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**Between a Rock and a Hard Place:
The United States, Mexico and the Agony of National Security**

by

Donald E. Schulz
Strategic Studies Institute
U.S. Army War College
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(revised version)

FOREWARD

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Over the past several years, a major shift has occurred in the panorama of U.S.-Mexican national security concerns. In the process, Mexico, a country that had enjoyed extraordinary political and socioeconomic stability for most of the preceding half century, has become dangerously unstable. Yet, few of the sources of this instability can be traced to traditional national security threats. While there was a time when one could view national security in narrow military terms, that era has now past, both for Mexico and the United States. The question is whether nonmilitary solutions can be found for these problems, or whether, failing that, a strategy of militarization will be adopted, and if so with what consequences.

THE SCOURGE OF NARCOPOLITICS

Arguably, the most serious threat to Mexican national security today is narcotrafficking.¹ The reason is not hard to discern: The cartels have so penetrated the Mexican state and socioeconomic structure that they have effectively subverted the

country's institutions. You name the institution, and it has to one extent or another been corrupted: Congress, the courts, state governors, the banks, businesses, the military, the police.... The Federal Judicial Police have been so corrupted that it is no longer possible to make clear-cut distinctions between them and the criminals they are supposed to apprehend. In Mexico, the police very often are the crooks, and they have been deeply involved in narcotrafficking. Even the presidency has been touched, at least indirectly. There have been cabinet members who have had connections with the cartels. A former member of President Zedillo's and ex-President Salinas' security detail has admitted having been an operative for the Tijuana Cartel. Salinas' brother, Raúl, apparently had ties with the Gulf of Mexico Cartel.²

In short, we are not simply talking about a comparative handful of crooked politicians or gangsters. Drugs are the country's major export crop. In 1994, Mexico earned at least \$7 billion and perhaps as much as \$30 billion from narcotics.³ The same year, the largest legal export--oil--earned only \$7 billion, and all legal exports combined amounted to less than \$61 billion. And this money goes everywhere. It is recycled into businesses, both legitimate and illegitimate. By investing in privatized state companies, tourism, construction, hotels, restaurants, exchange houses, banks and innumerable other enterprises,

Mexico's *narcos* "are able to both launder their profits and masquerade as respectable entrepreneurs."⁴

Mexico has become hooked on drug money. And that raises an important question: Given the extent of its addiction, can it stand a withdrawal? If the Zedillo administration were to succeed in eliminating--or, more realistically, sharply reducing --drug trafficking, what would be the impact on the economy? Mexico is currently in the process of recovering from a deep recession; the economy is still very fragile. Can the government take the chance of disrupting the recovery by *really* going after the drug lords? And if it did, what would be the social and political implications (the impact on unemployment and social unrest, for instance)?

The pain of withdrawal would be considerable in another way as well. For some time now, Mexicans have been debating whether or not a process of "Colombianization" was underway in their country. By Colombianization, of course, I am referring to a state of all-out war between the government and the cartels, similar to that which occurred in Colombia in the early 1990s, when the government went after (and eventually got) Pablo Escobar and the Medellín Cartel. So far, that has not happened in Mexico. It has not happened because the government has not waged war against the cartels the way the Colombian government did, and so there has been no massive retaliation or massive bloodshed.

There have, however, been some troubling recent developments. For some time, the United States has been pressing Mexico to take a stronger stand against the cartels, and President Zedillo has accordingly agreed to do this.⁵ In early 1996, the government arrested the head of the Gulf of Mexico Cartel, Juan García Abrego, and turned him over to U.S. authorities. Not long thereafter, it began going after the Arellano Félix brothers in Tijuana. An aggressive federal commander, Ernesto Ibarra, was appointed head of a special mobile intelligence unit, which swept through the area confiscating properties and arresting associates of the Tijuana Cartel. In August, as part of a nationwide purge of the Federal Judicial Police, about a quarter of the *Federales* in Baja California were dismissed. Ibarra was appointed commander of the federal police there. One month later, he received a call from then Attorney General Antonio Lozano, ordering him to report to Mexico City. When he arrived, no security detail was there to escort him so he left the airport in a cab. A few minutes later, a car pulled alongside, and gunmen sprayed the taxi with automatic weapons fire, killing Ibarra, two bodyguards and the driver.⁶

This was not an isolated assassination. Altogether, 8 counternarcotics officials or former officials based in Tijuana have been killed during the past year, along with more than a dozen state and municipal police and scores of minor traffickers.⁷

One does not have to be a rocket scientist to figure out what has been happening. There is a cause and effect relationship. If you go after the cartels, they will go after you. And I will go even farther than that: If you go after the corrupt police who are linked to the cartels, they will retaliate also. The fact that the assassins knew the details of Ibarra's travel plans suggests they were acting on information from inside the federal prosecutors' office.⁸

Beyond this, there is another problem. Since coming to office, the Zedillo administration has made a serious attempt to revamp the police. The Federal Judicial Police (PJF) have been purged. Some 1,600 agents--over a third of the force--have been fired.⁹ Meanwhile, the military has been increasingly brought into the law enforcement business. In late 1995, the armed forces took over the top command of the *Federales* in Chihuahua, bringing in active duty and former officers in a "test case" for a pilot project to incorporate personnel with military training into the PJF.¹⁰ Since then, generals have been placed in command positions in at least 19 state civilian police agencies and the federal district.¹¹ Ninety-five federal police and drug enforcement agents in Baja California have been replaced by soldiers. Increasingly, mid-level local commanders are meeting with police and judicial officials to formulate public security strategies.¹²

In December 1996, moreover, generals were placed in charge of the Federal Judicial Police, the National Institute to Combat Drugs (INCD, the Mexican equivalent of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration), and the Center for the Planning of Drug Control (CENDRO).¹³ Reportedly, the mid-level officers and the operational command units that will support them will also come from the armed forces.¹⁴ At the same time, the Center for National Security and Investigation (CISEN), the government's secret information service, has increasingly been taken over by the military.¹⁵ Furthermore, since last June there has been a sweeping shake-up of the police in Mexico City. The new head of that force, Brigadier General Enrique Salgado Cordero has replaced some 40 civilian police commanders with military officers. At least 11 former precinct commanders have been investigated for ties to a cocaine retailing ring. In the Federal District and elsewhere, troops have been repeatedly used to locate and help apprehend drug traffickers. In Tijuana, military officers have been placed in charge of the federal prosecutor's local office and the special police border unit monitoring immigration; the director of the state police is a military man, as is the chief of security at the city's international airport. As a result of these and other measures, some 70 percent of the narcotics confiscated in Mexico in 1996 was found by the armed forces.¹⁶

All of this, of course, is being done for a reason: Not only are the cartels more powerful than ever, but violent crime has been skyrocketing. There were some 1,500 kidnappings in Mexico in 1995, more than in any other Latin American country except Colombia (which leads the world in that dubious honor). Some of this, at least, is attributable to the police or former police, who are putting their skills to use in new and creative ways.¹⁷

Now, much of this crime is due to other factors also. The socioeconomic crisis that began in December 1994 has driven a lot of people over the line, and they are doing whatever they have to do to survive. A lot of it is illegal, and some of it is violent. At the same time, drug traffickers and guerrillas have increased their involvement in the kidnapping business. The point is simply that efforts to cure the diseases of drug trafficking and corruption will be painful. Indeed, in the short run they may be as painful as the diseases themselves, which is one reason why the government has been so reluctant to push the matter. Again, the danger is that a dialectic of violence may occur, which could potentially take Mexico down the road to full-scale "Colombianization." If that happened, even the president of the republic would not be safe.

