

## Dateline Mexico by Josefina Menendez

### A Second International trap

*Willy Brandt and Co. did their best to rope López Portillo into Brandt Commission versions of a "new international order" with the help of Mexico's foreign minister.*

**D**uring President López Portillo's trip to Europe last month a faction in the Mexican government led by Foreign Minister Jorge Castañeda made substantial progress in their efforts to link Mexico with the policies of Willy Brandt's Second International. In between López Portillo's meetings with French, German and Swedish government leaders on the crucial question of war-avoidance and economic development, Castañeda maneuvered to set up "unscheduled" meetings between the President and Second International leaders Willy Brandt, Austrian Chancellor Bruno Kreisky and Sweden's former Prime Minister Olof Palme.

High level diplomatic sources in Mexico have told this correspondent that in fact the Mexican Foreign Minister's sympathies toward the Second International go far beyond a mere ideological flirtation. In his efforts to highlight the world significance of "social democracies" such as Germany and Sweden, Castañeda downplayed Mexico's ties with "conservative, Gaullist" France to the point of deliberately withholding the approval of two major Franco-Mexican agricultural deals. It was only after other government ministries demanded the approval so President Giscard and López Portillo could sign them in Paris, that the Foreign Ministry finally gave the green light. Other ministries

involved in the preparation of López Portillo's trip are known to have added this onto their list of "mistakes" which merit Castañeda's ouster.

From all indications, Castañeda's faction organized a group of Mexican journalists to give the Mexican public the impression that the President's successful trip was a result not of his discussions with France's Giscard and Germany's Schmidt, but his encounters with the "more liberal," "pro-Third World" Social Democracy. For instance *Excelsior's* Manuel Buendía, a journalist known to be associated with the radical Jesuit "Theology of Liberation," reported from Europe that after the "heavy Gaullist" politics of Paris, the meeting with Willy Brandt in Bonn was like a "fresh breeze from the Rhine" for the Mexican President.

The Social Democracy's intense courting of López Portillo aims to convince him to throw Mexico's international prestige behind the report of Brandt's so-called Independent Commission on International Development Issues.

The "Brandt Commission" report proposes a strategy of "appropriate technologies" for the Third World, as well as a replacement of the principle of national sovereignty for a zero-growth "one world" government.

In a meeting May 21 in Bonn,

both Brandt and Austria's Kreisky tenaciously tried to convince the Mexican leader to agree to have Mexico host a heads of state summit to discuss the Brandt Commission report. Brandt promised to promote López Portillo's global energy plan in return.

Although López Portillo indeed gave credibility to Brandt's "North vs. South" strategy—both by meeting with him and Kreisky and by tolerating Castañeda's antics, the Mexican leader's statements on the Brandt Commission report clearly show he is by no means ready to endorse it fully. While Brandt emerged from the meeting with López Portillo telling the press that the Mexican President had agreed to have the summit meeting in Mexico sometime in January or February next year, López Portillo said "we must handle this matter cautiously." A few days later in Sweden, he stressed that the Brandt report has "some of the things" that need to be discussed, but not all. International discussion cannot just take place in its framework, he stated. He made no mention of the proposed summit.

The strong protechnology tendencies López Portillo has shown during his term totally contradict the Malthusian approach of the Brandt Commission. López Portillo has definitively identified nuclear as the energy source of the future. The Brandt Commission, however, favors "soft" technologies. In fact, Brandt intimate and former Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme, proudly told the press this week that it was thanks to his efforts that the Brandt Commission had eliminated any support for nuclear energy in their report.