

## Dateline Mexico by Josefina Menéndez

### He who casts the first stone

*López Portillo's Sept. 1 measures were a body blow against corruption. But the "anti-corruption" lobby is shrieking.*

A secret hidden from foreign readers about Mexico is that the "anti-corruption" fighters who have stoked the international rumor circuits with extravagant accounts of private aggrandizement by Mexican government officials—including the story that President López Portillo himself "has \$2.5 billion salted away outside the country"—are among the most corrupt businessmen and politicians in the country.

Take the famous case of Mauricio González de la Garza, the homosexual newspaper columnist in the pay of Mexico City Mayor Carlos Hank González. In early 1981, Mauricio wrote a best-selling "exposé" of corruption in the government and the family circles of López Portillo, titled *The Last Call*.

There was a curious omission in Mauricio's hyper-moralistic tract. Nowhere was the name of Hank González mentioned—though no case of corruption is more notorious.

Hank's fortune, one of the two or three largest in Mexico, is based entirely on trading political favors for lucrative business opportunities.

Hank's corruption is so vast, in fact, that when international circles close to Lord Caradon and former CIA chief William Colby decided that an "anti-corruption" campaign was just the thing to finish off the legitimacy of López Portillo's leadership, they launched the campaign by publicizing the fact that their friend Hank had invested some \$1 million of his flight-

capital in a mansion in Connecticut.

Most recently we have the curious case of Julio Scherer García, editor of the left-Jesuit magazine, *Proceso*. Scherer García, a product of "solidarist" rightist Christian Democrat circles in Monterrey in the early 1960s, went to bat for his flight-capital friends with a sudden splashy personal attack on the President right after the bank nationalization and exchange control decrees of Sept. 1.

The irony is that López Portillo's measures are the biggest anti-corruption drive launched in Mexico in years. Not only do they put the usurious private bankers out of business, returning credit flows to productive, not speculative, uses: politically, the measures delivered a body blow to the empire of Mexico's Mr. Corruption, former president Miguel Alemán, and his circle.

Here one finds the intersection of the flight-capital and dirty money channels first uncovered by Italian magistrates in 1981; Far East, Mexican, and South American dope dealers; the jet set scams of Alemán's "Acapulco crowd"; and real-estate speculation across Mexico.

The case of Alemán's regional empire in Baja California shows this corruption jumps the border into the United States—with national-security implications.

Gov. Bobby de la Madrid of Baja California has long warmed Alemán's heart with calls for re-opening Mexico to casino gambling and all the prosti-

tution and money-laundering that goes with it. Mafioso Johnny Alessio is his partner in this effort. Associated with both is the Bustamante family, one of the filthiest "business" groups of Baja, which raked in \$10 million on overcharges for natural-gas contracts from California in the 1976-79 period, according to grand-jury investigations of the time, and channeled millions in flight capital into California real estate.

That particular line of corruption goes right up to one of Ronald Reagan's circle of intimates, California Republican Party chairman Tirso del Junco. Del Junco is a business partner of Bustamante's, according to reliable sources here. He has been bending Reagan's ear with diatribes about Mexico ever since López Portillo's exchange-control measures shut down the flight-capital game.

*EIR* founder Lyndon LaRouche had some useful observations on how to effectively clean up corruption in his recent *EIR* policy study *Operation Juárez*. His suggestions parallel the López Portillo program now under way.

"Admittedly, the great problem in administering governmental functions of auditing, export-import controls, capital controls, exchange controls, is corruption of governmental officials," LaRouche writes.

But "the effective control of such problems lies not in investigating each matter case by case, but, directly the opposite, by considering the pattern of decisions shown on record. . . . The problem becomes acute, if the government itself has no clear policy—no clear, dirigistic policy. Then, in such case, by what criteria as to pattern of decisions can an official be judged? . . . There is no greater root of corruption of governmental officials than a lack of dirigism in national-economic policy."