

the motivating forces behind these policies?

Malaviya: Well, clearly both countries have a republican, nationalist historical tradition committed to improving the condition of their people through economic development. In the case of oil this is perhaps reflected best in the fact that the main thrust of progress was borne not so much by private initiative as by a policy of government leadership, where the direction of economic development was controlled by a political leadership committed to that vision. In other words, this progress was not the result of plenty of resources or technical strengths per se, but of the tenacity of the leadership to act with courage and vision to destroy poverty and backwardness.

Today, when Mexico has become one of the richest oil countries in the world, its attention has been drawn to the development of cities, basic industry, communications and transport, and above all of agriculture and what makes agriculture develop rapidly, such as fertilizers and irrigation.

Despite the talent and determination of the Mexican people, they continue to face antagonism from big neighboring countries. Had the leadership not shown the determination to face this, this country would not have produced a president who is today regarded as one of the most respected citizens of the world, one who has seen that worldwide cooperation alone can save the future of humanity.

India and Mexico must come closer to each other because such a process will have its own moral and material consequences towards improving the world's future.

EIR: At the 1979 United Nations General Assembly, Mexican President López Portillo presented a "global energy development proposal." What is your view of this proposal?

Malaviya: López Portillo's proposal was a clear-cut call to the advanced nations of the world to search for a rational system to link up production, consumption, and distribution of energy resources for the whole world. When he laid special emphasis on helping the developing countries financially to obtain whatever energy resources could be made available to them in their local areas, he had, no doubt, before him the great objectives of disarmament and immediate stoppage of the wasteful defense and armament industries.

Special emphasis must be placed on nuclear energy—both fission and fusion—which can ultimately provide a long-term solution to the world's energy problems. Besides, while the developed countries have the technology, there are countries of the Third World, including India and Mexico, which have rich deposits of nuclear minerals—uranium and thorium—and there is no reason

why we cannot plan out both the transfer of technology as well as the rational utilization of these resources for increased nuclear energy production throughout the world. This is especially so if proper understanding is achieved as a result of clear advice and action led by the leadership of countries like Mexico, India, and to a great extent also by many socialist, developed, and developing nations.

The significance of Benito Juárez

The figure of Mexico's Abraham Lincoln, Benito Juárez, was invoked repeatedly by both Mexicans and Indians during the López Portillo visit to India. This carried special meaning. Juárez's determined fight for Mexican sovereignty and independence during the period of European invasion (1862-1867) is seen in India as a parallel to India's own independence struggle 75 years later. Moreover, Juárez's rise to the leadership of his nation from a backward Mexican Indian village symbolized one of the great themes of López Portillo's and Gandhi's discussions: how to incorporate backward rural populations of the two countries in the urgent nation-building tasks each country faces.

Indian President Neelam Sanjiva Reddy drew out the historical parallels in his welcoming remarks to López Portillo on Jan. 25. "When the Mexican people began its march toward national independence on Sept. 15, 1910, our land was gradually falling under the control of a foreign empire," he declared. "The Mexican Revolution and the struggle of the Mexican people for social and economic justice served to awaken the spirit of national independence in the minds of the Indian people. Its leaders, like Padre Hidalgo and Benito Juárez, inspired us in the struggle for independence."

In the course of the visit, a ceremony was held to rename a New Delhi street in honor of Benito Juárez.

And López Portillo returned to the figure of Juárez in his final press conference, this time speaking of U.S.-Mexico relations. "We are very optimistic on account of the attitude of friendship and respect which Mr. Reagan has expressed to us. When we Mexicans learn to talk, the first words that are placed in our consciousness are those of Benito Juárez, which begin with the word 'respect': 'Respect for the rights of others is peace.'"