

Cuba. It was believed by the government that Mexican diplomacy could help to avert such an action.

The fact that López Portillo proceeded with the trip indicates that he felt his European summits were indispensable to defuse the danger.

Statements by both Giscard and Schmidt testified to the depth of attention paid to the Caribbean.

Giscard, in remarks at a state dinner for López Portillo May 16, stated that "we must exchange views on the situations where we have particular interest. I refer to the situation in Central America or in the region of the Caribbean where France is present with its American (overseas) departments."

Schmidt declared in remarks following the Bonn luncheon for López Portillo May 20: "You have showed me this morning, in a very expressive way, how Central America also threatens to become a dangerous focus of crisis. The problems of the neighboring countries, the problems of Central America and the Caribbean are very delicate. On account of the weight of its democratic tradition and the richness of its human and natural resources, Mexico has a key role. ..."

At a state dinner May 22 hosted by Sweden's royal family, President López Portillo addressed these words on the danger of imminent war to the international community:

The most important of the interests and goals (shared by Mexico and Sweden) is the preservation of international peace and security, gravely threatened by forces which even escape the control of the protagonists.

The world is passing through one of the most dangerous moments in the postwar period, due, principally, to the multiple hotspots which represent potential scenarios for the outbreak of a global conflict. There were, it is true, other moments in which war appeared imminent, but in those limited situations, which all of us recall, the problem was localized territorially and strategically.

Today, on the contrary, there are numerous regional conflicts which are linked among themselves, and linked with the strategic systems of the great powers. Each of these problems can, of its own, unleash an international conflagration, and the combination of several of these problems increases the possibilities that such a thing occur...

This is, in bold strokes, our position on problems relating to world peace and security, which constitute the preconditions for any initiative on political collaboration and cooperation...

In this manner we march toward the threshold of a new century which does not appear to correspond to the utopias of some optimistic futurologists but rather to the somber visions of those who foresee the return to a new Dark Age wrapped in the shadows of death.

Very little time remains to us to stop the generalization of famine, violence and war...

Exclusive
Interview
with
Philippe
Esper



'All French industry backs Mexican growth'

by Sophie Tanapura, Paris correspondent

Philippe Esper, Delegate for Foreign Action at the French Industry Ministry, granted the following exclusive interview to Sophie Tanapura, EIR's Paris correspondent, on the eve of Mexican President José López Portillo's trip to France.

Q: Would you give us your estimation of the results of industrial cooperation between France and Mexico since French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing's trip to Mexico one year ago?

A: What I would first like to point out is that economic and in particular industrial relations between France and Mexico have developed very much over the last few months and years. They have not achieved the level we would like yet, but nonetheless, our exchanges with Mexico reached more than 2.5 billion francs during 1979. French exports to Mexico went beyond 2 billion francs and Mexican exports to France were in the order of 500 million francs, not including oil transactions.

During the first months of 1980 growth has continued, since Mexican exports to France increased at a rate of 100 percent, while French exports to Mexico increased by nearly 50 percent. Therefore the level for us is still insufficient, but its growth is strong and therefore encouraging.

Another point that must be stressed is the development of French investments in Mexico. The entirety of French industry has shown a great interest in developing industrial cooperation with Mexico; in other words, has

responded in a favorable manner to Mexico's desire that there be not only French exports but also a progressive introduction of the manufacture of French goods which are of interest to the Mexican market, with industrial installations on the spot. This has then been translated into the constitution of a rather large number of Franco-Mexican companies, in particular during the course of 1979, and in some particularly interesting sectors like auto, machinery, steel, chemicals, the pharmaceutical industry and certain agro-food production.

These investments are also a sign that French industry is ready to give its Mexican partners knowledge in the field of technology which will permit them to have a certain autonomous development in certain sectors of interest. This is the general framework.

The President of the Republic's visit last February was the occasion for a reinforcement and stimulation of the efforts of French industry. On the occasion of this visit a number of important industrial accords were signed, in particular in the field of transportation, the field of nuclear energy and in the training of technical workers in the equipment industry. These accords, which have since been implemented and will continue to be implemented, are complemented by more precise and detailed accords, on the level of either public and private technical establishments, or the level of industrial sectors.

In sum, I think it can be said that Franco-Mexican relations are in a period of strong development with a will to work more in Mexico not only on the part of the authorities but also of French industry. I think I can say that this has been favorably welcomed by the Mexican authorities, in government as well as in the economic and financial circles that are the partners of French industry.

Q: What new developments can we expect in the field of industrial cooperation out of President López Portillo's visit to France?

A: The areas that will be taken up are those which I have indicated. Of course, I am limiting myself to the industrial area which will be a secondary part of the talks that will also include the political and economic aspects of the international situation, which are the most important.

But to stick to the bilateral and industrial side of things, the talks will cover the work already achieved or to be achieved by the industrialists of the two countries. I am thinking of the field of urban and interurban transportation by rail, the automobile industry, which includes the equipment and components that are a part of that industry, the telecommunications industry, and in particular, questions linked to the telephone, the space sector, chemicals, especially questions linked to fertilizers, the steel industry—sectors which should be developing in an important way in relation to the accords that have been signed—and then, of course, all the sectors linked to oil, in other words, all the petroleum industries, and in particular, the off-shore industries.

Q: Can you elaborate a little on your cooperation in the space sector?

A: During the two week French technical exhibit which took place in Mexico last November, French capabilities in the space sector were presented to the Mexican authorities, from telecommunications, to direct television by satellite or the observation of the earth. These are three areas in which France has good references in its own effective, operational programs. This is an area in which France has a satellite launching capacity, with the Ariane, and the subjects were presented to the Mexican and technical authorities, who showed a certain interest. Now we must set the stage for technical and later industrial cooperation in the precise areas that interest Mexico.

Q: There is also talk of an extension of nuclear cooperation between France and Mexico. ...

A: During the President of the Republic's trip to Mexico, an accord was signed between the Minister of Industrial Development, Mr. Oteyza and the French Minister of Industry, Mr. André Giraud, concerning the nuclear field. This accord covers different aspects, but each of them begins with training of the personnel which will permit Mexico to assume, when the time comes, responsibility for the production of civilian nuclear energy on the basis of the very important uranium resources Mexico has at its disposal. So this accord was a framework, with a part on "training," and a part on "technical studies" for a nuclear plan which is being completed; this is a phase which will be defined when Mexican leaders have made a decision concerning their national program, for the development of nuclear plants.

Q: Is there anything else you would like to add?

A: For the Mexican President's visit to France we wanted to show all the concern that French industry in general has for industrial development in Mexico. It is for this reason that on the eve of the Mexican President's arrival we asked the CNPF [Conseil National du Patronat Français, the national industrialist association—ed.] to organize an event in which a large number of French industries could exhibit in sector by sector working groups, and then in plenary sessions, the reasons and the themes of interest of their companies for Mexico.

On the Mexican side, the authorities of the Ministry of Industry and financial authorities will lay out the conditions necessary for the realization of investments in Mexico and a synthesis of these working sessions will be presented to the Mexican President during a meeting he will have with a selection of 40 French industrialists.

In closing, I would like to say that the effort which has been made to develop Franco-Mexican relations is an effort shared, wanted and supported by all of French industry, and this is what makes us confident in the pursuit of the development of industrial relations between the two countries.