Why is all this of interest to the United States? The answer is fairly obvious. Some 50-70 percent of the cocaine, up

to 80 percent of the marijuana and 20-30 percent of the heroin imported into the U.S. comes from or through Mexico.¹⁸ And add to this a newcomer: methamphetamines. "Speed" is enjoying a dramatic surge in popularity in the United States. Indeed, it is not too much to suggest that a major shift is occurring in the international drug trade. Over the next decade, there is likely to be a marked decline in U.S. consumption of cocaine. Tastes are changing, and synthetic drugs will at least partially push it out of the market. And here the Mexicans--especially the Guadalajara cartel run by the brothers Jesús and Luis Amezcua--have gotten in on the ground floor. They control about 80 percent of the U.S. market for methamphetamines, operate labs and distribution systems deep inside the United States and have a vast network of foreign suppliers that stretches around the world.¹⁹ Finally, Mexico has become one the most important money laundering centers in the Americas.

Drugs are a national security issue for the United States. Indeed, they may well be the most important U.S. national security interest in this hemisphere. They are poisoning our society, destroying the social fabric, spreading crime, violence and death. Should drug violence in Mexico escalate, we will not be immune. It will spread over the border. Indeed, it already is.

This again raises the issue of the cure and the disease. I have already asked whether Mexico can stand the pain of a withdrawal from its addiction. The question might equally be posed of the United States. Given the impact that a major drug war would have on the Mexican economy and its potential for social and political destabilization, including an increase in illegal migration across the border, can the United States really afford such a policy? I do not pretend to have the answer. I would merely suggest that this is an issue that needs to be fully thought out.

THE SPREAD OF GUERRILLA VIOLENCE

Another major national security issue that needs to be addressed is the spread of guerrilla war. Some time ago, this writer raised the issue of whether there were other groups besides the Zapatistas (EZLN) that might pose a national security threat to Mexico. In particular, I mentioned a group calling itself the Clandestine Revolutionary Workers Party-Union of the People-Party of the Poor, or PROCUP-PDLP. And I further stated that if another guerrilla war did break out, it would most likely begin in Guerrero.²⁰ Since then, of course, a new insurgency has flared up, initially in Guerrero but quickly spreading to Oaxaca and several other states. A new rebel organization, the Revolutionary People's Army (EPR), has appeared, composed of 14 tiny leftist factions, including PROCUP-PDLP.

Very little is known about the EPR, but what is known is disturbing. These are, in the words of one scholar, the "cavemen of the left."²¹ The movement's patriarch appears to be Felipe Martínez Soriano, a former rector at the Oaxaca Benito Juárez Autonomous University, who has been imprisoned since 1990 for his involvement in the killing of two *La Jornada* security guards in Mexico City. Over the years, Martínez Soriano and PROCUP-PDLF (which was founded in 1979, but whose roots go back to 1964 and the small revolutionary cells that flourished during that decade) have gained a reputation for fanaticism and violence that makes the Zapatistas look like choirboys. Until recently, at least, the rebels were unabashedly Marxist-Leninist and Maoist and advocated a strategy of Prolonged Popular War. Other groups in the radical left tended to view them as "crazies." They have been known to execute their own people for "ideological deviations" and wage war against other, less extreme, leftist organizations.²²

How much popular support the group has is hard to say. My guess is not much. However, it is certainly well financed. The insurgents appear to get much of their money from kidnappings, bank robberies, and possibly drug trafficking. The Mexican Government believes they were responsible for the kidnapping of billionaire Alfredo Harp Helú in 1994, for which they are reported to have received \$30 million.²³ They are well-armed and

give the impression of being highly organized and disciplined (as one would expect of groups which have led an underground existence for over two decades).²⁴ They have some ability to launch coordinated military attacks, and are not geographically limited to any one region of the country. They can pop up from safe houses in Mexico City as well as the poverty-stricken rural areas of southern Mexico. This gives them a considerable ability to appear and disappear at will, which means they can fight at times and places of their own choosing.

All this makes the EPR hard to defend against and even harder to wipe out. Thus, one can expect continued sporadic guerrilla attacks, bombings, kidnappings, and other acts of terrorism. The group has hinted it might try to carry out some spectacular operation, similar to the Tupac Amaru seizure of the Japanese ambassador's residence in Peru.²⁵ With elections coming up in July, it seems likely that it will try to disrupt the campaign, or at least hold it hostage to its demands.

Does the EPR have the capacity to win widespread popular support? Probably not. Its very extremism works against its acquiring a mass following. This being said, however, it must also be noted that the group has recently shown signs of moderating its tactics and rhetoric in an attempt to broaden its appeal through a campaign of "armed propaganda."²⁶ Moreover, there is a lot of discontent out in the countryside. Agrarian

unrest has mounted in recent years and will probably continue to increase, in large part because of the government's own actions: Its agricultural modernization program--including the revision of Article 27 of the Constitution (in effect ending the agrarian reform), the NAFTA, the elimination of quotas, tariffs, subsidies, credits and so on--will add fuel to what are still scattered bonfires. For their part, the Zapatistas, though contained militarily, have provided inspiration for tens of thousands of peasants, some of whom have already begun to seize lands for themselves. Some of the new guerrilla groups--and there are other small organizations out there besides the EPR and the EZLN²⁷--are clearly trying to emulate the better known movements. Whether these fires will grow larger and spread, how far and how fast, is impossible to say, but it would be foolish to pretend there is no problem.

Along these same lines, if guerrilla violence does spread, it will probably be partially because the Mexican military mishandles its counterinsurgency operations. There is a danger that the military will overreact and engage in human rights abuses (indeed, there has already been some of this),²⁸ and that its actions will have the effect of pushing significant numbers of campesinos into the arms of the guerrillas. This is a classic syndrome. One could see it very clearly in the formative years of the Salvadoran and Guatemalan guerrilla movements in the late

1970s/early 1980s,²⁹ and there is a chance it could occur in Mexico too. President Zedillo, for one, is aware of the trap and has promised not to fall into it,³⁰ but whether he can control the military--and whether it can control itself--remains to be seen.

