

Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

Clinton Library

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001. fax	re: Manifest (2 pages)	05/01/1997	b(7)(E), b(7)(F)
002. fax	re: Manifest (1 page)	04/30/1997	b(7)(E), b(7)(F)
003. fax	re: Manifest (3 pages)	04/30/1997	b(7)(E), b(7)(F)
004. fax	re: Manifest (1 page)	04/30/1997	b(7)(E), b(7)(F)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
 Speechwriting
 Lissa Muscatine
 OA/Box Number: 12087

FOLDER TITLE:

Mexico City

2017-1164-S

rc2828

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

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C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

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**UNITED STATES INFORMATION SERVICE
U.S. EMBASSY, MEXICO CITY**

FAX

FROM: Donald R. Hamilton, Minister-Counselor for Public Affairs
TO: John Funderburk
FAX NO.: 202-456-5340

Following are the scene-setters for the possible events in Mexico City.

TOTAL NUMBER OF PAGES: 8

If you don't receive all the pages of this fax, call 211-0042, ext. 3530. Callers from the United States should call 011-525-211-0042.

SCENE-SETTER FOR ANTHROPOLOGICAL MUSEUM

Context:

Mexico City's national Museum of Anthropology is one of the world's great museums and Mexicans are exceptionally proud of everything from its distinctive architecture to its unparalleled collection. The Anthropology Museum has a close working relationship with many institutions in the United States, especially the Smithsonian's National Gallery of Art in Washington. From last June through October the Smithsonian was host to a splendid exhibit of Olmec art from Mexico and to reciprocate, sent the exhibit called "Masterworks of the U.S. National Gallery" to the Anthropology Museum in Mexico City. It closed last week. Your guide will be the museum director and he may well be accompanied by senior officials from the National Council for Culture and the National Institute for Anthropology and History.

Objectives:

- To further demonstrate your interest in Mexico's history and your appreciation for the cultures which existed here in pre-Hispanic times.
- To enjoy one of the world's finest museums.

Talking Points:

- In visiting a museum such as this it is somewhat humbling to realize the breadth and antiquity of Mexican history through its 30 centuries.
- It is difficult to recognize that there was a thriving city of perhaps 200,000 people in what is now Mexico City long before any Europeans had dreamt that this hemisphere existed.
- My visit to Mexico is also driving home to me that the fusion of European and indigenous cultures began in Mexico almost a full century before the first European colonists arrived in what is now the United States.

SCENE-SETTER FOR MEXFAM

Context:

MEXFAM is a Mexico associate of Planned Parenthood International and receives funding from USAID. The center you are visiting, called "La Conchita" (the little shell), is fundamentally a youth recreation center, but it also conducts outreach to the more than 1,000,000 people who live in the area. Aside from providing a recreational opportunity for youth, their purpose is to provide family planning information for secondary school Mexicans (in Mexico, secondary means essentially through the ninth grade; the time after that is called preparatory). Although family planning is the fundamental purpose, apart from sports, there are other activities as well: some training in mechanics, computers, etc. The autonomous Federal Elections Institute also is operating an information center on the premises, up through the July 6 Mexico elections. Pending vetting of the script, there will likely be a skit or sketch carried out by young people affiliated with the school which they perform in neighborhoods outside the center to make people aware of family planning issues.

Objectives:

- To get an appreciation for the work that private organizations are doing to convey family planning information to young people in the lower and lower-middle class strata of greater Mexico City.
- To get some sense of what the lower echelons of urban life in Mexico are like.

Talking Points:

--I'm really pleased to be here and to see the valuable work that MEXFAM is carrying out to ensure that young people in this capital have the information that they need to make wise decisions.

SCENE-SETTER FOR VISIT TO TEMPLO MAYOR (PRINCIPAL TEMPLE)

Context:

As Cortez and his conquistadores consolidated their conquest of the island city of Tenochtitlan, which served as the capital of the Aztec empire, all of the religious sites relating to the Aztec empire were destroyed. Among them was the Templo Mayor, or principal temple, of the Aztecs. As it was destroyed and its building materials recycled into new buildings, especially the cathedral next door, the site of the principal temple was lost in history until 1978, when a construction project unearthed the Templo Mayor site. Finding such a site constituted a major event in Mexican archaeology and helped define the modern world's understanding of the empire of the Aztecs. The Aztecs were a warrior people and extremely violent in their approach to life. During your visit to the Templo Mayor sites, both outdoors and indoors, you will see ample evidence not only of the human sacrifices that they practiced, but also of the bloody conflicts they believed to have taken place among their gods.

Objectives:

- Whether a public or OTR visit, the objective is simply to expand your knowledge of and show your interest in the pre-Colombian cultures of which Mexicans are so proud.

Talking Points:

.-I think it is wonderful that in spite of the financial and logistical burdens involved, that the people of Mexico have made this special effort to preserve this immensely important historical monument right in the very heart of their nation and this, the world's largest city.

SCENE-SETTER FOR COFFEE WITH MRS ZEDILLO

Context:

By her own choice Mrs. Zedillo is not a broadly known public figure in Mexico. Naturally, people know who she is, but she has preferred to keep a rather low profile here, not picking up many of the public charitable and social events that some of her predecessors have taken.

Objectives:

- To establish a personal relationship which should make the rest of the visit and any subsequent contacts more smooth.

Talking Points:

Talking points will be developed when more is known of the schedule and whether or not Mrs. Zedillo has been in Yucatán with Mrs. Clinton.

SCENE-SETTER FOR ARRIVAL IN MERIDA

Context:

As you know, the Mexicans were anxious for a visit to Merida during the initial schedule in which both the President and First Lady would come. Merida is the capital of the state of Yucatán and shares the Yucatán Peninsula with the states of Quintana Roo (home to the famous resort of Cancún) and the state of Campeche. The Yucatán Peninsula is best known as being the center of the Mayan empire and is dotted with archaeological sites. It is also the site of the first encounter between the conquistadors and the indigenous peoples of Mexico. Yucatán is somewhat removed from the mainstream of Mexican political life because of its geographic isolation.

Objectives:

- A quiet and low-key arrival in Merida is desired, although because the First Lady is arriving ahead of the President, we can expect a fair bit of media interest as a lead-up to the Presidential visit. It is quite likely that the First Lady would be met by Mrs. Nilda Patricia Velasco de Zedillo, First Lady of Mexico, Mrs. Amira Hernández de Servera, wife of the Governor of the state of Yucatan, and by Mrs. Lulu Ululani de Gurria, wife of Mexico's Foreign Minister. The Mexicans envision this as a public event.

Talking Points:

--I have come to Merida in order to see some of the splendors that my husband, because of his recent injury, is not able to join me in. I can tell you that he is extremely disappointed that he will not have the chance to see some of the things that I am going to be able to see on this trip.

--While my principal objective is to see some of the archaeological heritage of Yucatán and indeed of Mexico and the entire world, I also hope to get a chance to see some of the social programs which have been undertaken in order to advance the people of Yucatán.

SCENE-SETTER FOR VISIT TO AND LUNCH AT FRANZ MEYER MUSEUM

Context:

The Franz Meyer Museum is a private museum occupying a site owned by the Government of Mexico. The site is a 17th-century building which has served many purposes over the years, including that of a hospital. The Museum is dedicated to the decorative arts and offers one of the finest appreciations of colonial art and artifacts in Mexico City. The quiet and classic Spanish colonial courtyard in the Museum would make an excellent site for the luncheon to be hosted by Mrs. Jones for Mexican women of accomplishment. Mrs. Jones has curated an exhibit in this museum. The exhibit dealt with the history of English ceramics in Mexico.

Objectives:

- To get a finer appreciation of the colonial history of Mexico, since most of your other cultural site visits have been dedicated to pre-Colombian history.

SCENE-SETTER FOR CIUDADELA MARKET

Context:

The Ciudadela (see-you-dah-DE-la) market is one of the capital's leading markets for Mexican handicrafts ("artesanias" - are-tay-sah-NI-ahss). Unlike some of the other markets, this one is visited by both tourists and Mexicans alike. It contains a nice selection of Mexican handicrafts ranging from silver through carved wood, textiles and glassware.

Objectives:

- To share an experience that most American tourists in Mexico have and to perhaps find some nice souvenirs of your trip to Mexico.

VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT AND FIRST LADY
TO
MEXICO CITY, MEXICO
MAY 5, 1997

EVENT: Airport Arrival of the First Lady

DATE: Monday, May 5, 1997

TIME: 7:00 PM

LOCATION: Mexico City International Airport-Marina Ramp

ATTENDEES: Greeter: Regan Burke, First Lady's Lead Advance

PRESS: Closed Press

REMARKS: None

SCENARIO: First Lady de-boards plane and proceeds via motorcade to the Presidente Inter-Continental Hotel.

Visit of the President and First Lady
To
Mexico City, Mexico
March 5-7, 1997

Event: Arrival Ceremony

Date: Tuesday, May 6, 1997

Time: 9:05-9:45 am

Location: Campo Marte, Mexico City, Mexico

Attendees: Greeters: President and Mrs. Zedillo
Attendees: Various Mexican and American dignitaries and The Cabinet.

Press: Open Press

Remarks: Remarks with consecutive translation

Scenario: The President and First Lady will be greeted at the arrival point by President and Mrs. Zedillo. The Presidents and First Ladies will be announced on to the stage.

The program begins with a 21 gun salute followed by the Mexican National Anthem and the US National Anthem.

President Zedillo makes remarks, followed by remarks by President Clinton.

Following the presidential remarks, officials from the US and Mexico are recognized.

President Zedillo's military aide will ask permission for a review of troops, at which point the military parade begins, passing from left to right in front of the reviewing stand.

President Zedillo, will then thank President and Mrs. Clinton and conclude the ceremony.

The President and First Lady exit stage left and work a rope line.

Depart Campo Marte via motorcade en route Los Pinos Presidential Palace.

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**The Trip of The President of The United States and First Lady
To Mexico City, Mexico
May 5-7, 1997**

EVENT: US Embassy Meet and Greet

DATE: Wednesday May 7, 1997

TIME: 6:40-7:30 P.M.

LOCATION: US Embassy, Mexico City

ATTENDEES: Ambassador Jones, Secretary of State Madeline Albright and US Embassy Employees (750)

PRESS: Closed

REMARKS: Introductions by Ambassador Jones and Secretary of State Albright

SCENARIO: The President and First Lady arrive by motorcade at US Embassy and proceed from basement arrival point to ground floor.

