

Eye on Washington by Nicholas Benton

Shultz stumbles on aid to Mexico

The day after the first great jolt devastated Mexico City, Sept. 20, Dr. Claude de Ville, head of emergency preparedness and disaster relief for the Pan-American Health Organization, told *EIR* that the "greatest potential danger" resulting from the earthquake is "reestablishing the infrastructure in a short time."

He said that the focus of concern and attention immediately following the quake will be to provide maximum treatment for potential health and related problems. But, he said people will soon "lose interest" when "major investment in terms of establishing hospitals, reopening facilities and housing and reestablishing water supplies [are required]."

"It will be a question of grants or loans of millions and millions of dollars," he said. The greatest need will be for housing, not only because of dwellings directly destroyed by the quake, but also because of the thousands of homes made structurally unsafe by the quake. The biggest expense will involve securing the water supply, and making sure the sanitation system fully functions.

De Ville's briefing was followed by a press conference by Secretary of State George Shultz, accompanied by the Mexican ambassador.

This reporter related De Ville's concerns to Shultz, and asked him if grants and loans would be forthcoming from the U.S.A.—a charged question, since the IMF had just announced it was cutting off credit to Mexico. Shultz' answer,

"The ambassador [from Mexico]

has expressed to me his appreciation for this instinctive outburst that comes from the American people to want to be of assistance. I believe I can fairly state that the instinct that is expressed in the Senate and House resolution as being to say, 'Well, let's assess the situation, and when that has been done, and we have an idea of what the damages are, and what the needs are, then let us take a look at that, and we would naturally like to be helpful. But we have to see what's needed, and respond in those terms. I think the point is certainly an accurate one, namely that there will be a massive reconstruction project. There has been great damage to the infrastructure. . . . But just how much and what the extent of it is, is just not known at this point, so it is not worth really speculating."

Quite clear and unequivocal, eh?

When I followed that up by asking Shultz if he would specifically "advise" the IMF to "reconsider" its credit-cut-off, he would not answer.

British journalist: Kissinger's target is Europe

"Lack of clarity" on the nature of the administration's commitment to the SDI has prevented key British and West German firms, in particular, from beginning to gear up for major participation in the SDI program, a British journalist has confided to this reporter. In particular, he confirmed that Henry Kissinger's fakery has been a significant factor. He was referring to Kissinger's alleged pro-SDI stand which proposes to limit SDI deployment to "point defense of missile silos."

This approach would leave out Europe, and has caused some ambivalence among firms otherwise eager to jump in on the SDI. He added that the

consensus in Britain is that, while Margaret Thatcher has attempted to influence Reagan, it hasn't worked, and everyone there is now generally resigned to the idea that the SDI is inevitable because of the unbending resolve of the U.S. administration.

Weinberger in good humor

The Reagan administration's unprecedented offensive for the SDI during the week of Sept. 16—including the President's nationally televised press conference and Defense Secretary Weinberger's Pentagon press briefing—dashed the latest round of malicious media rumors that the administration was on its last legs and that Weinberger was ready to throw in the towel.

Weinberger himself strongly rejected that rumor when asked by Leslie Stahl on "Face the Nation" Sept. 15, but he made it even clearer with his sharp humor at his Sept. 19 press conference—the kind you'll never see reported in any publication but this.

The Pentagon chief recommended a "driver training course" for the Soviet forces in Germany, whose ramming of a U.S. military vehicle he called "intentional." He specified that no Soviet apologies had been received for the Major Nicholson murder, nor for the latest ramming incident, and added, "There will be no need for anyone to pick up the pieces on this one," alluding to *Washington Post's* allegations that his assertions are usually toned down by his staff.

Weinberger said that Soviet retaliation for the "very successful" U.S. ASAT test had already begun—"in 1977." He stated that, despite spy scandals, there would be "no change" in information-sharing procedures regarding West Germany.