THE SOCIOECONOMIC CRISIS

Another major national security issue that must be at least briefly mentioned is the socioeconomic situation. Nineteen ninety-five was a year of crisis: 30,000 businesses went bankrupt, at least a million people (and probably many more) were thrown out of work, interest rates soared to 140 percent, inflation hit 52 percent, the economy contracted by 6.6 percent, and the value of the peso shrank to about 12.8 cents.³¹ More recently, however, things have been looking up. The country is no longer in a recession. Indeed, the growth rate during the last three-quarters of 1996 was nothing short of explosive. Investors are once again rushing to lend money, with the result that in January President Zedillo was able to announce that Mexico had paid back all of the \$12.5 billion loan it had borrowed from the United States, with interest, three years ahead of schedule. All in all, the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean estimates that the economy increased by about 4.5 percent in 1996, and most observers expect comparable growth this year.³²

This may well happen, but a note of caution is advisable. Not all of the indicators are positive, and some are even illusory. The early repayment of the U.S. loan was less an indication of economic recovery than of simple good business sense. All the Zedillo administration did, after all, was to borrow money on the European bond market at lower rates and send it to the U.S. Treasury. By the same token, the recovery has been largely restricted to the export sector. The domestic economy, which employs more than 80 percent of the job-holding population, remains depressed.³³

If I had to sum up the Mexican economy in two words, they would be "fragility" and "volatility." In recent years, the economy has resembled a rollercoaster, rising and falling for reasons that are sometimes very superficial or ephemeral. The December 1994 peso crisis, for instance, was sparked by a Zapatista offense that turned out to be nothing more than guerrilla theater.³⁴ At the same time, there are factors that are beyond Mexican control. Had the Clinton administration decided to decertify Mexico with respect to the war on drugs, the impact on the economy might well have been traumatic. Similarly, if U.S. interest rates should rise sharply investors will be tempted to place their money in Miami or New York rather than Mexico.

The bottom line is that the Mexican stock market and peso have still not completely stabilized. There were some shaky weeks last autumn (1996).³⁵ This February, moreover, the peso, buffeted by uncertainty as to whether Clinton would recertify Mexico, suffered its largest one-day drop in over a year, falling to 8 to the dollar. Many economic analysts believe that the government will have to devalue again after the July 1997 elections. This issue scares a lot of people, who remember what happened in 1994. These analysts believe that Zedillo should deal with the problem now rather than later, when the shock may be much greater, but for political reasons that is not in the cards.³⁶ The administration faces a tough election, and is not about to do anything (like substantially lowering the value of the peso) that would hurt its chances. That raises the question of whether history is about to repeat itself. President Salinas, it will be recalled, also postponed dealing with an overvalued peso before the August 1994 elections, only to have the economy collapse a few months later.

Will that happen again? Probably not. The best guess is that if there is an economic downturn, it won't be the kind of cataclysmic disaster it was last time. Some of the key variables are different: Under the structural reforms instituted after the last crisis, the peso is now in a "free float," with its value being dictated solely by the markets. By the same token, Mexico

today is not facing an imminent balance of payments crisis, with major short-term loans coming due and no money to pay them. On the other hand, the value of the peso has not depreciated in accordance with continuing high rates of inflation (about 27 percent in 1996), and that may indeed mean that the currency has become overvalued. Many analysts predict it will slip to between 8.5 and 9 pesos to the dollar by the end of the year.³⁷

Furthermore, Mexico still owes billions to the International Monetary Fund, and will probably borrow more this year.³⁸ The total foreign debt, incidently, is now over \$180 billion, which is a higher percentage of the economy than in 1982, when the Mexico's inability to meet its payments triggered the Latin American debt crisis.³⁹

Besides these economic variables, of course, there is also growing narcoterrorism and a new guerrilla group to worry about--not to mention, of course, the increasing uncertainty surrounding this summer's elections. Investors don't like instability and unpredictability. If the political crisis worsens--if there is an upsurge in assassinations, guerrilla violence and political turmoil--it may well have an impact on the economy. Everything is connected to everything else. A continuing political crisis would make a sustained economic recovery more difficult, and if the recovery cannot be sustained that, in turn, will prolong the political turmoil.

THE CONTINUING POLITICAL CRISIS

Will there be more political instability, scandals and violence? In a word, yes. Not only is there a growing threat of narcoterrorism and guerrilla attacks, but the political power struggle within the governing *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (PRI) has not yet been resolved, and some of these elements can be very violent. After all, there is a lot of power and money at stake. At the same time, the struggle between the PRI and the opposition is only going to intensify. Recent moves by the former to circumscribe electoral reforms are probably a harbinger of things to come.

In early November, after nearly two years of negotiations with the opposition, which produced over a dozen agreements, the PRI broke off talks, and used its legislative majority to impose its own more limited measures. Among other things, the ruling party will retain a marked advantage in state funding, there will be a higher ceiling on private contributions to campaign funds, spending violations will be decriminalized, and there will be restrictions on the opposition's ability to unite behind "common" candidates. The motive behind these maneuvers is not difficult to discern: Strong showings by the opposition in state elections in Guerrero, Coahuila and Mexico had raised speculation that the PRI might lose its majority in Congress in 1997. Even more worrisome, polls showed the PRI far behind in the critically

important race for the governorship of the Federal District (Mexico City).⁴⁰ A way had to be found to stack the deck.

All this, it may be noted, comes at a time when the "dinosaurs"--the old-line bosses who largely lost control of the party in the 1980s and early 1990s--are staging a comeback. A fierce power struggle is underway. At the PRI's 17th National Assembly in September, the Old Guard succeeded in pushing through rules that would require the party's next presidential nominee to have held elective office and been a party member for at least 10 years. Such a requirement would have prevented the last 5 presidents of Mexico from holding that office. The PRI deputies' subsequent decision to, in effect, throw out Zedillo's electoral law proposal and replace it with one of their own was only the most recent sign that the *políticos* are in the process of wresting back control of the party from Zedillo and the *técnicos*. If they are successful, this will pose a major obstacle to further political and economic reforms.

Things could get nasty. Electoral fraud and political violence are very real possibilities,⁴¹ and these dangers are not likely to dissipate after the July 1997 mid-term elections. Rather, they will grow. The next big election is in 2000, when the presidency itself will be at stake. By then, one suspects, the National Action Party (PAN) may have a more formidable candidate than it has ever had before. I believe Vicente Fox,

the charismatic governor of Guanajuato, will run.⁴² (Another possibility would be the governor of the Federal District, assuming the PAN's standard-bearer wins the upcoming race there.)⁴³ And unless the socioeconomic situation is a lot better than it is today and the PRI has a much stronger campaigner than it has had in some time, there is a good chance that the PAN's candidate will win. That again would raise the issue of whether the PRI is willing to turn power over to the opposition. In the past, it has sometimes resorted to massive fraud to salvage victories that could not be won by legitimate means. If election 2000 turned out to be a repeat of 1988, there could be serious violence.⁴⁴

But 2000 is a long way off. Anything can happen in 3 years. Mexico is heading into uncharted waters, and about the only thing that can be said with confidence is that there will be more turmoil. There will be more violence and more scandals, and all this will make for continuing Mexican national insecurity.