Ambassador Jones introduces Madeline Albright from off-stage after brief remarks. Secretary of State Albright gives brief remarks and introduces President Clinton and The First Lady.

The President and First Lady enter from off-stage onto platform.

Ambassador Jones goes to microphone at end of applause and recognizes a group of pre-school children (12-20 children of embassy employees) sitting near the platform who will sing a short *Hello* song to the President and First Lady.

After song is completed President Clinton approaches podium and the First Lady takes seat (stage left) along with Secretary Albright and Ambassador Jones (both stage right).

President Clinton addresses US Embassy Employees and families.

Once remarks are completed all four principals exit platform and work a small rope line.

Exit from ground atrium to inside hallway.

President proceeds to end of hallway for photo with Marine Honor Guard.

Depart for motorcade on route to airport.

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VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT
TO
MEXICO CITY, MEXICO
MAY 5-7, 1997

EVENT: The Present and Future of Mexico-United States
Relation's

DATE: Wednesday, May 7, 1997

TIME: 10:20 am - 11:50 am

LOCATION: National Auditorium

ATTENDEES: An assortment of Mexican business leaders, Cabinet members,
political leaders, Congressional members, human rights activist,
educators, diplomatic corps, college students, and various ethnic
groups. (9,500 plus)

PRESS: Open

REMARKS: Speech

TRANSLATION: Simultaneous

SCENARIO: The PRESIDENT and the First Lady arrive to the National Auditorium and will be met by President and Mrs. Zedillo. Prior to their arrival, the audience was shown a 12 minute video on _____. The First Lady and Mrs. Zedillo will be announced (off-stage) into the room where they will proceed directly to their seats in the front row. The PRESIDENTS will remain back-stage to view a 3 minute video on a TV monitor. At the conclusion of the video, PRESIDENT CLINTON and President Zedillo will be announced (off stage) into the auditorium. President Zedillo speaks and introduces the PRESIDENT. The PRESIDENT speaks. Upon the conclusion of his remarks, the PRESIDENT exits stage left. The First lady and Mrs. Zedillo will join their spouses for the off stage exit.

Draft: April 30, 1997

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THE TRIP OF THE PRESIDENT
TO
MEXICO CITY, MEXICO
MAY 5 - 7, 1997

EVENT: Cultural Presentation

DATE: Tuesday May 6, 1997

TIME: 7:55 p.m. - 9:10 p.m.

LOCATION: Palace of Bellas Artes

GREETERS: Ricardo Calderon Director of the Performance Theater
will greet on arrival at the Loading Dock.

President and Mrs. Zedillo will greet on the third
floor at the elevator.

ATTENDEES:	U.S.	MEXICO
	THE PRESIDENT & Mrs. Clinton TBD	President & Mrs. Zedillo TBD

PRESS: Pool

SCENARIO: THE PRESIDENT and The First Lady arrive via motorcade Palace of Bellas Artes. THE PRESIDENT and The First Lady proceed to the elvators where they are welcomed by the Director of the Performance Center. THE PRESIDENT and The First Lady proceed up to the box level where they are greeted by President and Mrs. Zedillo who will escort them to the Presidential Box. THE PRESIDENT and The First Lady enter the box and standing with President and Mrs. Zedillo, they acknowledge the audience. The Mexican National Anthem will be played followed by the American National Anthem.

THE PRESIDENT and The First Lady will view a cultural performance which will include the National Symphony Orchestra of Mexico, soprano Maria Luisa Tamez, tenor Alfredo Portilla and the Bellas Artes Choir.

After the performance and the departure of President and Mrs. Zedillo, THE PRESIDENT and The First Lady will have a brief tour of the Garcia Ponce Art Exhibit given by Agustin Arteaga - Director of the Palace Bellas Artes Art Museum.

THE PRESIDENT and The First Lady will depart Palace of Bellas Artes via motorcade en route National Palace.

m.kreiss
draft 3 4-30-97 09:00a.m.

DRAFT

THE TRIP OF THE FIRST LADY
TO
MEXICO CITY, MEXICO
MAY 5-7, 1997

EVENT: Visit to MEXFAM

DATE: Tuesday, May 6, 1997

TIME: 11:00 a. m. - 12:00 noon

LOCATION: "La Conchita" Juvenile Recreation Center

ATTENDEES: TBD

GREETERS: XXX

PRESS: Open

REMARKS: None

SCENARIO:

- HRC is greeted curbside, by XXX.
- XXX escorts HRC into Library for Roundtable Discussion w/X participants.
- Upon conclusion of Roundtable Discussion, XXX leads HRC on a tour of the facility.
- Upon conclusion of tour, XXX leads HRC to outdoor skit venue. (HRC and roundtable participants will have reserved seating in first row of audience).
- Upon conclusion of skit, HRC ascends the stage, stage right, delivers brief remarks & thanks audience/participants from standing microphone on stage.
- HRC descends stage right and walks to motorcade arrival/departure point.
- HRC departs.

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U.S. Department of State

Background Notes: Mexico, April 1997

Released by the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs.

OFFICIAL NAME: United Mexican States

PROFILE

GEOGRAPHY

Area: 1,972,500 sq. km. (761,600 sq. mi.); about three times the size of Texas.

Cities: Capital--Mexico City (15 million, 1990 census). Other cities--Guadalajara, Monterrey, Puebla, Leon.

Terrain: Coastal lowlands, central high plateaus, and mountains up to 5,400 m. (18,000 ft.).

Climate: Tropical to desert.

PEOPLE

Nationality: Noun and adjective--Mexican(s).

Population (1997 est.): 95 million. Annual growth rate (net): 1.8%.

Ethnic groups: Indian-Spanish (mestizo) 60%, Indian 30%, Caucasian 9%, other 1%.

Religions: Roman Catholic 89%, Protestant 6%, other 5%.

Language: Spanish.

Education: Years compulsory--12. Literacy--89%.

Health (1996 est.): Infant mortality rate--30/1,000.

Life expectancy--male 70 yrs., female 76 yrs.

Labor force (33 million): Agriculture, forestry, hunting, fishing--26%. Services--24%. Commerce--24%.

Manufacturing--15%. Construction--6%. Transportation and communication--4%. Mining and quarrying--1%.

GOVERNMENT

Type: Federal republic.

Independence: First proclaimed September 16, 1810; republic established 1824.

Constitution: February 5, 1917.

Branches: Executive--president (chief of state and head of government). Legislative--bicameral.

Judicial--Supreme Court, local and federal systems.

Political parties: Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), National Action Party (PAN), Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD), Labor Party (PT), and several small parties.

Suffrage: Universal at 18.

Administrative subdivisions: 31 states and a federal district.

ECONOMY

GDP (1997, proj.): \$370 billion.

Per capita GDP (1997, proj.): \$3,911.

Annual real GDP growth (1997, proj.): 4.5%; (1996): 5.1%; (1995): -6.2%

Avg. annual real GDP growth (1989-94): 3%.

Inflation rate (1997, proj): 18%; (1996): 28%.

Natural resources: Petroleum, silver, copper, gold, lead, zinc, natural gas, timber.

Agriculture (5.8% of GDP): Products--corn, beans, oilseeds, feedgrains, fruit, cotton, coffee, sugarcane, winter vegetables.

Industry: Types--manufacturing (22% of GDP), services, commerce, transportation and communications, petroleum and mining.

Trade: (1996, Bank of Mexico): Exports--\$96 billion: manufacturing 84%, petroleum and derivatives 10%, agriculture 5%, other 1%. Major markets: U.S. (84%), Europe (4%), South America (4%), Canada (2%).

Imports--\$89.5 billion: intermediate goods 80%, capital goods 10%, consumer goods 7%, other 3%.

Major sources: U.S. (76%), Europe (9%), Japan (5%), Canada (2%) (1996, U.S. Department of Commerce). Imports from U.S.--\$56.8 billion. Exports to U.S.-- \$73 billion.

Average exchange rate (1996): 7.60 pesos = U.S. \$1.

PEOPLE

Mexico is the most populous Spanish-speaking country in the world and the second-most populous country in Latin America after Portuguese-speaking Brazil. About 70% of the people live in urban areas. Many Mexicans emigrate from rural areas that lack job opportunities--such as the underdeveloped southern states and the crowded central plateau--to the industrialized urban centers and the developing areas along the U.S.-Mexico border. According to some estimates, the population of the area around Mexico City is about 20 million, which would make it the largest concentration of population in the world. Cities bordering on the United States, such as Tijuana and Ciudad Juarez, and cities in the interior, such as Guadalajara, Monterrey, and Puebla, have undergone sharp rises in population.

HISTORY

Highly advanced cultures, including those of the Olmecs, Mayas, Toltecs, and Aztecs, existed long before the Spanish conquest. Hernando Cortes conquered Mexico during the period 1519-21 and founded a Spanish colony that lasted nearly 300 years. Independence from Spain was proclaimed by Father Miguel Hidalgo on September 16, 1810; this launched a war for independence. An 1821 treaty recognized Mexican independence from Spain and called for a constitutional monarchy. The planned monarchy failed; a republic was proclaimed in December 1822 and established in 1824.

Prominent figures in Mexico's war for independence were Father Jose Maria Morelos; Gen. Augustin de Iturbide, who defeated the Spaniards and ruled as Mexican emperor from 1822-23; and Gen. Antonio Lopez de Santa Ana, who went on to control Mexican politics from 1833 to 1855.

Santa Ana was Mexico's leader during the conflict with Texas, which declared itself independent from Mexico in 1836, and during Mexico's war with the United States (1846-48). The presidential terms of Benito Juarez (1858-71) were interrupted by the Hapsburg monarchy's rule of Mexico (1864-1867). Archduke Maximilian of Austria, whom Napoleon III of France established as Emperor of Mexico, was deposed by Juarez and executed in 1867. General Porfirio Diaz was President during most of the period between 1877 and 1911.

Mexico's severe social and economic problems erupted in a revolution that lasted from 1910-20 and gave rise to the 1917 constitution. Prominent leaders in this period -- some were rivals for power -- were Francisco I. Madero, Venustiano Carranza, Pancho Villa, Alvaro Obregon, Victoriano Huerta, and Emiliano Zapata.

The Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), formed in 1929 under a different name, continues to be the most important political force in the nation. It emerged as a coalition of interests after the chaos of the Revolution as a vehicle for keeping political competition in peaceful channels. For almost 70 years, Mexico's national government has been controlled by the PRI, which has won every presidential race and most gubernatorial races.

