

a "violation of human rights" and an instance of "state repression."

Oaxaca: a terrorist time bomb

The warning delivered by López Portillo in Mexico City had as its special target the rising destabilization moves in the southern states of Mexico, Oaxaca, and Chiapas, among others.

The operation against de la Cruz's camp took place the day after a Mexican Communist Party front called the Cocei had wrested control of the municipal government in Juchitan, Oaxaca.

Besides massive vote fraud, the PCM-Cocei electoral alliance used terrorist intimidation to force the 70,000 inhabitants to accept the imposition of their candidate for mayor. Faced with open threats of a bloodbath, the electoral authorities were forced to concede that the PCM-Cocei candidate had "won" by a margin of 208 votes over the candidate of the ruling PRI party.

The town has particular importance because it is at one of the strategic crossroads of the country. Directly to the north, across 100 miles of the easily traversed Tehuantepec Peninsula, lie the major Mexican oil fields and refining complexes of Veracruz, Tabasco, and northern Chiapas. From its same Pan-American Highway location, it lies along the main route to Guatemala and is seen as a doorway into the Central American violence. The state of Chiapas, just a few miles down the road, directly borders Guatemala, and has been the

target of a "violence spillover" that is intended to move north through Juchitan into the rest of the oil region. This area of instability includes the largely Indian highlands in Chiapas, one of the centers of Jesuit organizing in the country and the scene of a bloody peasant conflict in June 1980.

Concern for the PCM-Cocei takeover of Juchitan has been reflected by influential Mexico City newspaper columnists, aware of the violent antecedents of the group. Cocei ran candidates for Juchitan mayor in two previous elections. In 1974, after losing the elections, Cocei carried out a "hit" against the house of the winning PRI candidate. One person was killed. In 1977, when it lost for the second time, Cocei launched a series of violent incidents to destabilize the state government which it considered the "enemy of the people." The same year Cocei set buses and stores on fire to demand the release of their jailed comrades. And in 1975 the Cocei, which had cooperated with the 23rd of September League, "broke" with it in a spectacular shootout that left almost a dozen people dead.

In a significant escalation of its capabilities, the Cocei sent a squad of 40 people to Mexico City in mid-February, where the group took over the embassies of India and Guatemala to protest what they termed "brutal and repressive tactics" on the part of the government. The action was closely coordinated by a Mexico City Jesuit clearinghouse and operatives of international "human rights" organizations.

New York Times defends Mexican terrorist operative

The terrorist October 2 camp, run by Francisco de la Cruz, and dismantled by Mexico security units last week, was an internationally promoted experiment in "radical" local-control brainwashing operations of the sort associated with the Pol Pot nightmare in Cambodia.

Marcel Lefèbvre, a Dark Ages ideologue of the Sorbonne, toured the camp last year in what the pro-terrorist Mexico City daily Uno mas Uno called "on-the-scene observation" of an "experiment to help the poor." This is "the only authentic socialist experiment in Latin America that I know of," Lefèbvre stated. But it was the New York Times, in a 1977 eulogy to de la Cruz by Mexico correspondent Alan Riding, which did most to build up his "social fighter" credentials.

Here is what the Times said:

Mr. Francisco de la Cruz is clearly the undisputed popular leader of his community, though its real strength comes from the full participation in the assemblies and communities that govern the settlement. Through communal work the squatters have built a health clinic, a kindergarten, a kitchen for volunteer laborers, a cement-block cooperative, a mechanic's shed and an editing room for a monthly bulletin.

Mr. de la Cruz . . . says he is "guided from the left" but his ideology appears to be closer to the "natural socialism" of his poorly educated followers, whose views have been shaped by hardship. "It means helping each other," a mother of six said when asked the meaning of socialism. . . .

In a country where both government and opposition political parties are dominated from above, Mr. de la Cruz dreams of a grass-roots political movement springing from the unorganized rural and urban poor. "When we have finished here, I would like to go back to the countryside and organize a peasant movement there."