**THE UNITED STATES AND THE REVOLUTION IN MEXICAN MILITARY AFFAIRS:
PITFALLS AND PROSPECTS⁴⁵**

Over the past two years, there has been a veritable sea change in U.S.-Mexican military relations. Granted, things have not always gone smoothly. The Mexicans have long memories. They have never forgotten that a good part of the U.S. southwest was

once Mexican territory, and that the United States has intervened on other occasions as well. As a result of these experiences and the enormous imbalances in military, economic and political power between the two countries, Mexicans developed a deep sense of insecurity vis-a-vis the "Colossus of the North." They have traditionally been wary of getting too close for fear of losing their sovereignty or becoming an economic vassel. Until the 1980s, their military manuals portrayed the United States as Mexico's natural enemy, and there is still a National Museum of Invasions in Mexico City where children can learn about the sad history of their country's relations with the gringos. And while the decision to join the United States and Canada in the North American Free Trade Agreement has broken down many of these inhibitions, there continues to be a lingering sensitivity in the Mexican psyche.

Thus, the furor in the Mexican press in March 1996 when it was learned that U.S. Secretary of Defense William Perry had told reporters that the two countries were considering conducting joint military exercises. Mexican officials fell over one another rushing to assure the public that U.S. soldiers would not be allowed to engage in maneuvers on Mexican soil. Yet, Perry had never suggested sending troops to Mexico. He was talking about joint *naval* exercises, and had simply listed this as one among a number of programs that could be undertaken to build

goodwill. But though the Mexicans had overreacted, the damage was done. Mexico halted scheduled joint naval operations with the United States. In spite of a large increase in drug shipments off the Pacific Coast, those exercises have still not been conducted.⁴⁶

Notwithstanding that episode, however, U.S.-Mexican relations were changing fast. In October 1995, Perry made the first ever official visit to Mexico by a U.S. Secretary of Defense, and the following April his Mexican counterpart, General Enrique Cervantes Aguirre, returned the honor. On the latter occasion, the two men signed an agreement for the transfer of 20 UH1H "Huey" helicopters to the Mexican Air Force, with up to 53 others to be delivered in 1997. In addition, the accord provided for the training of Mexican soldiers in counternarcotics tactics, as well as the training of helicopter pilots and mechanics, at various American military bases.⁴⁷ This was the largest agreement of its kind ever concluded between the two countries. Previously, helicopters had been provided to the Mexican anti-narcotics police rather than to the armed forces. In October 1996, it was reported that altogether 73 copters and four transport planes, worth \$50 million, would be donated.⁴⁸

Meanwhile, Mexico City and Washington were engaged in increasingly wide-ranging talks on joint counternarcotics operations. In March 1996, Presidents Clinton and Zedillo

established a High Level Contact Group to address the threat drugs posed to both countries. Later that month, at the first meeting, a 10-point communique was issued calling for the development of a joint antinarcotics strategy and increased cooperation, along with the implementation of laws to criminalize the laundering of drug profits. Since then, two other meetings of the Contact Group have been held, and the Mexican Congress has enacted money-laundering and organized crime laws to facilitate the war against trafficking.⁴⁹

Keep in mind that these developments have been occurring at a time when the Mexican military has been assuming new policing functions, including drug interdiction, and when it is increasingly involved in counterinsurgency operations in a half-dozen states. Half the Army has been mobilized for the struggle against the EPR and the Zapatistas; in the process, vast areas of central and southern Mexico have been militarized.

Furthermore, it is a time when the armed forces are rapidly growing in manpower, arms, budget, and political influence. Since 1994, troop strength has increased by some 15 percent to about 180,000, and will reportedly reach 210,000 by early next century. In 1995 alone, military spending may have increased by as much as 44 percent, and it has continued to rise ever since. (Even this does not tell the whole story, however. Off-budget bonuses controlled by the president may add up to a billion

dollars more to the armed forces' coffers.) Over the past three years, the military has purchased 70 combat helicopters, 70 AMX-13 counterinsurgency tanks, 14 training aircraft, and more than a thousand armored vehicles.⁵⁰ At the same time, President Zedillo has created a national security cabinet, assembling military commanders along with the Ministers of Justice, Interior and Foreign Affairs to make security policy.

So the military is out of the barracks. Its roles and missions are expanding, and it is becoming much more involved the policy process. And all this is making some observers uneasy. Moreover, some of the people who are most uncomfortable are in the armed forces. Military leaders have always been reluctant to become too deeply involved in counternarcotics operations for fear that this will make the institution more susceptible to corruption. While the services have long been involved in crop eradication, policing and interdiction are more dangerous activities. The military has traditionally been very protective of its prestige. In general, it has enjoyed a much better image than other governmental and political institutions, and it does not want to lose that public support--which could very well happen if it is increasingly penetrated by the narcotraffickers.

And make no mistake about it, such penetration will occur. The notion that the military is somehow invulnerable to drug corruption is a myth. The case of General Jesús Gutiérrez

Rebollo (to be discussed presently) provides only the most recent evidence. Until February, when he was arrested for being on the payroll of Amado Carrillo Fuentes' Juárez Cartel, Gutiérrez headed the National Institute for the Control of Drugs. A few years ago, another general was relieved of his command after being accused of protecting Colombian drug flights. In yet another incident, in 1991, two generals and three other officers were detained and imprisoned after soldiers refueling a cocaine-laden airplane shot and killed seven narcotics agents who had been trying to capture the craft.⁵¹

In short, if the military has been less susceptible to narcopenetration than the police, it is in part because it has constituted less of a threat to the cartels. That, however, is changing fast, and one must expect that the narcos will step up their efforts to subvert the institution. Most military officers are poorly paid, and this leaves them vulnerable to bribery. According to one U.S. estimate, Mexican traffickers spend as much as 60 percent of their estimated \$10 billion in annual profits to suborn government officials at all levels.⁵² Military and law enforcement agencies simply cannot compete with this.

Then, too, there are other sources of reluctance. Some officers worry that getting more deeply involved in policing and counternarcotics will adversely affect the military's ability to perform its traditional missions. In addition, many dislike this

kind of work. They are not trained for it, and tend to look down on it. Still others are concerned that these new duties will embroil them in violence they would rather avoid. Still, it is difficult to say no when your budget and troop strength are growing, and you are being given all sorts of high tech toys to play with.