GOVERNMENT

The 1917 constitution provides for a federal republic with powers separated into independent executive, legislative, and judicial branches. In practice, the executive is the dominant branch, with power vested in the president, who promulgates and executes the laws of the Congress. The president also legislates by executive decree in certain economic and financial fields, using powers delegated from the Congress. The president is elected by universal adult suffrage for a six-year term and may not hold office a second time. There is no vice president; in the event of the removal or death of the president, a provisional president is elected by the Congress.

The Congress is composed of a Senate and a Chamber of Deputies. Consecutive re-election is prohibited. Senators are elected to six-year terms. Implementing constitutional changes made in 1996, for the first time on July 6, 1997, 32 of the 128 seats in the Senate will be elected by proportional representation from party lists on a national basis. With this change, some states may have more Senators than others. The 32 Senators elected in 1997 will only serve three-year terms, in order to bring the entire Senate back into the same cycle in the year 2000. Deputies serve three-year terms. In the lower chamber, 300 Deputies are directly elected to represent single-member districts, and 200 are selected by a modified form of proportional representation from five electoral regions created for this purpose across the country. The 200 proportional representation seats were created to help smaller parties gain access to the Chamber.

The judiciary is divided into federal and state court systems, with federal courts having jurisdiction over most civil cases and those involving major felonies. Under the constitution, trial and sentencing must be completed within 12 months of arrest for crimes that would carry at least a two-year sentence. Practice often does not meet this requirement. Trial is by judge, not jury, in most criminal cases. Defendants have a right to counsel, and public defenders are available. Other rights include defense against self-incrimination, the right to confront one's accusers, and the right to a public trial. Supreme Court Justices are appointed by the President and approved by the Senate.

National Security

Mexico's armed forces in 1995 numbered about 175,000. The army makes up about three-fourths of the total. One year of limited training is required of all males at age 18. Principal military roles include national defense, narcotics control, and civic action assignments such as road-building, search and rescue, and disaster relief.

Principal Government Officials

President--Ernesto ZEDILLO Ponce de Leon
Foreign Minister--Jose Angel GURRIA Trevino
Ambassador to the U.S.--Jesus SILVA-HERZOG Flores
Ambassador to the United Nations--Manuel TELLO Macias
Ambassador to the OAS--Carmen MORENO de del Cueto

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Consulates general are located in Chicago, Dallas, Denver, El Paso, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New Orleans, New York, San Antonio, San Diego, and San Francisco; consulates are (partial listing) in Atlanta, Boston, Detroit, Philadelphia, Seattle, St. Louis, and Tucson.

POLITICAL CONDITIONS

Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de Leon was sworn in on December 1, 1994, as the President of Mexico. A trained economist with degrees from Yale, Zedillo served as Secretary of Programming and Budget and Secretary of Education in the Salinas Administration prior to being elected.

President Zedillo continued the process already underway of opening Mexico's political system, reforming the justice system, curtailing corruption, strengthening the fight against narcotics trafficking, and furthering Mexico's market-oriented economic policies. A severe financial crisis occupied much of the Zedillo Administration's attention in 1995-96, creating a need for difficult emergency economic

stabilization policies and intensified longer-term economic restructuring. Significant progress has been achieved in some areas.

Political Scene

Unexpected and traumatic events in early 1994 convulsed the Mexican political scene. In January 1994, peasants in the state of Chiapas briefly took up arms against the government, protesting alleged oppression and governmental indifference to poverty. The government and the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) have negotiated on topics such as granting greater autonomy to indigenous peoples since then, reaching several partial accords. There have been no clashes since the government's unilaterally declared cease-fire in 1994, and the two sides remain committed to a negotiated peace settlement.

In March 1994, PRI presidential candidate Luis Donaldo Colosio was assassinated. In September 1994, PRI Secretary General Jose Francisco Ruiz Massieu was also assassinated. Although the gunmen in both murders and co-conspirators in the Ruiz Massieu murder were tried and convicted, the Mexican public is not satisfied that all the truth behind these crimes has been uncovered.

Investigations into the murders resulted in the apprehensions in February 1995 of a second gunman in the Colosio murder, the arrest of the brother of former president Carlos Salinas as a suspected mastermind behind the second crime, and the filing of charges in March 1995 against the brother of Ruiz Massieu for obstructing investigations into the murder. Additional charges, including illegal enrichment for amassing multi-million dollar fortunes in overseas bank accounts, were filed against both men and investigations were widened to include their associates.

This has led to a flurry of public scandals regarding supposed attempts at obstruction of justice and allegations of major corruption in police, judicial, military and other authorities, as well as big business, including allegations of ties to narcotics trafficking. The atmosphere of scandal around former President Carlos Salinas has turned him into something of an arch-villain in the popular mind.

A new group of uncertain origin and size, the Popular Revolutionary Army (EPR), made its appearance in southern Mexico on June 28, 1996. The Government considers the EPR a terrorist organization and has vowed to bring the group to justice. This and the assassination of senior law enforcement officers by suspected drug traffickers in northern Mexico also has contributed to increased attention and concern over public safety.

Recent Elections and Electoral Reform

A record 78% of registered voters cast ballots in the August 21, 1994, elections. Election officials declared Zedillo of the PRI the winner with 49% of the vote, followed by National Action Party (PAN) candidate Diego Fernandez de Cevallos with 26% and Cuauhtemoc Cardenas of the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) with 17%. Despite isolated incidents of irregularities and problems, there was no evidence of systematic attempts to manipulate the elections or their results, and critics concluded that the irregularities which did occur did not alter the outcome of the presidential vote. Civic organizations fielded more than 80,000 trained electoral observers; foreigners -- many from the United States -- were invited to witness the process, and numerous independent "quick count" operations and exit polls validated the official vote tabulation.

These extraordinary electoral observation measures were needed to overcome public suspicions that electoral fraud might be committed. Over the years, the PRI has relied on extensive patronage and massive government and party organizational resources to maintain its continuance in power. In many cases, the party has been accused of fraud. However, as numerous electoral reforms implemented since 1989 have aided in the further opening of the Mexican political system, opposition parties have made historic gains in elections at all levels. Most of the concerns shifted from fraud to campaign fairness issues.

In 1989, the PAN became the first opposition party to win a state governorship (in Baja California.) The PAN now governs four states: Guanajuato, Baja California, Jalisco, and Chihuahua. The party has also won a number of mayoral races, especially in urban areas. In recent years, however, controversies regarding state electoral results and/or campaign practices in Yucatan, Tabasco and elsewhere have

pointed out the need for electoral practices to catch up with reformed electoral laws in some areas of the country.

During 1995-96 the political parties negotiated constitutional amendments to address electoral campaign fairness issues, which passed unanimously. In these negotiations, the parties were supported by consultations with civic organizations. It proved a disappointment when implementing legislation could not also be passed by consensus due primarily to disagreements over levels of public funding for political parties. The package of laws passed by the PRI majority in congress did include, however, major points of consensus that had been worked out with the opposition parties. The thrust of the new laws is to have public financing predominate over private contributions to political parties, to tighten procedures for auditing the political parties, and to strengthen the authority and independence of electoral institutions.

Even before the new electoral law was passed, opposition parties have obtained an increasing voice in Mexico's political system. While the ruling PRI still has substantial majorities in both houses of the Mexican Congress, 40% of its Chamber of Deputies and 33 of 128 senators were members of opposition parties. The PAN -- the largest opposition group -- rules over 37% of the country at the state and local levels.

The court system was also given greatly expanded authority to hear civil rights cases on electoral matters brought by individuals or groups. In short, a serious effort was made to "level the playing field" for the parties.

On July 6, 1997, all 500 members of the Chamber of Deputies and 32 members of the 128-member Senate will be elected. Also, an election will be held for the first time to choose the Mayor of Mexico City (to be known as the "Chief of Government of the Federal District"). This official was previously appointed by the president. Elections for state governors, state congresses, and/or for town mayors will be held in 11 states.

Other Reforms

To help reorganize the Mexican justice system, President Zedillo appointed as Attorney General a respected member of the opposition PAN party, the first time an opposition member has held a cabinet post in Mexico. (Attorney General Antonio Lozano was dismissed in late 1996 amid controversy regarding investigations into prominent murder and corruption cases.) Constitutional and legal changes were adopted to improve the performance and accountability of the Supreme Court and the Office of the Attorney General and the administration of federal courts. The Supreme Court, relieved of administrative duties for lower courts, was given responsibilities for judicial review of certain categories of law and legislation. A variety of laws was also passed in 1995-96 to help control organized crime.

Although the constitution provides for three branches of government, the Mexican presidency traditionally occupies a dominant position. In order to overcome this "presidentialism," the Zedillo Administration has sought to develop a greater role for the Congress, notably by inviting the participation of a multi-party legislative commission in the Chiapas peace negotiations and seeking congressional approval of the financial assistance package signed by the U.S. and Mexico in February 1995. The judicial reforms mentioned above are in part designed to allow the judicial branch of government to become a more effective counter-weight to the other two branches. The Zedillo Administration has also promoted a "New Federalism" to devolve more power to state and local governments, starting with pilot programs in education and health.

Education

Although educational levels in Mexico have improved substantially in recent decades, the country still faces daunting problems. Education is one of the Government of Mexico's highest priorities and it has increased the education budget 7.2% over 1996 to \$15 billion for 1997 -- one-fourth of the total budget. Education in Mexico is also being decentralized from federal to state authority in order to improve accountability.

Education is mandatory from ages six through 18. The increase in school enrollments during the past two decades has been dramatic. By 1994, an estimated 59% of the population between the ages of six

and 18 were enrolled in school. Primary (including preschool) enrollment in public schools from 1970 through 1994 increased from less than 10 million to 17.5 million. Enrollment at the secondary public school level rose from 1.4 million in 1972 to as many as 4.5 million in 1994. A rapid rise also occurred in higher education. Between 1959 and 1994, college enrollments rose from 62,000 to more than 1.2 million.

Although education spending has risen dramatically, given increased enrollment, a net decline occurred in per student expenditures. The Mexican Government concedes that despite this progress, 2 million children still do not have access to basic education, and hopes to provide access to half of those children by the year 2000.

