

## Dateline Mexico by Josefina Menéndez

### The PRI takes on the PAN

*De la Madrid has decided to put an end to the PAN's separatist and anti-government agitation.*

President Miguel de la Madrid has taken on himself to stop the campaign of the National Action Party (PAN) to promote separatist movements in several states of the country. De la Madrid went to the state of Sonora, the PAN's center of power, May 21 to warn the local oligarchy that his government will not tolerate the oligarchy taking advantage of Mexico's economic ills to incite animosity against the central government.

"In our political system," de la Madrid said, "the president of the republic is the president of all Mexicans."

All the national and local press interpreted this statement as the government's response to the secret meeting between local PAN leaders and U.S. State Department officials in Mexico April 22, at which they purportedly discussed the economic and social situation of Mexico and in particular Sonora. The meeting, which has shocked many Mexicans (see *EIR* May 24), took place at the U.S. consulate in Hermosillo, the capital of Sonora, which has a long history of financing for extreme right-wing paramilitary groups close to the PAN.

The incident has led to a national debate with most political parties now demanding the revocation of the PAN's status as a legitimate political party because of the accusation that it is conspiring with foreign officials.

In his May 21 speech, de la Madrid stated that his PRI (National Revolutionary Party) is the par-

ty of "nationalists which resisted the fall of Mexico's destiny under the tutelage of a foreign power."

Nobody in Mexico missed the identification of the PRI with the 19th-century Liberal Party of President Benito Juarez or that of the PAN with the so-called Conservative Party which backed Maximilian of Hapsburg in his attempt to overthrow Juarez and set up an empire in Mexico in the 1860s.

But the PRI's declaration of war has thus far not daunted the PAN. On May 22, PAN President Vicencio Tovar took to the press to denounce de la Madrid's warnings as "totalitarian" and "anti-constitutional." Local PAN leader Carlos Amaya mocked the president, commenting that "de la Madrid is afraid of us."

De la Madrid flew to the state of Nuevo León May 24, where the PAN is reported to be building a local following. There he denounced the "intrigues which try to divide the people of Mexico and sometimes try to oppose the interests of the Nuevo León people to the people of Mexico."

De la Madrid delivered his speech to a meeting of the Confederation of National Chambers of Commerce (Concanaco) at which several business leaders indicated they are ready to follow the PAN into confrontation with the central government. Concanaco president Emilio Goicochea demanded that de la Madrid apply some "economic realism" by dismantling the state-controlled industries.

The PRI will have to take the of-

fensive in other states as well. The PAN strategy to dissolve Mexico into small, warring states ruled by local oligarchies and plagued by religious fanaticism and backwardness is rapidly advancing.

According to the daily *Ovaciones* May 23, the PAN leadership in Sonora is moving to the neighboring state of Chihuahua to stir up hostility to the central government. The campaign is being repeated in the state of Baja California Norte, which, like Sonora and Chihuahua, borders the United States.

A fourth region targeted for separatist unrest is the state of Chiapas in the south, which borders Guatemala, where the PAN is known to be linking up with Riós Montt's fundamentalist Christian groups.

In Chiapas, the PAN is reported to be giving misinformation to the Guatemalan press to create conflict with the de la Madrid's government.

But it is not only political parties and the government that are outraged at the PAN's treasonous activities. Bishop Jenaro Alamilla, a spokesman for the Catholic Church, expressed his disapproval of the attendance of Hermosillo Archbishop Quintero Arce at the PAN meeting with State Department officials. Bishop Alamilla also revealed that U.S.-based fundamentalist sects are now proliferating in Mexico.

One such sect, an Oregon-based group calling itself the Luis Palau Evangelistic Team, has support from the PAN mayor of Hermosillo, Casimiro Navarro.

Sources close to the sect report that Archbishop Quintero Arce had "great words of praise" for evangelistic preacher Luis Palau during an April *crusade* to Hermosillo.

Luis Palau is also organizing "Christian" support for Guatemalan "born-again" dictator, Riós Montt.