Another concern, particularly within the human rights community, is that as the military becomes increasingly involved in police, counternarcotics and counterinsurgency operations human rights violations will increase. Again, there is a myth that the Mexican military is different from other Latin American militaries--that it is somehow immune from the abuses that have characterized other armed forces in the region. While it is true that the Mexicans have not engaged in the kinds of massive violations committed by their colleagues in Guatemala, El Salvador, Colombia, Peru and elsewhere, their record is far from impeccable. Serious abuses, including mass executions, were committed during the fighting in Chiapas, for which no one so far has been prosecuted. Allegations of human rights violations have risen again in recent months, especially in Guerrero and Oaxaca where the army has launched operations against the EPR guerrillas.⁵³ In the wake of the Gutiérrez Rebollo affair, moreover, evidence has arisen of military involvement in kidnappings and disappearances related to the war against drugs.⁵⁴

Counterinsurgency and human rights issues will be an ongoing concern for the United States, and could potentially become a source of embarrassment and friction. What would happen, for instance, if U.S. military equipment donated for counter-narcotics purposes were diverted to fighting guerrillas? Or if U.S. arms were used to suppress legitimate political movements? There would likely be a hue and cry in both countries.⁵⁵

Beyond the issue of counterinsurgency, moreover, the growing involvement of the military in the public security realm cannot but lead to apprehension that the armed forces, like the police, may engage in excessive violence. A certain amount of this is probably inevitable. The question is how much, and whether there will be mechanisms of accountability sufficient to preserve justice and prevent things from getting out of hand. To date, the evidence is not encouraging. The military continues to be unresponsive to human rights charges. (Since 1993, General José Francisco Gallardo Rodríguez has been imprisoned for the "crime" of having proposed the appointment of an ombudsman to root out military corruption and human rights abuses.)⁵⁶ There is also a concern that the weakening of due process protection that has occurred as part of the Zedillo administration's efforts to combat organized crime may result in the military being drawn into political conflicts and used to suppress the government's opponents.⁵⁷

In short, there is a danger that the United States might unwittingly be drawn into Mexico's domestic affairs, even to the point of taking sides--or being *perceived* to take sides--in the country's evolving political conflicts. This can get very sticky, and it needs to be given more thought.

A few final words about the growing militarization of Mexican society and the increasing politicization of the military. For over half a century, the Mexican armed forces have avoided meddling in political affairs. They accept the principle of subordination to civilian authority; they do not launch *golpes de estado*. This being said, however, it would be a mistake to take them for granted. Major changes are occurring in Mexican society and in the military's role within it. Changes in roles and circumstances could very well lead to new forms of behavior. Let there be no question about it, this is a highly secretive, authoritarian institution. While it is easy to bring it into the political arena, it may be much harder to get it out.

This does not mean that a coup is just around the corner. The likelihood that the military might overthrow the government still seems fairly remote. Given the Latin American tradition, however, it is not unthinkable. If Mexico were to descend into chaos, the armed forces might feel duty bound to intervene in order to "save the nation." More likely, in the case of a weakened presidency, they might become the power behind the

throne. And that, in turn, could lead to an increasingly partisan involvement. If the PRI brought the military into the political arena, and then found itself seriously challenged by the political opposition, the generals would have to decide who to support. If they were indebted to the PRI, that might shift them away from the more neutral stance the institution has adopted in recent years.

Along these same lines, there is also a possibility that the military could splinter and plunge into factional strife. Political fissures within the institution are growing. In January, for instance, 11 high-ranking retired military officers (including 3 brigadier generals, an admiral and 3 vice-admirals) announced their affiliation with the Party of Democratic Revolution. Their defection led General Ramón Mota Sánchez, a former PRI federal deputy (currently, there are 3 generals serving as PRI deputies), to denounce them. In turn, BG (ret.) Gustavo Antonio Landeros responded: "I am not a traitor to the military. I'm a traitor to intimidation and abuse." He claimed that the military was tired of being used to "cover up" the inability of the government to deal with the country's social problems. At the same time, BG Samuel Lara decried the privatization and sale of former state enterprises to transnational corporations and the loss of national sovereignty in the name of neoliberal economic policies.⁵⁸

Nor is this discontent restricted to general officers. There is considerable unhappiness in the mid-level officer corps with the way the country is being run. A lot of lieutenant colonels are disgusted with the corruption and incompetence they see both among civilians and within the military itself. They, no less than most Mexicans, are angry about the economic hardship that they and their families have suffered in recent years, and they are frustrated with a promotion system which, as they see it, is designed to weed out the best elements in their ranks and coopt the opportunists.

THE UNITED STATES AND MEXICO: BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE

In February, General Jesús Gutiérrez Rebollo, the director of the National Institute to Combat Drugs, was arrested and forced to resign after it was learned that he had been on the payroll of Amado Carrillo Fuentes' Juárez Cartel. At an unprecedented news conference, Defense Minister Enrique Cervantes announced that for years Gutiérrez had received gifts, payments and real estate from cartel leaders and provided protection for their cocaine shipments.⁵⁹ The general, it appeared, had been able to camouflage his ties to Carrillo Fuentes by launching operations against rival drug organizations even as he consolidated his relationship with Mexico's "Lord of the Skies." (A sobriquet Carrillo had won for pioneering the use of Boeing

727s to transport huge shipments of cocaine from Colombia to Mexico.)

This was a traumatic revelation. Since Gutiérrez' appointment as Mexico's drug czar in December, U.S. authorities had embraced him without reservation. His North American counterpart, General (ret.) Barry McCaffrey, had gone out of his way to praise him as "a serious soldier, a guy of absolute unquestioned integrity." Only a week before his arrest, Gutiérrez had travelled to Washington, D.C., where he had received a detailed briefing full of sensitive information on U.S. narcotics strategies, priorities, and operations. Even after discovering his criminal connections, the Mexican government had kept the Clinton administration in the dark for almost two weeks before finally announcing his removal. At that point, U.S. authorities found themselves having to scramble frantically to contain the damage.⁶⁰

The problem went far beyond the serious intelligence failures that had occurred on both sides, and the operations and informants that might have been compromised. The Gutiérrez affair triggered a massive crisis of confidence in the United States. Together with a crescendo of public allegations about the narcoconnections of the Salinas family, two sitting state governors, and other public officials, the Gutiérrez revelations left the devastating impression that the drug lords had so

penetrated the Mexican state that efforts to cooperate with the Mexican government (on counternarcotics issues, at least) were futile. There was simply no way of telling the good guys from the bad. The Mexicans themselves apparently did not know, or did not want to know.

The truth was that U.S. authorities and President Zedillo had the same basic problem: They were both utterly clueless. For years, the United States had placed its faith in Carlos Salinas and the new technocratic generation, only to find out belatedly that the *técnicos* were plagued by the same corruption and incompetence as the old guard *políticos*. By the same token, Zedillo, though personally honest, was dependent on those around him. He had trusted his advisers to find a prosecutor who would solve the sensational assassination cases that had plagued the country in recent years, and they had given him Pablo Chapa Bezanilla. (In December, Chapa was dismissed after thoroughly bungling the Colosio and Ruiz Massieu murder cases. He is currently in hiding, accused of planting evidence--a dead body--on one of Raúl Salinas' ranches.) The Gutiérrez fiasco was merely the latest manifestation of the same disease. Whom could you trust?

This being said, the bottom line is that the United States and Mexico are trapped. Their geographic proximation and growing demographic, socioeconomic and political intermixture are such

that they cannot escape one another. Consequently, they must learn to live together as best they can. For its part, Mexico finds itself between a rock and a hard place: It can bring the military into the law enforcement business, presumably on a temporary basis until crime can be curbed and the police reformed. Or it can try to muddle through with the police and judicial structures it already has, while moving more gradually to purge them of incompetent, corrupt and violent elements and build more professional institutions.

