

## Dateline Mexico by Josefina Menéndez

### 'Cabinetitis' grips the country

*It's too early to tell yet who will be the buenos for de la Madrid's cabinet, but some of the losers can already be spotted.*

The feverish period of behind-the-scenes deals and power plays when an incoming cabinet gets selected is now at its height. Some posts in the cabinet have already been pretty well locked up, I am told by knowledgeable sources. Others—particularly the powerful Interior post—are wide open, and probably will not be decided until the eve of the unveiling of the cabinet on Nov. 30, just before Miguel de la Madrid's inauguration Dec. 1.

At least four lists of "surefire leads" on who will *quedar* and who will not be coming out each day. Three-quarters of the names are there because the reporters were paid to put them on a list—either to boost a name or burn it.

I can't give you my own list of *buenos* at this point. But I can give you some idea of who's in trouble.

First of all there's the current mayor of Mexico City, Carlos Hank González.

There are those who still maintain that Carlos Hank only copped a top post in this past cabinet because certain messages were received after the attempted kidnapping of President López Portillo's sister, Margarita, in the cabinet countdown period of 1976.

Certainly the pressure is no less at the current time. Security experts state that the country is passing through a "very dangerous" period. Enhanced security for potential cabinet members is a standard matter.

At the same time Hank has trotted out a Freemasonic organization that he built up and paid for as his personal

political property and incorporated into the PRI a few years ago as the National Confederation of Liberal Organizations, under the direction of a certain Carlos Vázquez Rangel.

At the Oct. 12-15 "Mexican Grand Masonic Convention '82" run by Vázquez Rangel, Hank received the 33rd-degree rank as a Mason, amidst much publicity. Vázquez Rangel admitted to investigators last year that he was close to the infamous Propaganda-2 Lodge of Italy's Licio Gelli, and knew of 17 members of the P-2 Lodge in Mexico. He refused to reveal whether Hank González was among them.

At the beginning of 1982, Vázquez Rangel traveled to centers of terrorist Cuban exile organizations in Florida and New York to enlist the participation of their "Masonic" branches in his Mexican effort.

It is reported that fewer showed up than he hoped. But certainly some less-than-wholesome activity was under discussion: *EIR* journalist Hector Apolinar was detained by police acting on Vázquez Rangel's orders when Apolinar showed up to cover the event.

However for all his shenanigans, Hank looks like a loser this time around. De la Madrid wants nothing to do with him; Hank's notorious corruption (including the famous house in Connecticut) would make him a big liability for de la Madrid's pledge of "moral renovation." The two have been enemies for some time, an antagonism which flared in public early in the year when Hank organized Roman

circuses to boost his own image, such as the celebration of the opening of one of Mexico City's subway lines, while arranging virtual boycotts of de la Madrid's campaign appearances in the capital city.

Another loser will likely be Jorge Díaz Serrano, the Pemex chief who was dumped in mid-1981 because of unrestrained presidential ambitions. This deal-making friend of Occidental Petroleum's Armand Hammer made a national come-back as a senator from Sonora in elections in July, and had ill-concealed ambition to regain his powerful Pemex fiefdom under de la Madrid.

All that has come crashing down with the scandal of Pemex corruption, spreading from Houston grand jury investigations of kickbacks on over \$250 million in Pemex contracts in 1977-79. Though Díaz Serrano has not been personally implicated, close lieutenants have been, and you would have a hard time finding anyone here who thinks he wasn't either in on the scam or knew about it and refused to act.

Some have begun to wonder again if Díaz Serrano's interest in refineries began with alcohol or petroleum.

Not yet in public hot water, but perhaps getting there, is former Interior Minister Jesús Reyes Heróles. His agreement to serve on a new "Inter-American Dialogue" committee set up by David Rockefeller has certainly not raised his standing with many main-line PRI figures at a time when Rockefeller is a name roughly as endearing as that of the International Monetary Fund. Reyes Heróles may be aware of this fact, for he did not show up at the inaugural "Dialogue" meeting in Washington on Oct. 15-16.

The elderly Reyes Heróles himself is in any case a long shot to resume a cabinet post, but a cluster of his eligible protégés stand to slip a few points.