

## Dateline Mexico by Carlos Méndez

### Civil resistance in Tabasco

*London and Wall Street are promoting a conflict in this state in order to further the disintegration of Mexico.*

As conditionalities for a \$40 billion package of loan guarantees from the United States, international bankers aren't just demanding that Mexican President Ernesto Zedillo impose more draconian economic reforms or hand over his country's oil revenues as collateral. They want to accelerate the physical dismemberment of the Mexican nation, starting with handing over the governorships of such strategic states as Chiapas and Tabasco to the pro-terrorist Revolutionary Democratic Party (PRD).

Led by Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, the PRD is the political arm of the narco-terrorist Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN), whose insurgency in Chiapas is designed to separate Mexico's oil-rich southeastern region from the rest of the country as an "autonomous" indigenous entity. The southeast is not only the location of the bulk of the country's oil reserves, but it is also where 70% of the national electricity supply is produced, and the region responsible for producing meat and other agricultural products for national consumption.

On Jan. 17, Zedillo signed an agreement with four political parties, the National Political Accord, among whose reported provisions was a commitment to holding new gubernatorial elections within 18 months in Tabasco and Chiapas. This British-inspired demand means annulling 1994 elections in which candidates of the ruling Revolutionary Institutional Party (PRI) won the governorships, and handing them to the PRD in the name of "democratic reform." Tabasco and Chiapas

are two of the three states—the third is Veracruz—in which the PRD claims that PRI candidates were fraudulently elected and should be removed.

Although the government issued no official statement on new state elections being part of the accord, the rumors that the deal included a promise that Tabasco's PRI Gov. Roberto Madrazo would resign unleashed a nationalist furor from inside the PRI, both in Tabasco and the rest of the country. On Jan. 18, the state PRI leadership organized protests which blocked highways, closed down businesses, and announced its willingness to fight against the federal government which, it claimed, was violating the state's sovereign and constitutional right to elect its own governor. The Tabasco Cattlemen's Union, which provides 70% of the capital's meat consumption, warned that it would suspend meat shipments to Mexico City if Madrazo were forced out.

Pedro Jiménez León, PRI leader of the Tabasco state legislature, charged that "on behalf of an accord not signed by any Tabascoan . . . the leaders of other political parties who also don't live in the state wanted to hand it over . . . and attempted to negotiate the will of the Tabasqueños." Referring to the recent meeting between Government Minister Esteban Moctezuma and the EZLN's "Subcommander Marcos," Jiménez León reported that the minister had sent two emissaries to convince the local legislature to accept the naming of an interim governor, and added that "if Esteban Moctezuma went to Chia-

pas to meet with the hooded one [Marcos], he should at least be brave enough to come here, to our Congress, and meet with courageous people who will stand up in defense of sovereignty."

On Jan. 19, in violent confrontation with the PRD, PRI forces broke the blockade which the PRD had maintained around the governor's palace in Villahermosa and permitted Governor Madrazo to enter his office. Speaking from the balcony, he vowed that he would continue to govern in Tabasco. From the Congress, Jiménez León warned that the PRI would only suspend its "civil resistance" if the interior minister would state publicly that Tabasco's future had not been negotiated and that Madrazo would not be forced to resign.

The situation so rattled the federal government that by the end of the day on Jan. 19, the Government Ministry issued a statement saying that events in Tabasco were the result of "unfounded rumors and speculation . . . which are false and [which we] categorically reject." The PRD nonetheless, insists that the government had agreed to new elections, and Cárdenas called on PRD President Porfirio Muñoz Ledo to withdraw from the National Political Accord because the government had failed to keep its promises.

The PRI's opposition to Wall Street's imposition of communist governors is a national phenomenon. On Jan. 20, *El Financiero* reported that in response to the "insistent rumor" that Chiapas's PRI governor, Eduardo Robledo, would also be forced to resign, cattlemen and business leaders in the Coalition of Citizen Organizations warned the state legislature to respect the vote and denounced attempts by the federal government to make deals "behind the backs of the people."