Neither is a good option. The dangers of militarization are considerable. As Eric Olson has pointed out, "replacing one unaccountable institution (the police) with another that is equally impervious to public view, but significantly more powerful (the military)," could be a prescription for disaster.⁶¹ Nor is there any guarantee that the armed forces will be more effective at combatting crime than are the police.

On the other hand, police and judicial reform--and let there be no mistake, the two must go together--is an enormous task. A simple change of personnel is not enough. Even if the United States and the international community provided assistance--and the kinds of aid Mexico would accept would be seriously constrained by nationalistic sensitivities--corruption is so deeply engrained that it might well prove impervious. It is extremely difficult to transform the political culture of a

people. (Witness the problems the international community is having in reforming the Haitian police and judiciary.) And beyond that, there is the problem of limited resources. Unless Mexican officials are paid well enough so they can live decent lives without resort to graft, any attempt at reform will be doomed.

Then, there is the issue of U.S. behavior. The United States has a tendency to blame others for problems that are in significant part its own making. It is easier to chastise Mexico for narcotrafficking than to solve the seemingly insatiable U.S. appetite for drugs. Yet, without demand there would be no problem of supply. In a very real sense, the United States has been responsible for the destabilization of Mexico. Not wholly, of course; Mexicans must accept their share of the responsibility also. But the narcopathology that is destroying their social and political fabric is merely following its natural source of attraction--the U.S. market.

What this means in policy terms is that the United States must clean up its own house. Without a much more intense and sustained effort to curtail the U.S. domestic drug problem through prevention, treatment and law enforcement programs, little of lasting consequence will be accomplished. Drug lords and cartels will come and go, but the basic problem will continue essentially unchanged.

At the same time, we must understand that narcotrafficking will never be entirely eliminated. The drug war metaphor is misleading: This is not a military campaign, but rather a law enforcement, educational and public health problem. As such, it is a permanent not a temporary condition. The issue is not about "winning" or "losing," but rather "reducing" and "containing." (Or, alternatively, allowing the situation to get completely out of control.) As long as we persist in thinking of the problem in absolute terms, we will consign ourselves to frustration, demoralization and "defeat."

Finally, there is the issue of how to deal with Mexico. At this writing, the United States has just gone through its annual rite of "certification." This year the decision was more difficult than previously because it came so close on the heels of the Gutiérrez Rebollo affair. Nevertheless, the Clinton administration, after intense deliberation, chose to certify Mexico as a reliable ally in the campaign against drug trafficking.

In the judgement of this writer, that decision was a mistake. Not only is the veracity of the certification highly questionable, but it sends precisely the wrong message: The Mexicans are being told, in effect, that the United States is not really serious about drug trafficking. Certification is merely a charade; Mexico has impunity. Consequently, the pressure to

cooperate will be ameliorated since there are no penalties for noncooperation. The history of U.S.-Mexican counternarcotics relations is replete with cynicism, evasion, manipulation and deceit, and certification will likely reinforce those tendencies. Indeed, even as the Clinton administration was making its decision Mexican authorities were withholding information that senior officials in the Attorney General's office had allowed Humberto García Abrego, the Gulf of Mexico Cartel's chief money-lauderer, to escape police custody. (That revelation was made only a few hours *after* U.S. officials proclaimed Mexico certified.)⁶²

To be fair, there are no easy answers. The United States too is caught between a rock and a hard place. Full decertification, including the imposition of economic sanctions, would have produced an intense nationalistic backlash in Mexico, and made it much more difficult, if not impossible, for President Zedillo to cooperate on counternarcotics issues. It would have struck a telling body blow to Mexico's economic recovery, undermined the country's political stability, and done lasting damage to U.S.-Mexican relations, including trade, immigration and environmental cooperation. This was not a decision to be made lightly or in the heat of anger.

The most obvious alternative would be to decertify Mexico, but waive economic sanctions for national security reasons. Such

a decision would have fully satisfied no one. Mexican nationalists would still be offended; some of President Clinton's congressional critics would still probably demand stronger measures. But while the damage to U.S.-Mexican relations would still be considerable, the worst consequences of the other two options might be either avoided or significantly lessened. And at least the right message would be sent. It may be that under current circumstances this is the best that can be expected.

There is, of course, a fourth option: Congress could abolish the certification process altogether. Put simply, the requirement has become more trouble than it is worth. In an era in which the United States is trying to promote broad hemispheric cooperation with regard to trade, investment, counternarcotics, immigration, democratization, environmental protection and other matters, certification is becoming a serious impediment to the promotion of U.S. interests. Latin Americans consider it offensive--a hypocritical attempt to publicly humiliate them and interfere in their domestic affairs. They see Washington politicizing the process, certifying some countries (Mexico) but not others (Colombia) for reasons that appear to have little to do with their respective performances. And they wonder, given the growing U.S. propensity to resort to such sanctions, who will be next.

In short, decertification has become counterproductive. It may well lead to less Latin American cooperation rather than more. (Colombia's reaction to this year's decertification was to suspend all aerial eradication of drug-producing crops.) It undermines our allies by increasing nationalistic pressures on them not to cooperate, even as it demoralizes them by publicly rejecting the efforts they do make, sometimes at considerable risk and cost to themselves. At the same time, the vigorous application of sanctions would damage legitimate businesses, hurt innocent people and produce a bitter anti-U.S. backlash that could spread throughout the region. Under these circumstances, the United States would be best advised to be less heavy-handed. There are other, more effective ways to foster cooperation (including the exercise of political and economic pressure) than mounting a soap box.

This is probably asking too much, however. Today, U.S. foreign policy is being increasingly driven by domestic political pressures. In the process, means are becoming divorced from ends, with the result that policy is increasingly ineffective or counterproductive. This is dangerous. In the case of Mexico, it could make an already bad situation much worse.

1. Both President Ernesto Zedillo and his predecessor, Carlos Salinas, have designated drug trafficking as the greatest threat to Mexico's national security today. See, e.g., Zedillo's 1996 State of the Nation Address, in Foreign Broadcast Information Service (hereafter FBIS), *Daily Report: Latin America*, September 9, 1996. Also, Molly Moore and John Ward Anderson, "Drug Trade Called Greatest Threat to Mexico," *Washington Post*, October 23, 1996.

