madrid himself would be responsible should violence erupt. "Only the government could generate it, if it transgresses the law with the express authorization of the President of the Republic," he declared. "Nobody else," he insisted, "could take responsibility for such a sensitive and grave decision."

The danger of a new civil war is latent. Hundreds of thousands of Cárdenas supporters have taken to the streets in dozens of cities and towns all over the country to protest the fraud. Some have gone so far as to block highways or seize public buildings, mostly the local offices of the Federal Elections Commission. Cárdenas is aware of the danger and has called on his partisans to hold themselves strictly within the framework of legal struggle. On July 20, he began a tour through 15 of Mexico's states in which the fraud was the most blatant, in order to assure an orderly battle for "legality."

"Emotions are running high, the blood is boiling in many cases. But we must not yield to temptation nor lead the people into flight forward with measures which could bring us a political failure," he warned 20,000 backers who came out to welcome him in Cuernavaca, the Morelos state capital, July 21. Earlier, in Acapulco, Guerrero, he announced to 25,000 supporters that he challenged the official vote totals for that state. His FDN claims to have won eight of ten federal deputy seats and two senate seats in that state. All were given to the PRI!

Two of Cárdenas's friends, Xavier Ovando and Román Gil, were assassinated four days before the elections. They were precisely the people in charge of Cárdenas's anti-fraud operation. In every city Cárdenas has visited, he asked a minute of silence to honor the fallen.

### The third man in discord

The one who is trying to provoke violence and ignite the country is Manuel J. Clouthier, the PAN candidate. He has not recognized Cárdenas's victory, but rather claims victory for himself, despite entire sections of the PAN having gone over to the ranks of "Cardenismo" after the elections. Clouthier began a campaign for what he calls "civil resistance." A manual written at Harvard circulating inside the PAN tries to provoke a bloodbath (see *EIR*, Vol. 15, No. 27, p. 53).

That is the way Clouthier's attempt to break through President Miguel de la Madrid's security guards is being interpreted. "Let him through; he's the man; we are here for you to kill us," screamed some hysterical women accompanying Clouthier, while he suicidally rushed the soldiers surrounding the President "like an American football player," as the press put it. He said he wanted to protest to the President's face against the fraud.

Top-level sources reveal Clouthier is working with a powerful faction of the PRI and the government so that, on the supposition Salinas de Gortari gets the presidency, the vote fraud will be focused against Cárdenas, and the PAN will be given the majority of opposition deputy seats in Congress. As of now, official figures give the PRI 249 seats, the PAN 31, and the FDN only 20. Four senate seats have been recognized for the FDN, the first time any opposition party has been allowed in the senate.

PRI president Jorge de la Vega Domínguez is held to be part of the PAN-PRI plot. Also involved are his political "godfather," Carlos Hank González, and Mexico state governor Mario Ramón Beteta, heir of ex-President Miguel Alemán's political mafia. But the brains are the old Mexican oligarchic families, now headed by ex-bankers Agustín Legorreta, president of the Business Coordinating Council, and Juan Sánchez Navarro, president of the Mexican Businessmen's Council.

This group controls Mexico's biggest stock brokerages. Just before the elections, it ran a huge capital flight, which sucked out \$3 billion, by government account, and \$6 billion, by their own. The capital flight was a mafia message that Cárdenas had to be stopped, or else. The PAN has proposed legalizing narcotics, following the directives of the Inter-American Dialogue, to which Legorreta belongs. He also represents the Mexican wing of Oliver North and the Eastern Establishment's Project Democracy. Legorreta has boasted his clique of 300 men was what imposed the Economic Solidarity Pact, the economic shock program which has thrust Mexico into a deep economic depression since last October's

New York market crash.

The PRI got wiped out at the polls because of this Economic Solidarity Pact, which consists of cutting budget deficits by auctioning off the majority of state companies, freezing wages at 50% of what they were six years ago, and freezing prices and peso exchange rates with the deliberate goal of provoking a deep economic depression . . . to end inflation!

Not only the elections, but the recent increases in international interest rates and falling oil prices have multiplied the voices inside the PRI itself calling for President de la Madrid to abandon the depressive strategy and resume economic growth. That is, adopt the program proposed by Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas. This is the only context of national sanity in which the opposition parties' electoral challenges could be handled honestly, in the Electoral College which will give its final decision in the last half of August.

But the oligarchy will not give in. "We are still far from achieving the goal of reducing inflation," said Legorreta July 19, "and this makes us think that the pact will certainly continue from here to the end of the year." "The *coming recession* should not surprise us, because it is part of the Pact," he assured. And, in a clear reference to the dangers hanging over the country, he said, "We, all sectors and the government, have concluded that the political, social, and economic price of an economic stabilization program is less than letting uncontrolled inflation continue."

