

# 'Energy for growth'

## Mexico's President puts daring new plan before UN

This week Mexican President José López Portillo announced that he will soon put before the United Nations a proposal for agreements in world energy production and distribution keyed to take energy out of the realm of speculation and economic warfare, and place it at the service of generalized economic development. The West German daily, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, immediately underscored the significance of this move in an article stating that the Mexican President's proposal will prove the basis and direction for discussion of the new world economic order.

Mexico's initiative has been endorsed by the European Community heads of state, on the urging of French President Giscard d'Estaing. It is complementary to a Saudi proposal for an oil producers and consumers conference, also endorsed by the EC. Representatives of the EC and OPEC are now in discussions over implementation of the proposals, which spell the end of the oil majors' domination of world energy markets.

The general thrust of Mexico's initiative, taken to world opinion with increasing forcefulness and detail by López Portillo since his launching of the concept during a state trip to Moscow almost 11 months ago, is to arrange state-to-state treaties in energy matters which establish order in international oil markets and expedite transfer of energy technology—in oil, nuclear and all other areas—to energy deficient regions and the developing sector in general.

*El Nacional*, the semi-official newspaper of the Mexican government, highlighted the proposal's significance for the U.S. in an unusual front-page editorial April 11. López Portillo's UN drive is the answer to "Mr. Schlesinger's myopic, ... arrogant and close-minded attitude," the paper stated, referring specifically to Schlesinger's wrecking efforts against U.S.-Mexico energy cooperation, but drawing a lesson generally appropriate for U.S. critics of Schlesinger's zero-growth energy policies.

While primarily designed to wrest control of world energy production and allocation from the hands of London and Schlesinger, the Mexican push simultaneously cuts the ground out from under the "Western

Hemispheric strategic reserve" conception, whereby Mexico's oil and, in fact, all resources of the Western Hemisphere would be placed at U.S. disposal as a backup to Anglo-American war confrontations.

And little wonder that Mexico has shown a chilly attitude to the eight-nation Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries as well as nonmember oil producers meeting arranged by British energy officials to take place in London sometime in the next months, and by all signals designed to keep development considerations out of a renewed energy cartelization drive.

López Portillo has repeatedly stated that energy must be made the "patrimony of humanity" if World War III is to be avoided. And he has no illusions about just how close such a global conflagration is. "The horsemen of the apocalypse are galloping," he says.

Look for a vigorous Mexican diplomatic effort behind its energy proposal in the weeks ahead. Will U.S. constituencies speak out for it?

—Tim Rush

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## Chronicle of Lopez Portillo's diplomacy

*Over the past year, Mexican President José López Portillo has stated his commitment to the use of his country's oil reserves for development. A brief listing of his remarks appears here.*

### Moscow, May 19, 1978

As reported in the Mexican press: The Mexican President yesterday called upon all humanity to establish an international finance system keyed to the optimal rationalization of energy resources.

In the course of a press conference called at the conclusion of his three-day stay in Moscow, he spoke of the necessity of establishing (such) a financial system. He added that the system could be based on funds