2. Nor is Raúl the only member of the Salinas clan involved with narcotics traffickers. Serious allegations are now being made against the Salinas brother's father, Raúl Salinas Lozano, and their former brother-in-law, the now deceased José Francisco Ruiz Massieu. In 1992, their cousin, Carlos Enrique Cervantes de Gortari, was convicted in a cocaine trafficking case. See Sam Dillon with Christine Biederman, "Secretary to Mexican Patriarch Discloses Links to Drug Barons," *New York Times*, February 26, 1997; Molly Moore, "Drug Gang's Long Arm Grips Mexico," *Washington Post*, February 2, 1997; John Ward Anderson and Molly Moore, "Salinas Kin Linked to Drug Figure," *Ibid.*, February 17, 1997; and Sam Dillon and Craig Pyes, "Ties With Drug Traffickers Taint 2 Mexican Governors," *New York Times*, February 2, 1997. On narcopolitics in Mexico, see Yolanda Figueroa, *El Capo del Golfo: Vida y Captura de Juan García Abrego*, Mexico: Editorial Grijalbo, 1996; Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives, *A Review of President Clinton's Certification Program for Narcotics Producing and Transit Countries in Latin America*, 104th Congress, 1st Session, March 29, 1995, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1995; Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, *The Drug Trade in Mexico and Implications for U.S.-Mexican Relations*, 104th Congress, 1st Session, August 8, 1995, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1995; Douglas W. Payne, "Drugs and Dollars: A Global Challenge," *Freedom Review*, Vol. 27, No. 4, July-August 1996, pp. 83-94; and Silvana Paternostro, "Mexico as a Narco-Democracy," *World Policy Journal*, Vol. 12, No. 1, Spring 1995, pp. 41-47.

3. The \$7 billion figure is from the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. But the U.S. Treasury's Financial Crime Enforcement Network estimate is between \$10 and \$30 billion, and Mexican Assistant Attorney General Moisés Moreno Hernández put

the total at about \$30 billion. See Molly Moore and John Ward Anderson, "Traffickers: Mexico's New Desperados," *Washington Post*, April 28, 1996; and Tim Golden, "Mexican Connection Grows As Cocaine Supplier to U.S.," *New York Times*, July 30, 1995.

4. Andrew Reding, "Certification a Polite Fiction--Neither Mexico Nor the U.S. Can Afford a Real Crackdown on Drugs," *Pacific News Service, Internet*, March 10, 1996. The figure for Mexican export earnings is from United Nations Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), *Preliminary Overview of the Economy of Latin America and the Caribbean, 1996*, Santiago, Chile: United Nations, 1995, p. 47.

5. See Eric L. Olson, *The Evolving Role of Mexico's Military in Public Security and Antinarcotics Programs*, WOLA Briefing Series: Issues in International Drug Policy, Washington, D.C.: Washington Office on Latin America, May 1996.

6. Sam Dillon, "Mexico Drug Wars Advance Within Sight of U.S. Border," *New York Times*, October 10, 1996.

7. John Ward Anderson, "Soldiers Replace Federal Police in Drug-Wracked Mexican State," *Washington Post*, February 22, 1997.

8. This has since been verified by a former gunman for the Arellano Félix brothers. See Moore, "Drug Gang's Long Arm."

9. Molly Moore, "Mexico's Attorney General Fires 17% of Federal Police," *Washington Post*, August 17, 1996; Moore, "Tijuana--Drug Traffickers' Hub," *Ibid.*, February 16, 1997; and John Ward Anderson, "Soldiers Replace Federal Police in Drug-Wracked Mexican State," *Ibid.*, February 22, 1997.

10. Subsequently, the requirements of combatting a new guerrilla threat led the military to withdraw 30 officers who had been participating in the Chihuahua experiment. Most recently, however, Army personnel relieved all PJF commanders and agents in Ciudad Juárez, Camargo, Hidalgo del Parral, Ojinaga, and the state capital, Chihuahua. FBIS, *Daily Report: Latin America*, February 25, 1997; Information from a knowledgeable State Department source.

11. John Ross, "Mexico Barbaro, Cracks in the Mexican Military Wall as Army Goes Public," Part 1, February 3-17, 1997, No. 52, via Internet.

12. FBIS, *Daily Report: Latin America*, February 25, 1997; Olson, *The Evolving Role of Mexico's Military*, p. 5.

13. Following the arrest of General Jesús Gutiérrez Rebollo in February 1997, the INCD was purged and a civilian lawyer named director. More on the Gutiérrez affair later.
14. FBIS, *Daily Report: Latin America*, January 7, 1997.
15. Especially the Navy. Information from Andrés Oppenheimer of the *Miami Herald* and from a Mexican intelligence officer.
16. FBIS, *Daily Report: Latin America*, January 7, 1997; Sam Dillon, "In Shake-up, Army Officers Fill Top Police Posts in Mexico City," *New York Times*, June 19, 1996; John Ward Anderson, "Scandal Exposes Mexican Military's Corruptibility," *Washington Post*, February 20, 1997; and Ross, "Mexico Barbaro."
17. Sam Dillon, "Abductions Rock Mexico, Scaring Not Just the Rich," *New York Times*, November 1, 1996.
18. U.S. Department of State, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, March 1996, p. 141.
19. John Ward Anderson and Molly Moore, "Mexico's Cartels Diversify," *Washington Post*, August 12, 1996.
20. Donald E. Schulz, *Mexico and the Future*, Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 1995, p. 19.
21. Denise Dresser, "Mexico: Uneasy, Uncertain, Unpredictable," *Current History*, 96, 607, February 1997, p. 53.
22. For a brief history of the movement, see the "Executive Summary" in FBIS, *Daily Report: Latin America*, September 4, 1996. See also, David Ronfeldt, John Arquilla, Graham Fuller and Melissa Fuller, *The Zapatista "Social Netwar" in Mexico*, Santa Monica, CA: RAND, DRR-1547-A, December 1996, pp. 79-83 (draft); Matt Moffett, Craig Torres and Dianne Solís, "Brutal Rebel Group in Mexico Leaves Trail of Death, Uncertainty," *Wall Street Journal*, September 3, 1996; Sam Dillon, "Mexico Builds a Picture of a Fanatic Rebel Group," *New York Times*, September 5, 1996; and Andrés Oppenheimer, "Mexican Revolutionary May Have Called Rebels' Shots From Jail," *Miami Herald*, September 8, 1996.
23. Dillon, "Mexico Builds a Picture"; "Executive Summary".
24. See, e.g., *Proceso's* report on the EPR's "Basic War Course," in FBIS, *Daily Report: Latin America*, September 11, 1996.

25. See FBIS, *Daily Report: Latin America*, February 5, 1997.
26. The evidence here is mixed. Jorge Castañeda has reported that undisclosed government sources are claiming that the EPR has executed 50 members of the armed forces in recent months, some in gruesome circumstances. In "After the Bailout, A Flood," *Washington Post*, March 2, 1997. On the other hand, see Julia Preston, "With Nonviolent Sallies, Rebels in Mexico Fight On," *New York Times*, February 13, 1997. I am skeptical of the Castañeda report.
27. The most recent groups to appear are the Independent Revolutionary Army and the Armed Front for the Liberation of the Neglected Peoples of Guerrero. It remains to be seen whether they have any capabilities.
28. See, e.g., Molly Moore, "Mexico's War on Rebels Gives Rural Towns the Jitters," *Washington Post*, October 16, 1996; Julia Preston, "Mexico Confronts Rebels With Limited Crackdown," *New York Times*, October 16, 1996; and Human Rights Watch/Americas, *The New Year's Rebellion: Violations of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law during the Armed Revolt in Chiapas, Mexico*, Vol. 6, No. 3, March 1, 1994.
29. See, e.g., Donald E. Schulz, "Ten Theories in Search of Central American Reality," in *Revolution and Counterrevolution in Central America and the Caribbean*, Donald E. Schulz and Douglas H. Graham, eds., Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984, pp. 27-35. See also the chapters by Gordon Bowen on Guatemala and by Schulz on El Salvador.
30. See, e.g., FBIS, *Daily Report: Latin America*, September 4, 1996.
31. John Ward Anderson, "As Peso Slips, Mexicans Fear a Repeat of 1994's Economic Crisis," *Washington Post*, November 2, 1996.
32. ECLAC, Preliminary Overview, p. 37; "Mexican Output Rises 7.4%, Eclipsing Economic Forecasts," *New York Times*, November 22, 1996.
33. Castañeda, "After the Bailout, the Flood"; FBIS, *Daily Report: Latin America*, February 19, 1997.
34. Granted, the crisis had deeper causes. See, e.g., Donald E. Schulz, *Mexico in Crisis*, Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies

Institute, 1995, pp. 40-42; and Schulz, *Mexico and the Future*, pp. 9-14.

