

## Dateline Mexico by Josefina Menéndez

### The case of the 'Centro Tepoztlán'

*His Club of Rome links will hurt the planning minister's presidential aspirations.*

Last week's Club of Rome meeting in Caracas, Venezuela was of particular significance for Mexico's elite. First of all, it was the first annual Club of Rome gathering to be held on Latin American soil in six years. Second, Club of Rome members were flaunting their intent to influence the policies of all the nations, including Mexico, that will attend the North-South meeting in Cancún, Mexico.

And third, Mexico was represented in Caracas by a number of important personages, including former President Luis Echeverría (once a strident opponent of the Club of Rome's antigrowth philosophy); current United Nations Ambassador Porfirio Muñoz Ledo, a strong candidate in many people's book to succeed Jorge Castañeda as Mexico's foreign minister; and the well-known Victor Urquidi, the only Mexican who is an official member of the Club of Rome.

Urquidi's role has received particular backroom attention here since the Caracas event, primarily because he delivered his presentation—which was totally blacked out in the Mexican press—in the name of the "Centro Tepoztlán," a little-known but very powerful Mexican think tank.

My research indicates that the Centro Tepoztlán exerts significant influence on policy matters both domestically and internationally, despite the fact that its antigrowth tilt makes it hostile to the economic

development policies of the current Mexican government. A quick review of the Center's founding members indicates the source of their influence.

One of them is Saburo Okita, member of the Club of Rome and the Trilateral Commission, and former Japanese foreign minister. Okita played an important inside role in sabotaging possible oil-for-technology accords between Japan and Mexico back in May 1980, when Japanese Prime Minister Ohira visited Mexico.

Two others are Maurice Strong and Ignacy Sachs, both members of the editorial board of the Dutch ecologist magazine *Mazingira*.

The networks that the Centro Tepoztlán plugs into through *Mazingira* are highly significant. A frequent collaborator of the Dutch magazine is the Soviet Dzhermen Gvishiani, son-in-law of the late Aleksei Kosygin and the cofounder of the Vienna-based International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis. Gvishiani has been identified as an important member of the KGB faction that supports the Club of Rome's policies.

Other Mexican members of the Tepoztlán Center include the Social Democrat Jorge Hernández Campos; Leopoldo Solís, the monetarist sub-director of the Mexican Central Bank; and Manuel Camacho. Camacho's participation in the Tepoztlán Center has led to a flurry of speculation, since he is one of the

top advisers to Miguel de la Madrid, Mexico's secretary of budget and planning (SPP) and a leading presidential hopeful. The question on everyone's mind is whether Camacho's preference for antidevelopment philosophies reflects that of his boss De la Madrid.

This hypothesis gained credence here late in the week when news got around that De la Madrid's SPP was also sponsoring a World Conference on Information Strategies in Mexico City, which brought to Mexico the Club of Rome's leader Aurelio Peccei; Club of Rome founder and ex-NATO official Alexander King; the pro-Nazi futurologist Alvin Toffler; and the co-author of the Malthusian *Global 2000 Report*, Gerald Barney.

All this will hardly stand De la Madrid in good stead for the presidential succession fight.

In fact, President López Portillo took the occasion of a visit to his office by De la Madrid and the conference's leaders to sharply attack the concept of information theory. "This power runs the risk of becoming arbitrary, abusive, and it will help bring about the tremendously unfortunate system of technocracy."

The word "technocracy" in Mexican politics is a virtual synonym for the presidential hopes of De la Madrid—a man constantly identified as an able "technocrat" in the media and official circles.

After the president's unmistakable broadside against the man thought by many to be the front-runner for the presidential nomination, the word is out that former Pemex chief Jorge Díaz Serrano is not the only aspirant sent to the showers early this spring.