This shows that the Mexican and Wall Street oligarchies have reached an agreement to use a heavy hand against Cárdenas and consummate what he calls "a coup d'état." Word swept through business circles July 19 that the Mexican Businessmen's Council had, in a private meeting, refused to support Manuel J. Clouthier in "Philippinizing" Mexico. "Calm down, Manuel; you achieved what you wanted; if you continue, you could ignite Mexico," boss Juan Sánchez Navarro told him.

### Fanaticism and treason

Fanaticism is on the loose. Market analyst Luis Enrique Mercado showed this in his July 21 column in the daily *El Universal*. "It would be extremely difficult for Carlos Salinas de Gortari to fully comply with his promise of 'no more sacrifices,'" he warned. The economic depression will have to continue "at least during all of 1989," he continued, threatening: "It is a process which is not as simple as political speeches seem to suggest, nor will the transformation take place without people being dead, wounded, and disappeared." Mercado is the dictation secretary of central bank head Miguel Mancera Aguayo. Mancera was fired from that post by ex-President José López Portillo when he nationalized the banking system in 1982. But Miguel de la Madrid put him back, as a guarantee to foreign creditors.

A traitor could have an ounce of intelligence and rethink

things before jumping off a cliff. But, what can be done with a fanatic?

### **Negotiation or revolution?**

The nationalist leaders who remained in the PRI after Salinas split the party last year have banged their heads against the wall in their attempts to use the Cárdenas victory to clean the traitors out of the PRI. The PRI is paralyzed because

---

---

*Not only the elections, but the recent increases in international interest rates and falling oil prices have multiplied the voices inside the PRI itself calling for President de la Madrid to abandon the depressive strategy and resume economic growth. That is, adopt the program proposed by Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas.*

---

---

Salinas and de la Madrid do not dare make reforms which could get out of control, to the point that the PRI ends up with Cárdenas's program.

This stalemate cannot endure, because the PRI members are demanding Cárdenas's program. On July 20, when Hugo Domenzáin, the leader of the government employees' union, tried to convince his rank and file at a union meeting that "we Mexican workers enjoy a decent life" and that the July 6 elections "have been proven legal and clean," the workers interrupted him. An impressive shout rocked the union hall: "Cut it out, you liar. Viva Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas!" On July 16, the PRI chief for Mexico City, Guillermo Jiménez Morales, abruptly suspended a meeting of local leaders which had been called to analyze "the causes" for the PRI officially losing the federal district to Cárdenas, when several began to say "the urban electorate chose the thesis nearest to the postulates of the Mexican Revolution," i.e., Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas. This pressure has already forced Fidel Velázquez, the political chief of the unions which belong to the PRI, to demand a 50% wage increase.

Obviously, that could not be done without breaking the entire Economic Solidarity Pact schema. The PRI is unable to mobilize its once-overwhelming membership, because its members demand it adopt Cárdenas's program. Many voices in the PRI are calling for the government to reach some sort of deal with Cárdenas. On July 17, Attorney General Sergio García Ramírez met Cárdenas's top campaign strategist Por-

firio Muñoz Ledo, former head of the PRI, and allowed news photographers to take pictures of them together. García Ramírez is seen as a bridge between the current administration and nationalist ex-Presidents Luis Echeverría (1970-76) and José López Portillo (1976-82). On July 18, Ramírez gave a speech, representing the President, on the anniversary of the death of Mexico's nation builder Benito Juárez. Quoting Juárez, García Ramírez pleaded for both sides to come to an agreement, in the higher interest of the nation. Talk began to spread of a possible "co-government" by the PRI and Cárdenas's FDN, which split from it last year.

That set off alarm bells among the oligarchy. On July 20, the president of the Employers' Confederation of the Mexican Republic, Jorge Oejo, attacked Cárdenas as part of the Echeverría-López Portillo faction. Those former Presidents are deeply hated by the oligarchy because they tried to industrially develop the country on the model of Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas's father, President Lázaro Cárdenas (1934-40). Lázaro Cárdenas nationalized Mexico's oil and turned feudal estates into peasant cooperatives.

Oejo was echoing accusations made July 12 by the Nazi José Angel Conchello, PAN's ideologue. Conchello then called Cuauhtémoc a malignant "Trojan Horse" of the PRI nationalists. The *Wall Street Journal* and *Baltimore Sun* are pressuring the same way against Cárdenas. A columnist in the daily *El Norte* in Monterrey, the Mexican oligarchy's stronghold, revealed July 21 that PRI candidate Salinas had been corraled in a private meeting by businessmen. They demanded he define himself on Cárdenas. Salinas responded, "Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas is my enemy. . . . It is a lie that he is an invention of 'the system' . . . They [traditional Mexican nationalists] look to the past. We are looking toward the 21st century," that is, the post-industrial society.