35. This appears to have been largely a product of the Mexican Government's decision not to privatize state-owned petrochemical plants, together with profit-taking and uncertainty about U.S. policy after the November elections.

36. The Central Bank, in fact, has been intervening in order to prevent devaluation. FBIS, *Daily Report: Latin America*, February 19, 1997; Anderson, "As Peso Slips."

37. Information from Isaac Cohen of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. See also FBIS, *Daily Report: Latin America*, February 19 and 25, 1997.

38. See, e.g., *El Economista*, February 3, 1997.

39. Castañeda, "After the Bailout, a Flood."

40. A recent poll (January 24-28) conducted by the Indemerc Louis Harris organization, for instance, showed capital residents preferring the National Action Party by 36 percent to the Party of Democratic Revolution's 24 percent and the PRI's 14 percent. FBIS, *Daily Report: Latin America*, February 10, 1997. See also John Ward Anderson and Molly Moore, "Ruling Party Down, Not Out, in Mexico," *Washington Post*, January 19, 1997.

41. Already, the Mexico City offices of the National Action Party and the Party of Democratic Revolution have been broken into and computer records stolen. FBIS, *Daily Report: Latin America*, February 3, 1997.

42. On Vicente Fox, see especially Andrew Reding, "The Next Mexican Revolution," *World Policy Journal*, Vol. 13, No. 3, Fall 1996, pp. 61-70.

43. Much will depend on who that individual is. If it is the erratic Diego Fernández, the PAN's candidate in the 1994 presidential election, the party may very well snatch defeat from the jaws of victory.

44. Many Mexicans believe that Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas defeated Carlos Salinas in the 1988 presidential election. Though this cannot be proven, there is no question that there was widespread fraud. See Schulz, *Mexico in Crisis*, p. 6.

45. On the Mexican military and civil-military relations, see

especially Roderic Ai Camp, *Generals in the Palacio: The Military in Modern Mexico*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1992; Monica Serrano, "The Armed Branch of the State: Civil-Military Relations in Mexico," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, Vol. 27, Part 2, May 1995, pp. 423-448; Stephen J. Wager and Donald E. Schulz, "The Zapatista Revolt and Its Implications for Civil-Military Relations and the Future of Mexico," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, Vol. 37, No. 1, Spring 1995, pp. 1-42; and Wager, "The Mexican Military Approaches the 21st Century: Coping with a New World Order," in *Mexico Faces the 21st Century*, Donald E. Schulz and Edward J. Williams, eds., Westport, CT: Praeger, 1995, pp. 59-76.

46. Mary Beth Sheridan, "Proposal for Joint Exercises Spurs Uproar in Mexico," *Los Angeles Times* (Washington edition), March 19, 1996; Molly Moore, "Latin Drugs Flow North Via Pacific," *Washington Post*, January 30, 1997.

47. In early April, counternarcotics training had already begun for 15 Mexican military officers at Fort Benning. This was to be the first step in a three-step program that would subsequently take them to Fort Bragg and Fort Campbell. Clint Claybrook, "Mexican Officers Train at Benning School to Fight Drugs," *Columbus Ledger-Enquirer* (Georgia), April 2, 1996.

48. Sam Dillon, "Mexico Quietly Makes Big Shifts Toward a More Pro-U.S. Policy," *New York Times*, May 2, 1996; "Army Reportedly Will Get U.S. Copters To Aid Drug War," *Chicago Tribune*, October 20, 1996.

49. U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO), *Drug Control: Counternarcotics Efforts in Mexico*, GAO/NSIAD-96-163, June 1996, p. 19.

50. Andrés Oppenheimer, "Generals Expand Role in Mexico," *Miami Herald*, February 15, 1997; Ross, "Mexico Barbaro"; Julia Preston, "Mexico's Army Out of the Barracks," *New York Times*, September 14, 1996.

51. Wager, "The Mexican Military Approaches the 21st Century," pp. 65-66.

52. Dillon and Pyes, "Ties With Drug Traffickers Taint 2 Mexican Governors."

53. Ross, "Mexico Barbaro"; Physicians for Human Rights and Human Rights Watch/Americas, *Waiting for Justice in Chiapas*, December 1994; Human Rights Watch/Americas, *MEXICO: Army Officer Held*

'Responsible' for Chiapas Massacre; Accused Found Dead at Defense Ministry, Vol. 7, No. 7, June 1995; and Andrew Reding, *Mexico: Democracy and Human Rights*, Perspective Series, Washington, D.C.: Immigration and Naturalization Service, U.S. Department of Justice, July 1995, especially pp. 31-34. This is not to mention, of course, earlier human rights abuses--e.g., during the counterinsurgency operations in Guerrero in the 1970s, and the suppression of student protesters at Tlatelolco in 1968.

54. Julia Preston, "Drugs Connect Mexico Leaders to Abductions," *New York Times*, March 9, 1997.

55. Several U.S.-leased counternarcotics helicopters were in fact diverted in Chiapas. GAO, *Drug Control: Counternarcotics Efforts in Mexico*, p. 15.

56. Gallardo was charged with a variety of offences, but to date Mexican courts have not found him guilty of anything. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights has called on President Zedillo to release him, but without effect.

57. See, e.g., Olson, "The Evolving Role of Mexico's Military," p. 4.

58. Ross, "Mexico Barbaro."

59. FBIS, *Daily Report: Latin America*, February 21, 1997.

60. Julia Preston, "A General in Mexico's Drug War Is Dismissed on Narcotics Charges," *New York Times*, February 19, 1997; Preston, "Mexico's Jailed Anti-Drug Chief Had Complete Briefings in U.S.," *Ibid.*, February 20, 1997; Pierre Thomas, "U.S. Assesses Damage Caused by Mexican Drug Official," *Washington Post*, February 20, 1997.

61. Eric Olson, "Mexico's Drug-fighting Plan Questionable," *Miami Herald*, February 28, 1997.

62. Molly Moore, "Officials, Not Judge, Freed Drug Suspect," *Washington Post*, March 2, 1997.