ECONOMY

Sustained economic growth is vital to Mexico's prospects for a successful evolution to a more competitive democracy. Mexico's level of economic prosperity has a direct, though proportionally smaller impact on the U.S. as it affects trade and migration. In recent years Mexico has sought economic prosperity through liberalization of its trade regime. In January 1994, Mexico joined Canada and the United States in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which will phase out all tariffs over a 15-year period. Four months later, in April 1994, Mexico joined the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Mexico was the first Latin American member of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC), joining in 1993, and in January 1996, became a founding member of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Mexico's NAFTA membership helped the Mexican economy grow by 3.5% in 1994. Following the December 1994 devaluation of the peso, however, Mexico experienced a severe financial crisis that also threatened the stability of other emerging market economies, especially in Latin America.

The United States responded by leading a group of international lenders in making available to Mexico over \$40 billion in international financial assistance, including \$20 billion from the United States. This action helped stabilize the Mexican economy, allowing Mexico to repay the loans to the United States more than three years ahead of schedule and with \$580 million in interest.

In 1996, Mexico's economy grew over 5%, recovering from the recession more briskly than anticipated. Inflation fell, unemployment fell and the peso stabilized. Mexican real GDP is expected to grow about 4% in 1997.

Although the 1995 recession was severe, with real GDP falling 6.2%, tough stabilization measures averted an even more serious collapse and brought about a rapid recovery. NAFTA contributed to the process of adjustment by enabling Mexico to reduce its current account deficit through increased exports rather than through slashing imports from the United States, as it had following the 1982 debt crisis.

Trade

Mexico was the United States third-ranked trading partner in 1996, accounting for 9% of U.S. trade. In 1996, U.S. \$56.8 billion in exports to Mexico were almost equal to our exports to Japan, even though the Mexican economy is just one-seventh the size of Japan's. The United States was Mexico's predominant trading partner, accounting for 84% of Mexican exports and 76% of Mexican imports. The chief U.S. exports to Mexico were motor vehicle parts, office equipment, and agricultural products; the top imports from Mexico included petroleum, cars and coffee. The United States in 1996 was the source of 60% of all direct foreign investment in Mexico.

U.S.-Mexico trade increased during NAFTA's first three years. In 1996, U.S. exports to Mexico were up 36% and U.S. imports from Mexico were up 80% over 1993 levels. Cyclical economic factors, rather than NAFTA, caused a trade deficit in 1995 and 1996; strong growth in U.S. demand, along with the Mexican recession and devaluation of the peso, increased U.S. imports while slowing growth in U.S. exports.

NAFTA eliminates restrictions on the flow of goods, services, and investment in North America. In addition to phasing out tariffs, NAFTA eliminates, as far as possible, non-tariff barriers and promotes

safeguards for intellectual property rights -- patents, copyrights, and trademarks. The pact also includes provisions on trade rules and dispute settlement, and its parallel labor agreement seeks to ensure full protection of workers' rights.

Through its supplemental environmental cooperation agreement, NAFTA marked the first time in the history of U.S. trade policy that environmental concerns have been addressed in a comprehensive trade agreement. The pact also serves as a basis for enhancing ongoing U.S.-Mexico cooperation on a host of other issues that do not respect national borders.

Agriculture

Mexico's agrarian reform program began in 1917, when the government began distribution of land to farmers. Extended further in the 1930s, this cooperative agrarian reform, which guaranteed small farmers a means of subsistence livelihood, also caused land fragmentation and lack of capital investment, since commonly held land could not be used as collateral. This, combined with poor soil, several recent years of low rainfall, and rural population growth, has made it difficult to raise the productivity and living standards of Mexico's subsistence farmers.

Mexico's agricultural sector continues to experience heavy debt problems, even as the government seeks to foster a shift to a market-oriented and competitive farming industry. High interest rates for loans have compounded the difficulty for producers, and the 1994 peso crisis exacerbated the decline in productivity. According to the Mexican Government's office of statistics, agriculture accounted for 5.8% of GDP in 1996.

In an effort to raise rural productivity and living standards, Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution was amended in 1992 to allow for the transfer of communal land to the farmers cultivating it. They then could rent or sell it, opening the way for larger farms and economies of scale. By early 1996, however, only six farmers' cooperatives had voted to disincorporate. Since communal land use is formally reviewed only every two years, privatization of these communal lands may continue to be very slow.

In the past, the government encouraged production of basic crops such as corn and beans by maintaining support prices. In order to rationalize its agricultural sector, Mexico is phasing out its support price scheme. Corn production dropped in 1995 and 1996 as more was imported. The government in 1996 crafted federal-to-state agreements targeted at each states' most urgent needs, with the goal of increasing the use of modern equipment and technology in order to increase per-acre productivity.

In addition to this new initiative, the government is continuing PROCAMPO, the rural support program which provides the approximately 3.5 million farmers who produce basic commodities - about 64% of all farmers - with a fixed payment per hectare of cropland.

Manufacturing and Foreign Investment

Mexico's manufacturing sector in 1996 accounted for 22% of the GDP and 21% of employment in the formal urban economy. Manufacturing grew 11% after having declined 5% during Mexico's recession in 1995.

The industrial sector as a whole, which along with manufacturing includes construction, electricity and mining, grew 10% in 1996, following a drop of 8% in 1995. Construction rebounded with 11% growth after declining 23% in 1996.

In December 1993, Mexico passed a new foreign investment law which promotes competitiveness and established clear rules for the entry of international capital into productive activities. The law also permits foreigners to own non-residential property in the "restricted zones" - within 100 kilometers (62 miles) of the border and 50 kilometers of the coasts. Residential property in these zones still must be acquired via a trust through a Mexican financial institution. Total new direct foreign investment in 1995 was \$7 billion, down from \$11 billion in 1994. Direct foreign investment of at least \$8 billion is widely expected to have taken place in 1996, although the final tallies have not been released.

Transportation and Communications

The Zedillo Administration is continuing the previous government's modernization of infrastructure and

services, deregulation and development of more efficient transport systems, and increased privatization. Mexico's land transportation network is one of the most extensive in Latin America. More than 4,000 kilometers (2,400 miles) of four-lane highway have been built through government concessions to private sector contractors since 1989. The 36,000 kilometers (22,000 miles) of government-owned railroads in Mexico are currently being privatized through sale of 50-year operating concessions. The Northeast railroad, Mexico's primary freight carrier, was privatized early in 1997 for \$1.4 billion. Another significant section, the Northwest railroad, will be privatized by mid-1997.

Tampico and Veracruz, on the Gulf of Mexico, are Mexico's two primary seaports. Recognizing that the low productivity of Mexico's 79 ports poses a threat to trade development, the government has steadily been privatizing port operations to improve their efficiency.

A number of international airlines serve Mexico, with direct or connecting flights from most major cities in the United States, Canada, Europe, Japan, and Latin America. Most Mexican regional capitals and resorts have direct air service to Mexico City or the United States. Airport privatization, based on the successful experience with ports, should begin by the end of 1997.

Mexico has taken significant steps to modernize its telecommunications system. A key element was the privatization in 1990 of the national telephone company, Telefonos de Mexico (TELMEX), which was sold to a consortium of Mexican investors, Southwestern Bell, and France Telcom. This privatization has meant an increased rate of infrastructure enhancement. In addition, eight regional companies are providing cellular telephone service to various parts of Mexico, resulting in a dramatic expansion of cellular telephone users. Two larger communications satellites have been ordered to replace the two now in use. The government has also opened the telecommunications sector to greater foreign investment. Starting in 1997, long-distance telecommunications service will be a much more competitive industry in Mexico, with nine consortia (two of them having significant fiber optic systems of their own) giving Telmex strong competition for the customer base.

FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Government of Mexico has sought to maintain its interests abroad and project its influence largely through moral persuasion. In particular, Mexico champions the principles of non-intervention and self-determination. In its efforts to revitalize its economy and open up to international competition, Mexico has sought closer relations with the U.S., Western Europe, and the Pacific Basin. While the United States and Mexico are often in agreement on foreign policy issues, some differences remain--in particular, relations with Cuba. The U.S. and Mexico agree on the ultimate goal of establishing a democratic, free-market regime in Cuba but disagree on tactics to reach that goal.

Mexico actively participates in several international organizations. It is a supporter of the United Nations and Organization of American States systems and also pursues its interests through a number of ad hoc international bodies. Mexico has been selective in its membership in other international organizations. It declined, for example, to become a member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries. Nevertheless, Mexico does seek to diversify its diplomatic and economic relations, as demonstrated by its accession to GATT in 1986; its joining APEC in 1993; becoming, in April 1994, the first Latin American member of the OECD; and a founding member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1996. Mexico attended the 1994 Summit of the Americas, held in Miami, and agreed to assume responsibility for coordination of the agenda item on education.

U.S.-MEXICAN RELATIONS

U.S. relations with Mexico are as important and complex as with any country in the world. A stable, democratic and economically prosperous Mexico is fundamental to U.S. interests. Our relations with Mexico have a direct impact on the lives and livelihoods of millions of Americans -- whether the issue is trade and economic reform, drug control, migration, or the promotion of democracy. The U.S. and Mexico are partners in NAFTA, and enjoy a rapidly developing trade relationship.

The scope of U.S.-Mexican relations goes far beyond diplomatic and official contacts; it entails extensive commercial, cultural, and educational ties, as demonstrated by the nearly 290 million legal

crossings from Mexico to the United States in fiscal year 1995. In addition, more than half a million American citizens live in Mexico. More than 2,600 U.S. companies have operations there, and the U.S. accounts for 60% of all foreign direct investment in Mexico. Along the 2,000-mile shared border, state and local governments interact closely.

Since 1981, the management of the broad array of U.S.-Mexico issues has been formalized in the U.S.-Mexico Binational Commission, composed of numerous U.S. cabinet members and their Mexican counterparts. The Commission holds annual plenary meetings, and many sub-groups meet during the course of the year to discuss trade and investment opportunities, financial cooperation, consular issues and migration, legal affairs and anti-narcotics cooperation, cultural relations, education, energy, border cooperation, environment, labor, agriculture, health, housing and urban development, transportation, fisheries, tourism, and science and technology.

A strong partnership with Mexico is critical to controlling the flow of illicit drugs into the United States. The U.S. has certified Mexico as fully cooperating in this effort based on an unprecedented level of cooperation on counternarcotics and Mexico's own initiatives in fighting drug trafficking. This is the best way to ensure that Mexico's cooperation and anti-drug efforts grow even stronger.