For his part, Cárdenas underlined on July 19, "We are determined not to give in or retreat in our efforts; we are not going to trade victories for defeats." "We will not surrender to a plan which ignores and despises the people's great struggles and efforts; which has turned our country into the private business of a tiny group of 300 and hands it over to foreigners."

In Acapulco July 20, Cárdenas called on his backers to get out of the public buildings they had seized, not to block highways, and to fight within the law. He announced his FDN coalition would concentrate on legal defense of the vote and political mobilization, with simultaneous rallies all over the country on Aug. 15, the date on which the electoral college would meet. If necessary, he said, there would be a march Sept. 1 converging "from all possible points" in the country on Mexico City. That is the date when President Miguel de la Madrid gives his last state of the union message and opens the new Congress. The Congress has the last word on who wins federal elections. There, Cárdenas said, "the opposition legislators should defend as a bloc" the election victories.

# The July 16 speech by Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas

*Excerpts from the speech given by the presidential candidate of Mexico's National Democratic Front (FDN) Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, given July 16 in the Zócalo (main plaza) of Mexico City, to more than 400,000 supporters:*

The pledge was violated. Once again they failed to keep their word. The government, the President of the Republic, had offered clean elections, respect for the popular will. As of July 6, the people have been abused, the law violated, and today we see consummated the final phases of a great electoral fraud.

An in-depth fight will take place on the legal front, but we have before us a problem which is essentially political. We are and will continue to trace the fraud and the effects of the irregularities. But our fight is not over statistics, with these we are not going to demonstrate fraud. . . . The people will not allow themselves to be fooled, and even less will they surrender. . . .

In the first two decades of this century, our people paid a bloody price to open up democratic pathways and to rescue the nation's sovereignty. They backed the anti-reelection fight as a means of bringing a long, despotic, subservient dictatorship to an end by peaceful and constitutional means, first by confronting the dictator with his own conscience. . . .

The country should be rebuilt in its political institutions, in the organization and orientation of its economy, in the forms toward which society is developing, in the political and economic relations with other nations, to thus be a nation with democracy . . . that takes advantage of the potential of its natural resources, of its productive plant that could be constantly expanding and modernizing, and of the inventiveness of its people, to encourage economic growth that necessarily translates into social well-being. . . .

In a special way our relations with the United States will have to be restated. We have had and still have close commercial political, cultural, and labor links that we will have to continue having, but under conditions such that that relationship be one of dignity and always yield mutual advantage.

What is true is that a heavy dependency has been imposed on us from there, which has only eased and become a relationship of greater equity when there have been governments with genuine popular support in Mexico. It is during those times that it has been possible to broaden the space for exercise of our sovereignty.

By its ideological definition, by the political determination of the government, we are experiencing today one of the greatest moments of subjugation and subordination in our history, of the most brazen surrender.

From the United States, we expect cooperation in technology, cultural and scientific contributions, investments that fully adapt to our laws and come to complement the national economy, in accordance with our interests and priorities.

The American people and government have had dealings with the Mexican Revolution and with vigorous social movements of Latin America. A good neighbor policy then developed which generated relations of respect and dignity. It was not, however, without tensions because of the various interests involved. We think that that good neighbor policy toward Latin America, updated, could return.

Mexico cannot be indifferent or lukewarm toward what is happening with its brother nations of Latin America. An authentic economic and political integration with them must be promoted, and the defense and joint promotion of common interests carried out. [We need] continental planning, a greater impulse to certain productive activities in accordance with relative advantages, greater closeness and tighter political, social, and cultural collaboration.

The conflicts are worsening today in Central America because of undue U.S. intervention. [We ask] that that intervention cease, that U.S. troops in Panama and Honduras leave, that the military and financial aid to the Nicaraguan and Salvadoran counterrevolution cease. Support should be provided the Central American agreements, and a very active support on our part, so that peace on the isthmus may be imposed and national efforts can center on democratization and development. . . .

A few months remain to the present government. I have called upon the President of the Republic, and I do so again today . . . to fulfill and guarantee the fulfillment of the Constitution and of the laws which emanate from it, to preserve the social peace, and not undertake any new action that raises the indebtedness of the country or complicates its handling, that affects the popular economy or violates the nation's sovereign decision-making, not to continue with the dismantling of the public enterprises. . . .

The Executive has the commitment to bring the electoral process to a good end. I repeat, the people with their vote decided by peaceful means to change the government. Violence can only be generated by the government if it transgresses the law by express authorization of the President of the Republic. No one else could order and take responsibility for such a difficult and serious decision.