

India and Mexico reject the Brandt Commission

by Dennis Small

Mexican President José López Portillo and Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, the two most respected statesmen of the Third World, held summit talks in New Delhi this week which the Mexican head of state characterized as “an extraordinarily high level of discussions.” The leaders found accord on two central topics, which together have opened the door to the new Reagan administration and its European allies, such that a new era of pursuing mutual interests between North and South is now within reach.

López Portillo and Gandhi agreed: 1) that their shared goal of guaranteeing “universal peace” could be achieved only through economic cooperation and technological development between North and South; and 2) that model bilateral relations between India and Mexico would center around exchanging Mexican oil and petroleum technology for Indian technology and expertise in the field of nuclear energy. “There are many aspects of Indian development,” said an appreciative López Portillo, “that are still unknown in Mexico, and vice versa.”

These agreements are a blow to the Socialist International and its approach to North-South relations, as elaborated in the Brandt Commission Report.

- The Brandt Commission is hostile to the transfer to the Third World of advanced technology, such as nuclear know-how. López Portillo and Gandhi demanded access to it.

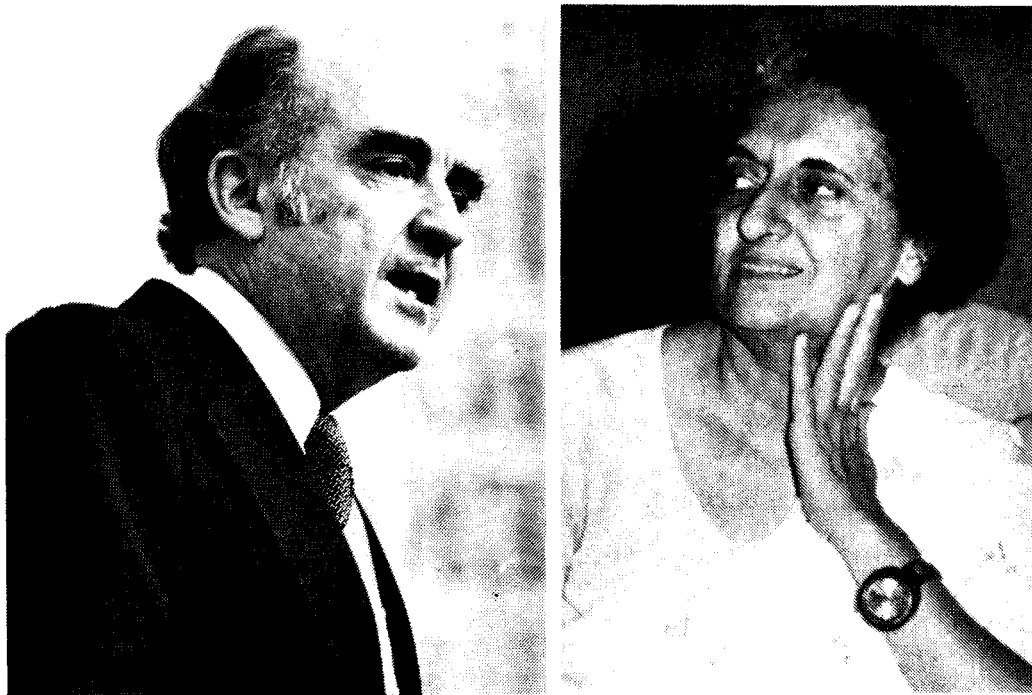
- The Brandt Commission, arguing that North and South have opposed economic needs, fosters confrontation—López Portillo and Gandhi call for principled cooperation. The Brandt report had hoped discussion at

the probable June North-South summit meeting in Mexico would center on the basis of the Brandt Commission report—but Gandhi and López Portillo flatly said no.

The two leaders were quite explicit on this last point. J. N. Dixit, the official spokesman for the Indian Foreign Ministry, reported that the two heads of state carried out a “continued exchange of views on the international economic situation, and in this context, while discussing the proposed summit, agreed that while the Brandt Commission report needs to be studied, there are also *other* studies which developing countries should take note of.” Asked what other studies were being referred to, the Indian official made it clear that the Brandt report was being shelved, by answering ironically: “There are thousands of them.”

Round two

The injuries Gandhi and López Portillo inflicted in New Delhi on the Socialist International are not the first this year. In early January, López Portillo met with Ronald Reagan in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, and they reached broad agreement on a cooperative approach toward North-South relations and Third World stability. Reliable sources told *EIR* that the two leaders at that time reached an understanding whereby Mexico would work with India, Iraq, and other moderate forces in the developing sector to contain the influence of the Jacobin faction headed by Cuba’s Fidel Castro in exchange for which Reagan agreed to participate in the June North-South summit in Mexico along with France and West Germany.



Mexico's José López Portillo and Indira Gandhi have begun to take Third World leadership away from the advocates of "class war" and "decoupling" from the industrial nations.

The India-Mexico accords have now strengthened this approach. Mrs. Gandhi will in turn take it into a foreign minister-level meeting of the nonaligned nations in New Delhi on Feb. 9-12. Fairly acrimonious disputes with the Cuban delegation are expected, given the Castro government's current "let's have a showdown" outlook.

Developments in France and Germany this week further strengthened the potential of this emerging prodevelopment configuration. According to the West German daily *Neue Ruhr Zeitung*, the Saudi government has presented to the French and Germans a proposal for military and other economic cooperation deals totaling no less than \$70 billion. French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing has also proposed an international conference on Afghanistan to deal with "ending interference in Afghanistan."

This diplomatic initiative, on which Giscard confided he had consulted with Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev, could contribute tangibly to creating the kind of entente in which East and West could trigger global economic expansion in what French tradition calls a Grand Design.

Avoiding war and destabilization

The Indian and Mexican heads of state have also approached their talks from this standpoint of world leaders concerned, above all, with securing peace. Commenting on the talks, a spokesman for Mrs. Gandhi noted that the two leaders had agreed that "everything

should be done to strengthen the forces of peace and stability in different parts of the world. . . .

"The forces of intervention and great power confrontation should be stemmed and defused by means of cooperation between nonaligned and developed countries," he concluded.

Mrs. Gandhi told the Mexican president that Indian policy has worked to "defuse situations born of confrontation and rigid positions," a clear reference to Indian mediation efforts regarding Afghanistan and Kampuchea.

President López Portillo had struck a similar theme in his speech at a banquet given in his honor: "It is necessary that all peace and law-loving peoples make every effort to reduce tensions and to reject those pressures seeking to involve us in a renewed cold war. In order to advance toward these objectives we must have political solidarity and economic cooperation among countries like India and Mexico . . . countries without imperial dreams or hegemonic pretensions, which jealously defend their sovereignty and which affirm their right to independent development."

The Mexican president went on to attack a military conception—that of "limited warfare"—much in vogue with Henry Kissinger and his followers who, under Carter, attempted to foist it on NATO.

"My government believes that limited wars . . . threaten world peace. We follow with great concern the developing war in the Persian Gulf. . . . Mexico does not recognize security zones or spheres of influence that extend beyond one's own borders."