

Mexico's President launches his tour

by Robyn Quijano

Mexican President Miguel de la Madrid ended the first leg of his four-nation South American tour with an attack against Henry Kissinger and his policies of destabilization, wars, and invasions.

After signing a communiqué with Colombian President Belisario Betancur backing economic integration of the continent and pointing to development as the solution for Central America, the Mexican President condemned "those who conspire against the peace of nations, and above all against democracy and liberty, and who assume the most retrograde positions. We Latin Americans are protagonists of contemporary history and not the objects of this history. To play this role we are prepared with the best weapons a nation can have . . . reason and law. . . ." Kissinger is known in Ibero-America for having told Chilean foreign minister Gabriel Valdes in 1969 that "nothing important can come from the South. History has never been produced in the South."

The question of Ibero-American sovereignty, independence, and the need for a well-defined security pact were discussed. In response to the not-so-secret unpublished portion of the Kissinger Commission report on Central America which recommends a U.S. invasion of Nicaragua, Betancur and de la Madrid agreed that the four presidents of the Contadora Group (Mexico, Colombia, Panama, and Venezuela) would immediately meet "in order not to suffer such a defeat as during the Malvinas crisis when Latin America managed no more than a moral protest," reports Mexico's *Excelsior* newspaper.

Mexico and Colombia, the northern and southern flanks of Central America, are targeted for destruction should the region become the center of East-West conflict, the new Vietnam, that Kissinger is planning.

In his greeting to the Mexican President, Belisario Betancur described the labors of Contadora and attacked "the United States, the Soviet Union, and Cuba for supplying arms to the region. . . . [We must stop] all of our nations from being pulled into an East-West conflict, or from being victims of such a conflict," stated the Colombian President.

De la Madrid's ministers expressed outrage last month when the U.S. Southern Command's Gen. Paul Gorman charged that the Mexican government was covering for subversives in the region, and Kissinger crony Barbara Walters

provocatively asked Democratic presidential candidates how they would react to a communist insurgency in Mexico.

The day de la Madrid left Mexico another scandal erupted as the following April 2 *Newsweek* story hit the Mexican press: "President Reagan has ordered the State Department to play hardball with Mexican President de la Madrid to win Mexican support for U.S. policies in Central America."

National Security Decision Directive (NSDD) 124 was signed by Reagan in March, the magazine reports, ordering the State Department to write a "communication and diplomacy master plan" to change Mexican opposition to Kissinger's war plans in Central America. The CIA will arrange for Central American leaders to "call upon Mexican officials," the U.S. embassy will "discreetly assemble a list of de la Madrid aides whom Washington should try to influence," and Reagan will tell de la Madrid during a May visit to the United States: "The price for continued U.S. economic aid to Mexico is support for Washington's policies in Central America."

EIR founder Lyndon LaRouche warned recently that the aim of Kissinger's policy is to set up a U.S. invasion of its neighbor and ally. If carried out, NSDD 124's "hardball" is a giant step toward that plan.

It was Victor Acosta, president of the Colombian Labor Federation (UTC), who proposed to de la Madrid that Ibero-America take the two steps essential to dealing with the economic crisis. Speaking at a luncheon with 50 representatives of Colombian labor, political parties, and business, Acosta told the Mexican President that Ibero-America must respond with a joint debt moratorium and regional coordination "to defend our economies."

"The challenges of today newly unite us. . . . Economic problems are at the heart of all the others. This is the moment to . . . seek solutions through collaboration and joint action," said de la Madrid in Bogotá.

Betancur commented emphatically: "Latin America has become a net exporter of capital. . . . This cannot continue, and Latin America must demand a change in the rules of the game of the international economic system. It is urgent to stop Latin America from continuing to pay more principal and interest than it receives in new loans, at the expense of the per capita income of the 375 million inhabitants of our region, income that dropped by 5% in 1983. We need new resources with long payment terms and reasonable interest rates.

"The last half-point increase in the prime rate can cost Latin America nearly \$1.5 billion in the next 12 months. These irrational levels of interest rates are a result of the U.S. model of development, which is now financed in significant portion through the contributions of the developing countries. If Latin America were working with the interest rates which the U.S. paid between 1870 and 1930—2.3% over inflation—it would stop the transfer of nearly \$15 billion a year."