During 1996, the U.S. and Mexico established a High-Level Contact Group (HLCG) on narcotics control to explore joint solutions to the shared drug threat, to coordinate the full range of narcotics issues and to promote closer law enforcement coordination.

The United States and Mexico have a long history of cooperation on environmental and natural resources issues, particularly in the border area, where there are serious environmental problems caused by rapid population growth, urbanization, and industrialization. Cooperative activities between the U.S. and Mexico take place under a number of agreements such as:

A 1944 treaty creating the International Boundary and Water Commission, which has a wide range of responsibilities for solving U.S.-Mexico water and boundary problems such as distributing the waters of the Colorado River and the Rio Grande between the two countries; jointly operating international dams and other joint flood control works along boundary rivers; and solving border water quality control problems. Since the early 1980's the IBWC has focused on border sanitation and groundwater resources.

The 1983 La Paz Agreement to Protect and Improve the Border Environment.

The 1993 North American Commission on Environmental Cooperation, created under NAFTA by the U.S., Mexico, and Canada, to strengthen environmental laws and address common environmental concerns; and

A November 1993 agreement between the U.S. and Mexico, also under NAFTA, establishing the Border Environmental Cooperation Commission (BECC) which works with local communities to build or upgrade environmental infrastructure such as wastewater treatment plants, drinking water systems, and solid waste disposal facilities; and the North American Development Bank (NADBANK), which leverages private sector capital to finance border environmental infrastructure projects certified by the BECC.

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Information Sheets. Travel Warnings are issued when the State Department recommends that Americans avoid travel to a certain country. **Consular Information Sheets** exist for all countries and include information on immigration practices, currency regulations, health conditions, areas of instability, crime and security, political disturbances, and the addresses of the U.S. posts in the country. **Public Announcements** are issued as a means to disseminate information quickly about terrorist threats and other relatively short-term conditions overseas which pose significant risks to the security of American travelers. Free copies of this information are available by calling the Bureau of Consular Affairs at 202-647-5225 or via the fax-on-demand system: 202-647-3000. Travel Warnings and Consular Information Sheets also are available on the Consular Affairs Internet home page: <http://travel.state.gov> and the **Consular Affairs Bulletin Board (CABB)**. To access CABB, dial the modem number: (301-946-4400 (it will accommodate up to 33,600 bps), set terminal communications program to N-8-1 (no parity, 8 bits, 1 stop bit); and terminal emulation to VT100. The login is **travel** and the password is **info** (Note: Lower case is required). The CABB also carries international security information from the Overseas Security Advisory Council and Department's Bureau of Diplomatic Security. Consular Affairs Trips for Travelers publication series, which contain information on obtaining passports and planning a safe trip abroad, can be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250-7954; telephone: 202-512-1800; fax 202-512-2250.

Emergency information concerning Americans traveling abroad may be obtained from the Office of Overseas Citizens Services at (202) 647-5225. For after-hours emergencies, Sundays and holidays, call 202-647-4000.

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Travelers can check the **latest health information** with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, Georgia. A hotline at (404) 332-4559 gives the most recent health advisories, immunization recommendations or requirements, and advice on food and drinking water safety for regions and countries. A booklet entitled *Health Information for International Travel* (HHS publication number CDC-95-8280) is available from the U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402, tel. (202) 512-1800.

Information on **travel conditions, visa requirements, currency and customs regulations, legal holidays, and other items of interest to travelers** also may be obtained before your departure from a country's embassy and/or consulates in the U.S. (for this country, see "Principal Government Officials" listing in this publication).

U.S. citizens who are long-term visitors or traveling in dangerous areas, are encouraged to register at the U.S. embassy upon arrival in a country (see "Principal U.S. Embassy Officials" listing in this publication). This may help family members contact you in case of an emergency.

Further Electronic Information:

Department of State Foreign Affairs Network. Available on the Internet, DOSFAN provides timely, global access to official U.S. foreign policy information. Updated daily, DOSFAN includes *Background Notes*; *Dispatch*, the official weekly magazine of U.S. foreign policy; daily press briefings; directories of key officers of foreign service posts; etc. DOSFAN's World Wide Web site is at <http://www.state.gov>; this site has a link to the DOSFAN Gopher Research Collection, which also is accessible at <gopher://gopher.state.gov>.

U.S. Foreign Affairs on CD-ROM (USFAC). Published on a quarterly basis by the U.S. Department of State, USFAC archives information on the Department of State Foreign Affairs Network, and includes an array of official foreign policy information from 1990 to the present. Priced at \$76 (\$95 foreign), one-year subscriptions (MSDOS and Macintosh compatible) are available from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250-7954. To order, call (202) 512-1800 or fax (202) 512-2250.

2 Mexico City

Two volcanoes and a pyramid complex flank Mexico's capital, once the center of Aztec civilization and now the country's cosmopolitan business, art, and culinary hub. From the Alameda, a leafy center of activity since Aztec times, to the Zona Rosa, a chic shopping neighborhood, Mexico City offers endless options to urban adventurers. Day trips might include colonial Puebla, where mole sauce and Talavera tiles originated, or the floating gardens of Xochomilco.

By Frank
"Pancho" Shiell

Updated by
Patricia Alisau

MEXICO CITY is a city of superlatives: It is both the oldest (670 years) and the highest (2,240 meters, or 7,349 feet) city on the North American continent, and with nearly 24 million inhabitants, it is the most populous city in the world. It is Mexico's cultural, political, and financial core—on the verge of the 21st century but clinging to its deeply entrenched Aztec heritage.

Before the 16th-century arrival of the conquering Spaniards, Mexico City was the flourishing capital of the Aztec civilization. Well over 500 years after the mysterious demise of the great city of Teotihuacan—whose gargantuan pyramids just northeast of the city are a must-see—wandering Aztecs in search of their prophesied promised land would build their city upon encountering an eagle, perched on a prickly pear cactus, holding a snake in his beak. In 1325, the official date of the founding of Mexico City (upon which historians disagree), they discovered it on this very spot. Called Tenochtitlan, even then it was the biggest city in the Western Hemisphere and, according to historians, one of the three largest cities on earth. Tenochtitlan occupied what was then an island in shallow Lake Texcoco, connected to lakeshore satellite towns (now neighborhoods) by a network of *calzadas* (canals and causeways; now freeways). When he first laid eyes on the city, Spanish conquistador Hernán Cortés was dazzled by the glistening metropolis, which reminded him and his men of Venice.

A combination of factors made the conquest possible. The superstitious Aztec emperor Moctezuma II believed the white, bearded Cortés on horseback to be the mighty plumed serpent-god Quetzalcoatl, who, according to a tragically ironic prophesy, was supposed to arrive from the east in the year 1519 to rule the land. Moctezuma therefore welcomed the foreigner with gifts of gold and palatial accommodations.

But in return, Cortés initiated the bloody massacre of Tenochtitlan, which lasted almost two years. Joining forces with him was a massive army of Indian "allies," gathered from other settlements like Cholula and Tlaxcala, who were fed up with the Aztec Empire's domination and taxation. With the strength of their numbers and the European tactical advantages of brigantines built to cross the lake; imported horses, firearms, and armor; and, inadvertently, smallpox and the common cold, Cortés succeeded in devastating Tenochtitlan. Only two centuries after it was founded, the young Aztec capital lay in ruins, about half of its population dead from battle, starvation, and contagious European diseases to which they had no immunity.

Cortés began building the capital of what he patriotically dubbed New Spain, the Spanish Empire's colony that would spread north to cover what is now the United States southwest and south to Panama. Because he had difficulty pronouncing the word Tenochtitlan, he named the city Mexica (Meh-she-ka), which was the real name of the Aztecs (the Spaniards were the ones who had originally dubbed the Mexica Indians "Aztecs"). At the site of the demolished Aztec ceremonial center—now the 10-acre Zócalo—he started building a church (the precursor of the gigantic Metropolitan Cathedral), mansions, and government buildings. He utilized the slave labor—and artistry—of the vanquished native Mexicans. On top of the ruins of their city, and using rubble from it, they were forced to build what became the most European-style city in North America, but unlike the random layout

cated grid pattern of the Aztecs. The Spaniards also drained and filled in Lake Texcoco, preferring wheels and horses (which they introduced to Mexico) over canals and canoes for transport. (The filled-in lake bed turned out to be a soggy support for the immense buildings that have been slowly sinking into it ever since they were built.) For much of the construction material they quarried local volcanic porous stone called *tezontle*, which is the color of dried blood and forms the thick walls of many historic downtown buildings.

During the colonial period, the city grew, and the Franciscans converted the Aztecs to Christianity. In 1571 the Spaniards established the Inquisition in New Spain and burned heretics at its headquarter palace, which still stands in Plaza de Santo Domingo.

More than 200 years later, Mexicans rose up against Spain. The historic downtown street 16 de Septiembre commemorates the "declaration" of the War of Independence. On that date in 1810, Father Miguel Hidalgo rang a church bell and cried out his history-making *grito* (shout) to his countrymen "to recover the lands stolen three centuries ago from our forefathers by the hated Spaniards . . . Viva Mexico!" That "liberty bell," which now hangs above the main entrance to the National Palace, is rung on the eve of every September 16 by the president of the republic.

Today, travelers flying into or out of Mexico City get an aerial view of the still-remaining portion of Lake Texcoco on the eastern outskirts of the city; at night the vast expanse of city lights abruptly ends at a black void that appears to be an ocean.

In-flight views also provide a panorama of the vast, flat 1,482-square-kilometer (572-square-mile) Valley of Mexico, the *Meseta de Anahuac*, completely surrounded by mountains, including, on its south side, two supposedly extinct and usually snowcapped volcanoes, both well over 17,000 feet high: Popocatepetl and Iztaccihuatl. ("Popo," as the first volcano is affectionately called, started to bubble and boil in December 1994, and villages surrounding the volcano had to be evacuated temporarily.) The volcanoes are separated by the 2½-mile-high Cortés Pass, from which the arriving conquistador, after a nine-month trek from Veracruz, gazed down for his first astonishing glimpse of Tenochtitlan.

Unfortunately, the single most widely known fact about the capital is that its air is polluted. Many foreigners envision the city as being wrapped in black smog every day; they picture gray skies and streets packed with vehicles. But in reality, although the capital does have a serious pollution problem, it also has some of the clearest, bluest skies anywhere. At 7,349 feet, it often has mild daytime weather perfect for sightseeing and cool evenings comfortable for sleeping. Mornings can be glorious—chilly, and bright with the promise of the warming sun.

