
Camacho in the Wings

Mexico's foes target presidential republic

by Carlos Cota Meza

This article was written before the assassination of Luis Donaldo Colosio on March 23, and only minimally updated. Its analysis of the larger plot against Mexico will likely prove prophetic for coming events.—The Editors

Ever since 1929, when the Revolutionary Institutional Party (PRI) was founded, elections in Mexico have been a formalism to legitimize the permanence in power of a political class that emerged from the armed conflict of 1910-17. Elections, especially presidential elections, are orchestrated to give support to Article 80 of the Constitution: "The supreme exercise of executive power of the Union shall be deposited with a single individual who shall be called President of the Mexican United States." No one who has held this post can ever again hold it, according to Article 83.

The political class (the PRI-government duo and the "partitocracy" created around it) has always resolved its internal differences through election of a successor, in fulfillment of Article 80. For better or worse—usually worse—this is the way Mexico has been ruled for the past 65 years, as a *presidential republic*. Since the outbreak of the Chiapas conflict on Jan. 1 of this year—which was originally described as an Indian uprising but which is now widely acknowledged to have nothing "Indian" about it—the entire political process unleashed by the EZLN terrorist army and Bishop Samuel Ruiz has ended in a dispute over Article 80 of the Constitution.

Until his murder on March 23, the struggle was between Luis Donaldo Colosio, the PRI's presidential candidate, and Manuel Camacho Solis, who lost out in his bid for that post. While all attention centered on whether or not Camacho would run his own presidential candidacy, and with which party, in fact, Camacho was already working to seize control of the internal workings of the system which can turn anyone (be he a Miguel de la Madrid or a Carlos Salinas de Gortari) into a President. Then will come Camacho's announcement: not that he will be a presidential candidate, but that he *is* the President.

Endorsers from abroad

For the umpteenth time, the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times* have presented Camacho Solis as a viable presidential candidate. *The Washington Post* of March 12 used the standard "unidentified sources" to offer up quotes that "a Camacho candidacy also could provide the impetus that Mexico needs to enter a modern era of clean, competitive politics—pushing the country into a political modernization to parallel the economic changes that President Carlos Salinas de Gortari already has tried to carry out. According to the *Post*, "senior PRI members inside the government are working behind the scenes to promote Camacho as an independent candidate, contending that he represents the best hope for Mexico's political modernization."

The *New York Times* wrote that same day that "a Camacho candidacy would almost certainly cut into support of both Mr. Colosio and the leftist leader Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, throwing open a race that had seemed before the uprising to be almost a perfunctory step in Mr. Colosio's ascent to power."

On March 18, *The Wall Street Journal* published a prominent article entitled "Mexican Peace Commissioner Calls Us." It described how Camacho Solis, in a telephone call to *Journal* reporter David Asman, "asked to respond to questions about the economy." Camacho said, "Specifically, there is a need for continuity. Monetarily, this will be met through a new, independent central bank under the directorship of Miguel Mancera. On the fiscal side, that continuity will be maintained through the continued participation of Pedro Aspe and his economic team." Thus, shamelessly, Camacho Solis calls up the *Wall Street Journal* and assures it: Mancera and Aspe will continue to run the national economy at your service.

Why were the establishment newspapers of the United States so interested in a split in the PRI? U.S. circles of power are awash with self-congratulations, because what is being slated for destruction is the structure of government which the Constitution's Article 80 gave Mexico. The Anglo-American oligarchs gloat because Mexico, as its government unravels, is falling into their hands.

The puppet-masters

Two months after Camacho's political revival with the Chiapas conflict, the support networks for his presidential bid surfaced. In an interview with "Subcommander Marcos" on CBS's "60 Minutes" program, it did not go unnoticed that the man accompanying the masked EZLNER was Juan Enriquez Cabot Lodge, identified as "the public relations man for the Commissioner" (Camacho).

Juan Enriquez Cabot Lodge served as head of metropolitan services of Mexico City when Camacho Solis was mayor. One of his tasks was to attract foreign investment into Mexico City's real estate market. London's *Financial Times* reported on July 15, 1993 that the companies Reichmann International

and Soros Realty—owned by Paul Reichmann of the bankrupt Canadian family and the London-based mega-speculator George Soros—would be investing in Mexico City real estate projects similar to the Santa Fe Center, where they own some 120,000 square meters. They also negotiated \$500 million worth of projects with the city government for the Alameda Project in the historic center, and plan to build Latin America's tallest building along the Paseo de la Reforma, Mexico City's main avenue. Juan Enríquez Cabot Lodge described Soros's investments as "a vote of confidence in Mexico and in its economic future."

