

## Dateline Mexico by Hugo López Ochoa

### Whom the gods would destroy . . .

*In a paranoid fit, scandal-ridden Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas is blaming all his troubles on Lyndon LaRouche.*

In a desperate attempt to divert attention from accusations made against him by Terry Reed and John Cummings in the book *Compromised: Clinton, Bush and the CIA*, Revolutionary Democratic Party presidential candidate Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas has accused U.S. Democratic presidential precandidate Lyndon LaRouche of being behind Reed and Cummings. The authors charge that Cárdenas was on the CIA payroll and collaborated in setting up a weapons factory for the Nicaraguan Contras.

This is the first time that Cárdenas himself has directly attacked LaRouche. For the past year, his henchmen have constantly attacked the American statesman, accusing him of being associated with the Mexican government in order to "discredit" Cárdenas.

In an interview in the May 23 *Proceso* magazine, Cárdenas announced that "we are consulting on the LaRouche people's publication of this, which implicates me in matters regarding weapons . . . one of that group's many fantasies. We'll see whether we go ahead with a lawsuit. If we decide to go ahead, we'll file." LaRouche's reply, published May 25 in *Reforma* newspaper, was unequivocal: "This is such an absurd statement that the only comment it deserves is, 'whom the gods would destroy they first make mad.'"

This characterization of Cárdenas during the recent period couldn't be more accurate. His star is waning. Although he has denied Reed and Cummings's revelations, the truth is that

he is becoming more deeply enmired in scandal every day. And the only person to emerge in his defense has been Felix Rodriguez (a.k.a. Max Gomez), the central figure in the Iran-Contra connection in Mexico mentioned in *Compromised*.

CIA man Rodriguez/Gomez, known even before the publication of *Compromised* as an agent of George Bush and Oliver North, is named by Reed as the man who introduced him to Cárdenas shortly after the latter had left the governorship of Michoacán state. Cárdenas was then a member of the ruling PRI party. The meeting was to discuss the setting up of a weapons factory in that state to supply the Contras. Reed asserts that Gomez told him at that time that Cárdenas "is in our pocket, don't forget that. I am personally paying him a lot of Agency money to make this project work. Don't pay any attention to what he does in today's meeting. He's ours."

On May 19, *El Universal's* Washington correspondent, José Carreño, reported that "a veteran former U.S.-Cuban agent of the Central Intelligence Agency has become . . . an involuntary defender of . . . Cárdenas by rejecting statements in the book published here in March." Carreño, who interviewed Rodriguez, said that the latter, "famous for participating in the persecution and death of Argentine guerrilla 'Che' Guevara in Bolivia, said that Terry Reed and John Cummings were 'liars.'" However, Carreño then reported statements by Louis Wolff, editor of *Covert Action* magazine, "better known for its expo-

sés of U.S. intelligence covert activities," who gave assurances that "Reed is reliable."

*Reforma* also published statements by Marivilla Carrasco, president of the Ibero-American Solidarity Movement, in which she charges that "British intelligence backs the armed uprising in Chiapas," and that the so-called Zapatista National Liberation Army is "an instrument of this international apparatus, headed in Mexico by Samuel Ruiz, Manuel Camacho Solís, and Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, who have used it as a spearhead for destabilization."

*Novedades* columnist Juan Ruiz Healy also revealed in his "A Fondo" column on May 20 that "Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas last year traveled to a town very near Havana to participate in a ceremony with a very well known Cuban Santería priest." Some of Cárdenas's friends in the narco-terrorist São Paulo Forum, such as Fidel Castro and the Dominican Republic's ex-presidential candidate Francisco Peña Gómez, as well as the recently jailed Carlos Andrés Pérez of Venezuela, are all practitioners of Santería, according to several sources.

Perhaps this is why Healy dubbed the affair "Voodooagate," and emphasized that "Santería is far more than just a simple pagan rite which opposes the faith of Christian believers; it implies a network of connections and commitments which are not totally clear."

All these scandals hit Cárdenas after he bombed out in the country's first televised presidential debate on May 12. In the debate, it became clear that Cárdenas embraces the same International Monetary Fund economic program as his two opponents. As a result, his image as an "opposition" candidate was largely erased. Since the debate, he has dropped to third place in the polls.