Smog is not the only thing Mexico City has in common with Los Angeles: The city lies on a fault similar to the San Andreas in California. In 1957 a major earthquake took a tragic toll, and scars are still visible from the devastating 1985 earthquake (8.1 on the Richter scale); the government reported 7,000 deaths, but according to vox populi the death toll reached 50,000.

Growing nonstop, Mexico City covers about a 1,000-square-kilometer (386-square-mile) area of the valley. The city limits are surrounded on three sides by the state of Mexico and bordered on the south by the state of Morelos. Advertising campaigns and tour pack-

ruins, but cosmopolitan, historic Mexico City is an important destination in itself, more foreign and fascinating than many major capitals on far-away continents. And since so many flights from the United States pass through the capital, visitors should not pass up the opportunity to stop here at least for two days but preferably for five.

EXPLORING

Orientation

Most of Mexico City is aligned around two major intersecting thoroughfares: Paseo de la Reforma and Avenida Insurgentes. Administratively, the city is divided into 16 *delegaciones* (districts) and about 400 colonias each with street names fitting a given theme, such as rivers, philosophers, doctors, or revolutionary heroes. The same street can change names as it goes through different colonias, making it a bit more difficult to find an address. Hence most street addresses include the colonia they are in, and, unless you're going to an obvious place, it is very important to tell your taxi driver the name of the colonia.

The principal sights of Mexico City are organized into three tours. You need a full day to cover each thoroughly, though each can be done at breakneck speed in four or five hours. Tour 1, Zócalo and Alameda Park, concentrates on a relatively compact area that can be seen on foot. Its focus is historical, since the Zócalo, its surrounding Centro Histórico, and Alameda Park were the heart of both the Aztec and the Spanish cities. The second tour, taking in Reforma, Zona Rosa, and Chapultepec Park, will necessitate some form of transportation if done in its entirety, but strong walkers can cover most of it on their own. Exploring San Angel and Coyoacán in southern Mexico City will also require a taxi ride or two. Originally separate colonial towns, both were absorbed by the ever-growing capital, yet they retain their original pueblo charm and tranquility.

Tour 1: Zócalo and Alameda Central

Numbers in the margin correspond to points of interest on the Zócalo and Alameda Central map.

The **Zócalo** (formal name: **Plaza de la Constitución**) of Mexico City was built by the Spaniards on the site of the main temple complex of Tenochtitlan, the capital of the Aztec empire. This enormous paved square, the largest in the Western Hemisphere, was built by Indian slave labor on the site of the Aztec ceremonial center, which once comprised 78 buildings. Throughout the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries, the Spaniards and their descendants constructed elaborate churches and convents, elegant mansions, and stately public edifices, many of which have long since been converted to other uses. There is an air of Old Europe to this section of the city, which, in its entirety (the Centro Histórico), is a national monument that has been undergoing a major refurbishing; at press time much had already been accomplished and even more was underway. Imposing buildings are constructed with the ubiquitous blood-red volcanic *tezontle* stone and the quarry stones that the Spaniards recycled from the rubble of the Aztec temples they razed. Throngs of small shops, eateries, cantinas, and street vendors contribute to an inimitably Mexican flavor, even an exuberance. Repaved, pedestrian-only streets, such as La Palma and Motolinia, add to the delightful strolling opportunities.

During the daytime, the downtown area is filled with people and vibrant with activity. As in any other big city, travelers should be alert to pickpockets, especially on crowded buses and subways, and avoid dark, deserted streets at night.

Zócalo means "pedestal" or "base": In the mid-19th century an independence monument was envisioned for the square, but it was never built. The term stuck, however, and now the word **zócalo** is applied to the main plazas of most Mexican cities. Mexico City's Zócalo (since it's the original, it is always capitalized) is used for government rallies, protest marches and sit-ins, and festive events. It is also the focal point for Independence Day celebrations on the eve of September 16 and is spectacularly festooned during the Christmas–New Year holiday season. Flag-raising and -lowering ceremonies take place here in the early morning and late afternoon.

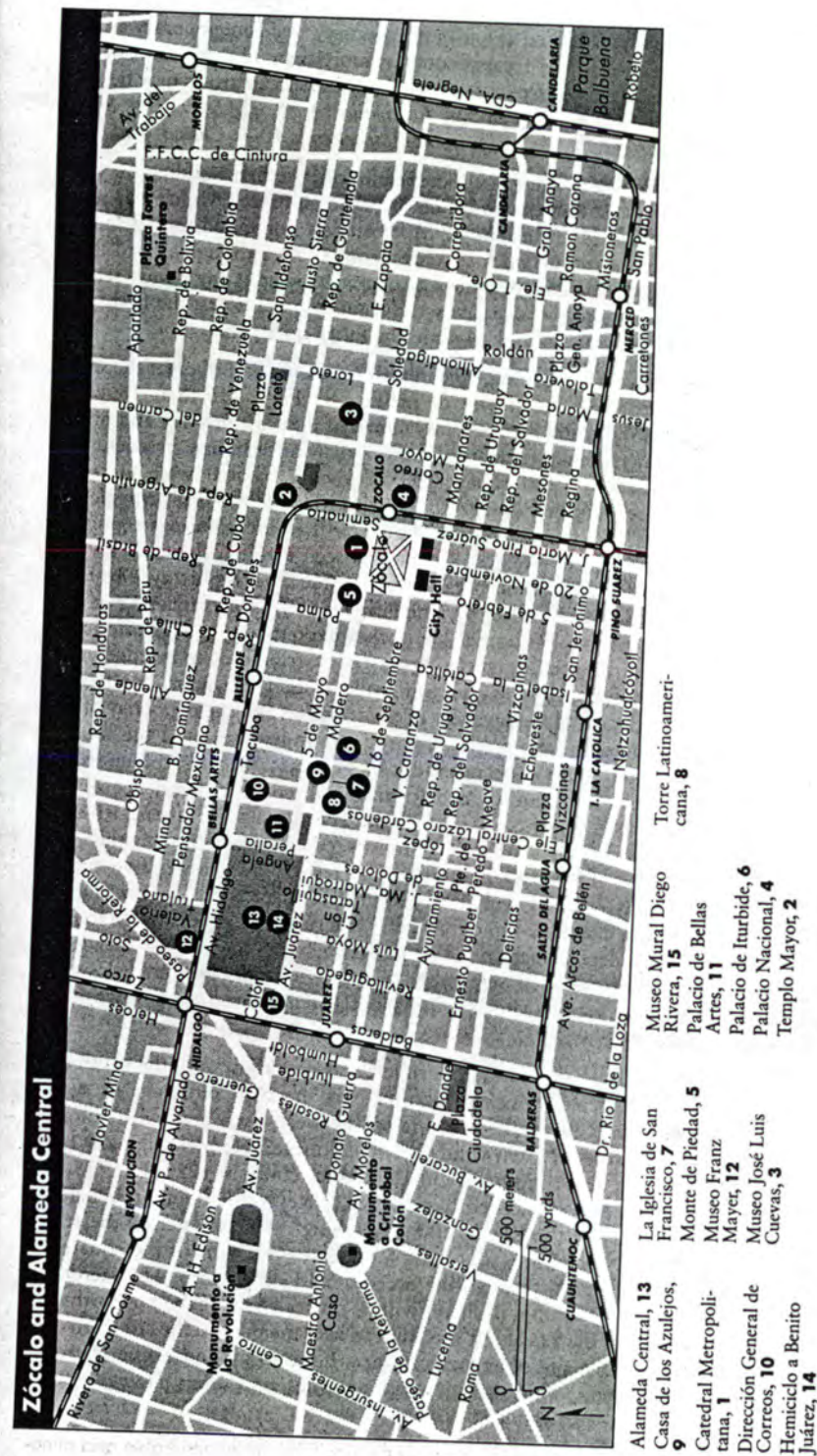
1 Around the square are the two most important symbols of church and state in Mexico. On the north side is the **Catedral Metropolitana** (Metropolitan Cathedral), which, over the centuries, has sunk noticeably into the spongy subsoil. Its lopsidedness is evident when viewed from across the square, but engineering projects to stabilize the structure are always being undertaken. Construction on this oldest and largest cathedral in Latin America began in 1573 and continued intermittently throughout the next three centuries. The result is a medley of baroque and neoclassical touches. Inside are four identical domes, their airiness made earthbound by rows of supportive columns. There are five altars and 14 chapels, mostly in the fussy, Churrigueresque style, an extremely decorative form of Spanish Baroque from the mid-17th century. Like most Mexican churches, the cathedral is all but overshadowed by the innumerable paintings, altarpieces, and statues—in graphic color—of Christ and the saints.

Adjacent to the cathedral, the comparatively small 18th-century **Sagrario Church**, even more tilted, has an elaborate Churrigueresque facade.

2 Turn left as you leave the cathedral and walk one block north on Seminario to view the excavated ruins of the **Templo Mayor** (Great Temple of the Aztecs). It was unearthed accidentally in 1978 by telephone repairmen and has since been turned into a vast and historically significant archaeological site and museum. At this temple, dedicated to the Aztec cult of death, captives from rival tribes—as many as 10,000 at a time—were sacrificed to the bloodthirsty god of war, Huitzilopochtli. Seven rows of leering stone skulls adorn one side of the structure.

The adjacent **Museo del Templo Mayor** contains 3,000 pieces unearthed from the site and from other ruins in central Mexico; they include ceramic warriors, stone carvings and knives, skulls of sacrificial victims, a rare gold ingot, models and scale reproductions, and a room on the destruction of Tenochtitlan by the Spaniards. The centerpiece is an eight-ton disk discovered at the Templo Mayor; it depicts the myth of the goddess Coyolxauhqui (the moon), who was decapitated and dismembered by her brother, Huitzilopochtli, for trying to persuade her 400 other brothers to murder their mother. *Corner of Guatemala and Argentina.* • \$3. ☺ Tues.–Sun. 9–6. Call ☎ 5/542-4784 to 4786 to reserve English-language tours.

3 As you return to the Zocalo on Seminario, make a quick detour one block east to Calle Academia and the **Museo José Luis Cuevas**. One of



Cuevas, who is ranked as one of the country's best contemporary artists. The sensational Sala Picasso contains more than 30 original works by the Spanish master. Up-and-coming Latin American artists may be seen at rotating temporary exhibits. *Academia 13*, ☎ 5/542-8959. • *Small admission fee.* ☺ *Weekdays noon-8, weekends 10-6. Closed Wed.*

- ★ 4 As you return to the Zócalo on Seminario, the first building on your left is the vast **Palacio Nacional**, or National Palace, which was initiated by Cortés on the site of Moctezuma's home and remodeled by the viceroys; its current form dates from 1693, although a third floor was added in 1926. Now the seat of government, it has always served as a public-function site. In fact, during colonial times, the first bullfight in New Spain took place in the inner courtyard.