The media reported that Paul Reichmann formed an association with the Mexicans who bought the state television consortium Imevisión, with an eye to the future. Meanwhile, the construction of a skyscraper on the Paseo de la Reforma more than 200 meters high has already been approved; it will be built under the auspices of Mexican speculator Sergio Bolanos, a rumored Soros frontman, just finishing four years in jail on tax evasion charges.

Juan Enríquez Cabot Lodge, apparently the liaison for all this, is the son of Antonio Enríquez Savignac, international financier and former Tourism Secretary under the Miguel de la Madrid government, and Marjorie Cabot Lodge, heir to the Bank of Boston founding family. Antonio Enríquez is president of the "Mexico 2000" group, which designed one of the world's most expensive real estate programs for urbanizing the wooded hills west of Mexico City, around the Santa Fe Center where Soros has his investments.

The mysterious Soros is already being called the "King Midas" of international finance. It is said that he risks as much in his real estate operations as in speculating with currency exchange fluctuation, which earned him an estimated \$1-2 billion in a bet on the devaluation of the pound sterling, and lost him almost \$600 million in one day in betting on a devaluation of the Japanese yen, which didn't happen.

How far relations go between Soros, Manuel Camacho Solis, and the Enríquez Savignac-Cabot Lodge family, we don't know. What is certain is that Soros is up to his neck in the Mexico City real estate market (as he is also in Buenos Aires), and that he would not hesitate to "bet" on a peso mega-devaluation. After all, it is in the midst of political turbulence and instability that his investments "operate" best.

In a full-page ad published in the *New York Times* on Sept. 28, 1993, Paul Soros (George's brother and partner) and Gerard Manolovici (another Soros partner) explained why it is better to have chaos in Ibero-America: "It's when you go from disaster to bad that you make the most money." They also advocated destruction of the role of the Armed Forces, as part of this same project: "A final, third benchmark is an underlying, basic political factor, civilian control of the military. When you can be sure that [military influence in the government] is really firmly finished, the value of any investment goes up 30, 40, even 50 percent."

Opposition

Camacho's rising sun is not saluted by everyone in Mexico, however. Manuel Camacho Solis should be fired as Peace Commissioner, for "covering up the invasion of a foreign army which seeks to destroy our Armed Forces and Mexico's leading national institutions," said Marivilia Carrasco at a March 9 Mexico City press conference called by the Ibero-American Solidarity Movement (MSIA). For two decades, Camacho has been associated with foreign organizations that have sponsored the Chiapas "uprising." As a Princeton University graduate student, he took as his thesis adviser none other than Prof. Richard Falk, notorious as a promoter of the "Iran model" against oil-producing countries seeking to use their natural wealth for industrialization. Falk's operational mode has been to set ethnic-religious conflicts against the "national oppressor state," as he did in supporting the Ayatollah Khomeini in the late 1970s or Bishop Samuel Ruiz today, Carrasco charged.

In 1980, Camacho Solis founded and directed the Tepoztlán Center, A.C., together with his uncle Leopoldo Solis and Enrique Iglesia, now president of the Inter-American Development Bank. Both, two years later, would become founding members of the Establishment think-tank, the Inter-American Dialogue. Collaborating with Camacho in the Tepoztlán Center are Saburo Okita, Japanese founding member of David Rockefeller's Trilateral Commission, Victor L. Urquidi (the only Mexican founder of the Club of Rome), Raul Prebisch (creator of the U.N. Economic Committee on Latin America, or ECLA), and Maurice Strong, Canadian oil magnate and creator of the U.N. Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), among others. Each and every one shares the anti-sovereignty views of Camacho's mentor Richard Falk.

End of presidential government

For the moment, the "armed uprising" of Jan. 1, which supposedly represented the clamor for justice of Mexico's abandoned Indians, has been left far behind. With the government's agreement to reform Article 4 of the Constitution—a concession aimed at the territorial dismembering of Mexico—the phase of "reforming" the electoral laws and procedural codes has arrived. It is virtually certain that by August, Articles 84 and 85 of the Constitution will also be up for revision. The first refers to the "absolute failure of the President of the Republic" and to the congressional mechanism for designating "an interim President"; the second refers to the emergency congressional procedure called for when "the President-elect does not show or the election is not held and declared."

One by one, by vitiating each of these constitutional provisions, Mexico will be turned from a presidential republic into some kind of parliamentary government, where weak interim governments will rule at the whim of the international creditors.