Diego Rivera's sweeping, epic murals on the second floor of the main courtyard have the power to mesmerize. For more than 16 years (1929-45), he and his assistants mounted the scaffolds day and night, perfecting techniques adapted from Renaissance Italian frescoes. The result, nearly 1,200 square feet of vividly painted wall space, is grandiosely entitled *Epic of the Mexican People in Their Struggle for Freedom and Independence*. The larger-than-life paintings represent two millennia of Mexican history, as seen through the artist's vivid imagination. The innocence of pre-Hispanic times is portrayed by idyllic, almost sugary scenes of Tenochtitlan. Only a few vignettes—a lascivious woman baring her leg in the marketplace, a man offering a human arm for sale, and the carnage of warriors—acknowledge other aspects of ancient life. As you walk around the floor, you'll pass images depicting the savagery of the conquest and the hypocrisy of the Spanish priests, the noble independence movement, and the bloody revolution. Marx appears amid scenes of class struggles, toiling workers, industrialization (which Rivera idealized), the decadence of the bourgeoisie, and nuclear holocaust. The murals are among Rivera's finest works. They are also the most accessible and probably the most visited of the artist's paintings. The palace also houses two minor museums—dealing with 19th-century president Benito Juárez and the Mexican Congress—and the liberty bell rung by Padre Hidalgo to proclaim independence in 1810 hangs high on the central facade. It chimes every eve of September 16, while from the balcony below, the president repeats the historic shout for independence known as *el grito*. • *Free.* ☺ *Daily 9-5. Closed holidays.*

As you leave the building turn left and then right onto the south side of the Zócalo, which is occupied by the twin buildings of **Ayuntamiento** (City Hall). The one on the west, decorated with colonial tiles of arms of Cortés and other conquistadores, was originally built in 1532, destroyed by fire in 1692, and rebuilt in 1722. In 1935, the Distrito Federal needed more office space; to maintain architectural symmetry in the Zócalo, the "matching" structure across the street (20 de Noviembre) was built. Complete your tour of the square by heading north, through the arcade, on 5 de Febrero. The **Monte de Piedad** (Mountain of Piety) will be on your left, at the far northwest corner of the Zócalo. It was built to help the poor in the late 18th century on the site of an Aztec palace. It currently houses the National Pawn Shop, which sells jewelry, antiques, and other pawned goods. ☺ *Mon.-Sat. about 10-7.*

TIME OUT At Cinco de Mayo 10 is one of Mexico City's most venerable and atmospheric cantinas, **Bar la Opera** (☎ 5/512-8959). The bar-restaurant

still see it); and it was one of the first cantinas to allow women. Stop in for a drink, lunch, dinner, or a snack.

There are two notable sites one block north of Cinco de Mayo on Calle Tacuba at the **Plaza Manuel Tolsá**: the **Palacio de Minería**, a 19th-century architectural landmark; and the neo-classical **Museo Nacional de Arte** (National Art Museum), which contains a superb collection of religious and contemporary artwork. *The museum is at Calle Tacuba 8*, ☎ 5/512-3224. • \$2. ☺ *Tues.-Sun. 10-5.*

From Calle Tacuba, walk two blocks south to Calle Madero, one of the city's busiest and most typical streets in terms of its architectural variety. On the south side of Calle Madero, between Bolívar and Gante, is the **Palacio de Iturbide** (Emperor Iturbide's Palace), which has been converted into a branch of Banamex (Banco Nacional de México). This handsome Baroque structure—note the imposing door and its carved-stone trimmings—was built in 1780 and became the residence of Iturbide in 1822. One of the heroes of the independence movement, the misguided Iturbide proclaimed himself emperor of a country that had thrown off the imperial yoke of the Hapsburgs only a year before; his empire, needless to say, was short-lived. Major cultural exhibitions are held in the atrium. *Calle Madero 17*, ☎ 5/518-2187. • *Free.* ☺ *Inner atrium: weekdays 9-6, and on weekends during exhibitions.*

- 7 **La Iglesia de San Francisco**, built on the site of Mexico's first convent (1524), is located a block west of the palace, on the same side of Calle Madero. Moctezuma's zoo was supposed to have stood on the site in Aztec times. The present 18th-century French Gothic church is one of the newest buildings on the street. The beautiful ceiling paintings are being restored.
- 8 In stark contrast to the church is the **Torre Latinoamericana** (Latin American Tower), once the tallest building in the capital. This 47-story skyscraper was built in 1956, and on clear days the observation deck and restaurant on the top floors afford fine views of the city. *Calle Madero and Eje Central Lázaro Cárdenas*. • \$3. ☺ *Observation deck: daily 10 AM-11:30 PM.*

- 9 Three other interesting buildings are off Eje Central Lázaro Cárdenas, a main thoroughfare. The 17th-century **Casa de los Azulejos** (House of Tiles) is catercorner from the tower, on the north side of Calle Madero at the corner of Callejón de la Condesa. Its well-preserved facade of white, blue, and yellow tiles, iron grillwork balconies, and gray stonework make it among the prettiest Baroque structures in the country. Currently occupied by Sanborns, a chain store/restaurant, it was built as the palace of the counts of the Valle de Orizaba, an aristocratic family from early Spanish rule. Reopened in March 1995 following refurbishing, the interior is more dazzling than ever. A Moorish patio, a monumental staircase, and a mural by Orozco are worth seeing. This is a good place to stop for lunch, and the shops upstairs have an excellent selection of jewelry and crafts at fair prices. *Calle Madero 4*. ☺ *Daily 8 AM-10 PM.*

- 10 Continue north on Callejón de la Condesa to the **Dirección General de Correos** (General Post Office) at the corner of Calle Tacuba and Eje Central Lázaro Cárdenas. This neo-Renaissance building (1908) epitomizes the grand imitations of European architecture common in Mexico during the Porfiriato, or dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz (1876-1910). On the corner of Calle Tacuba and Eje Central Lázaro Cárdenas, the neo-Renaissance building (1908) epitomizes the grand imitations of European architecture common in Mexico during the Porfiriato, or dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz (1876-1910).

the postal history of Mexico. ☺ *Mon.–Sat. 8 AM–midnight, Sun. 8–4.* *Museum: Weekdays 9–7. Free.*

- ★ 11 The most celebrated public building of the Díaz period is the **Palacio de Bellas Artes** (Fine Arts Palace), which is diagonally across from the post office, at the corner of Eje Central Lázaro Cárdenas and Avenida Juárez and across from Alameda Park. This colossal marble palace was constructed as an opera house between 1904 and 1934, with time out for the revolution. Today the theater serves as a handsome venue for international and national artists, including such groups as the Ballet Folklórico de México. It boasts a Tiffany stained-glass curtain depicting the two volcanoes outside Mexico City. In addition, the palace is renowned both for its architecture—by the Italian architect Adamo Boari, who also designed the post office—and for its paintings by several celebrated Mexican artists, including Rufino Tamayo and Mexico's trio of muralists: Rivera, Orozco, and Siqueiros. In the palace Rivera reconstructed his mural *Man at the Crossroads*, which was commissioned for and then torn down from Rockefeller Center in New York City, because of its political message (epitomized by the face of Lenin). Temporary art exhibits are also held at the palace. ☎ 5/510-1388. ☺ *Tues.–Sun. 10:30–6:30.*
- 12 Aficionados of colonial Spanish decorative and applied arts should detour at this point to visit the **Museo Franz Mayer**, located one block west of the rear of the Palacio de Bellas Artes, facing the north side of Alameda Park. The museum opened in 1986 in the 16th-century Hospital de San Juan de Dios. Exhibits include 16th- and 17th-century antiques such as wooden chests inlaid with ivory, tortoiseshell, and ebony; tapestries, paintings, and lacquerware; Rococo clocks, glassware, architectural ornamentation; and an unusually large assortment of Talavera ceramics and tiles. Wall plaques explain in detail the history of the production of tiles (*azulejos*), a technique carried from Mesopotamia and Egypt to the Persians, Arabs, and Spaniards, who brought it to Mexico. It also has an impressive collection of more than 700 different editions of the book *Don Quixote*. The museum building is faithfully restored, with pieces of the original frescoes peeking through; classical music plays in the background. *Av. Hidalgo 45, at the Plaza Santa Veracruz, ☎ 5/518-2267. \$1.25. ☺ Tues.–Sun. 10–5. Call ahead for an English-speaking guide.*
- 13 **Alameda Central** (Alameda Park), across Avenida Hidalgo from the Plaza Santa Veracruz, has been one of the capital's oases of greenery and a center for activities since Aztec times. The Indians held their *tianguis* (market) on the site. In the early days of the Viceroyalty, it was where victims of the Inquisition were burned at the stake. National leaders, from 18th-century viceroys to Emperor Maximilian and President Díaz, clearly envisioned the park as a symbol of civic pride and prosperity: Over the centuries, it has been endowed with fountains, railings, a Moorish kiosk imported from Paris, and ash, willow, and poplar trees. Its most conspicuous man-made structure is the white marble semicircular **Hemiciclo a Benito Juárez** (monument to Juárez) on the Avenida Juárez side of the park. It is a fine place for strolling (and resting) and listening to live music on Sundays and holidays.
- 15 **Fonart**, the government-owned handicrafts chain, has a store at Avenida Juárez 89, just west of the park (see Shopping, below). At the far western side of the Alameda is **Museo Mural Diego Rivera**, built to display Diego Rivera's controversial mural *Sunday Afternoon Dream* in Alameda Park, originally painted on a lobby wall of the Hotel

tion, "God does not exist," which he later replaced with the bland "Conference of San Juan de Letrán." Following the hotel's destruction in the 1985 earthquake, this gentle and poetic mural, which survived undamaged, was moved in its entirety across the street to the museum built to house it. *Museo Mural Diego Rivera, at Calles Balderas and Colón, ☎ 5/510-2329. \$2. ☺ Tues.–Sun. 10–6.*

Tour 2: Reforma, Zona Rosa, and Chapultepec Park

Numbers in the margin correspond to points of interest on the Chapultepec Park, Reforma, Zona Rosa, and Downtown Historic Section map.

The Paseo de la Reforma, modeled after the Champs-Élysées in Paris, was built by Emperor Maximilian in 1865 to connect the Palacio Nacional with his residence, the Castillo de Chapultepec. Reforma is 30 blocks long, so public transportation is recommended if you want to cover all the sights described. Begin at Reforma's northern end, about 2 kilometers (1 mile) north of Bellas Artes, in the area known as **Tlatelolco** (Tla-tel-oh-l-coh). Before the conquest, Tlatelolco and Tenochtitlan were sister cities, and the domain of Cuauhtémoc, the last Aztec emperor. In modern times its name makes residents shudder, because it was here that several hundred protesting students were massacred by the Mexican army in 1968. The 1985 earthquake destroyed several high-rise apartment buildings in Tlatelolco, in which hundreds perished.

- 1 The center of Tlatelolco is the **Plaza de las Tres Culturas**, so named because Mexico's three cultural eras—pre-Hispanic, colonial, and modern—are represented on the plaza in the form of the small ruins of a pre-Hispanic **ceremonial center** (visible from the roadway); the **Iglesia de Santiago Tlatelolco** (1609) and **Colegio de la Santa Cruz de Tlatelolco** (1535–36); and the ultra-contemporary **Ministry of Foreign Affairs** (1970). The church contains the baptismal font of Juan Diego, the Indian to whom the Virgin of Guadalupe appeared in 1531. The Colegio (college), founded by the Franciscans after the Conquest, was once attended by the sons of the Aztec nobility. *The plaza is bounded on the north by Manuel González, on the west by Av. San Juan de Letrán Norte, and on the east by Paseo de la Reforma, between Glorieta de Peralvillo and Glorieta Cuicláhuac.*
- 2 The plaza itself can be seen in passing, but nearby are two other points of interest. Between República de Chile and Allende is the **Mercado de la Lagunilla**, known affectionately as the Thieves' Market. Go on Sundays, when it is busiest, and watch your money: Here, along with the usual flea-market fare, you can find antiques (some of them fake), toys, secondhand books and clothes, semiprecious stones, art, and some handicrafts.
- 3 Nearby is **Plaza Garibaldi**, Mexico City's mariachi square (see Nightlife, below). Pass through here during the day, but return at night, when it resounds with music and festivity until the wee hours, especially on weekends. One warning: Late at night things can get a bit raucous. Choose a cantina, order a tequila; the musicians will be around shortly to serenade you (tipping is essential). Late at night, well-to-do Mexicans usually park along the west side of the square to enjoy some "drive-up" mariachi serenading especially for them. On the north side of the square is the Mercado de San Camilito, where

- ★ 5 The **Castillo de Chapultepec**, like the Palacio Nacional, witnessed the turbulence and grandeur of all Mexican history. In its earliest permutations, its home on the Cerro del Chapulín (Grasshopper Hill) was a Mexica palace, where the Indians made one of their last stands against the Spaniards; later it was a Spanish hermitage, gunpowder plant, and military college. Emperor Maximilian used the castle (parts of which date from 1783) as his residence, and his example was followed by various presidents from 1872 to 1940, when Lázaro Cárdenas decreed that it be turned into the **National History Museum**.

Displays on the museum's ground floor cover Mexican history from the conquest to the revolution; the bathroom, bedroom, tea salon, and gardens were used by Maximilian and his wife, Carlotta, during the 19th century. The ground floor also contains works by 20th-century muralists O'Gorman, Orozco, and Siqueiros, whereas the upper floor is devoted to temporary exhibits, Díaz's malachite vases, and religious art. Situated on top of a hill, the Castillo is accessible by car, on foot (10 minutes), or by a free but unreliable shuttle bus and elevator. ☎ 5/553-6242. ➦ \$2. ☺ Tues.-Sun. 9:30-5.

Just down the hill from the Castillo is the **Museo Galeria de la Lucha del Pueblo Mexicano por su Libertad**, which goes by the more fanciful **Museo del Caracol** (Museum of the Snail) because of its spiral shape. The museum concentrates on the 400 years from the Viceroyalty to the Constitution of 1917, using dioramas and light-and-sound displays that children can appreciate. ☎ 5/553-6285. ➦ \$1.25. ☺ Tues.-Sun. 9-5.

- 6 The **Museo de Arte Moderno** (Museum of Modern Art) is just north of the Castillo on the south side of Reforma. Two rooms are devoted to plastic arts from the 1930s to the 1960s; a third focuses on the past 20 years; and a fourth room and annex house temporary exhibits of contemporary Mexican painting, lithography, sculpture, and photography. ☎ 5/553-6211. ➦ \$3. ☺ Tues.-Sun. 10-6.

- 7 The private collection of painter Rufino Tamayo now has a permanent home in the sleek and austere **Museo Rufino Tamayo**. Tamayo's unerring eye for great art is evidenced by paintings and sculptures by such contemporary masters as Picasso, Miró, Warhol, and Henry Moore. In *Chapultepec Park, on the north side of Paseo de la Reforma and west of Gandhi*, ☎ 5/286-6519. ➦ \$3. ☺ Tues.-Sun. 10-6.

- ★ 8 The greatest museum in the country—and arguably one of the finest archaeological museums anywhere—is the **Museo Nacional de Antropología** (National Museum of Anthropology), just west of the Museo Rufino Tamayo. Even its architectural design (by Pedro Ramírez Vázquez) is distinguished. The collection is so extensive—covering some 100,000 square feet—that four hours are barely adequate to see it. However, bilingual guides take you through the highlights in two-hour tours. English guidebooks are available in the bookshop.

Begin in the Orientation Room, which traces the course of Mexican prehistory and the pre-Hispanic cultures of Mesoamerica. There are 12 rooms on the ground floor, including preclassical cultures, Teotihuacan, the Toltecs, Oaxaca, the Maya, and the north and west of Mexico. The so-called Aztec calendar stone and profusely feathered Aztec headdresses, reconstructed Mayan temples, and reproductions of the Mayan paintings from the ruins of Bonampak are just some of the highlights. Statuary, jewelry, weapons, clay figurines, and pottery

rooms on the upper floor contain faithful ethnographic displays of current indigenous peoples, using maps, photographs, household objects, folk art, clothing, and religious articles. ☎ 5/553-1902. ➦ \$3. ☺ Tues.-Sat. 9-6, Sun. and holidays 10-6.

Other sights in the first section of Chapultepec Park include three small boating lakes; the Casa del Lago, a cultural center; a botanical garden; archaeological excavations (visitable by appointment); and the zoo housing Mexico's pandas, gifts from China. **Los Pinos**, the residential palace of the president of Mexico, is located on the park's southern boundary, at Avenida Constituyentes and Parque Lira. It is heavily guarded and cannot be visited. The less crowded second and third sections contain a fancy restaurant, amusement parks (see *What to See and Do with Children, below*), the national cemetery, and the **Lienzo Charro** (rodeo).

TIME OUT After visiting the museums, take a five-minute taxi ride just north of the park to Colonia Polanco, which is quickly upstaging the Zona Rosa as the chic place for shopping and dining. The outdoor tables at **Sanborcito's**, also known as **Restaurante Polanco**, are usually filled by the residents of this well-heeled, tranquil neighborhood. It has a small but moderately priced menu and is especially good for brunch. *Julio Verne and Emilio Castelar, overlooking a lovely park with a statue of Lincoln.*

Reforma wends its leisurely way west into the wealthy neighborhoods of Lomas de Chapultepec, where most of the houses and estates are behind stone walls.

Tour 3: San Angel and Coyoacán

Numbers in the margin correspond to points of interest on the San Angel and Coyoacán map.

To explore the southern part of the city—which until 50 years ago was separate pueblos—take a taxi or pesero down Avenida Insurgentes. At 34 kilometers (21 miles) the longest avenue in the city, Insurgentes did not exist as such before the 1920s.

Get off at Avenida La Paz. On the east side of Insurgentes is a bizarre monument to revolutionary leader and onetime president Alvaro Obregón. The gray granite **Monumento al General Alvaro Obregón** marks the spot where the national hero Obregón was gunned down in a restaurant in 1928. Its main attraction used to be none other than Obregón's hand and forearm—eerily preserved in formaldehyde—which he lost in a 1915 battle. However, it's been removed for burial.

- 1 Cross Avenida Insurgentes on Avenida La Paz, then take the southern fork off Avenida La Paz (Calle Madero) until you come to the **Plaza San Jacinto**. You are now in San Angel, a little colonial enclave of cobblestoned streets, gardens drenched in bougainvillea, stone walls, and pastel houses.

★ Plaza San Jacinto is interesting in its own right. In 1847 about 50 Irish soldiers of St. Patrick's Battalion—who had sided with the Mexicans in the Mexican-American War—had their foreheads branded here with the letter *D* (for deserters) and were then hanged by the Americans. These men had been enticed to swim the Rio Grande and desert the ranks of U.S. General Zachary Taylor by pleas to the historic and religious ties between Spain and Ireland; as settlers in Mexican Texas, they felt their allegiance to the United States was tenuous.

representing day and night, light and darkness, or life and death. Some modern writers, with more drama than truth, have claimed that the losing team—or sometimes the winning team—were ceremonially sacrificed after a match.

According to legend, the Toltec ruler was so powerful that he boastfully challenged the water gods to a match. He won and, as a prize, claimed their treasures of greenstone, turquoise, and gold. In revenge they withdrew their rain, and the city had to succumb.

How Tula really came to fall as a great city is not known. It did not disappear as a settlement, and certainly was a town important enough later so that an Aztec king's daughter married its ruler. The site has important buildings from periods that date after its mythical ending. Nevertheless, it seems eventually to have ceased to be a powerful force, and its fall may have been connected with the wanderings of Nahuatl-speaking tribes, one of which may have been the later powerful Aztec.

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All the World Is Aztec Land



When the Aztec became strong enough, one of their rulers ordered that every book that dealt with their history be burned and new ones be written so as to show the glory of his people since all the world belonged to them. Thus the people that met the European conquerors were able to invent their own past. This is not a unique feat in history, but our own inquisitive need for knowing the real story has not been helped by it.

They claimed to have come from Aztlán, the Place of Cranes, somewhere in the north, led by four God-Bearers, together with six other



Figure 36. This famous sculpture, found accidentally during the laying of cable for the Mexico City telephone system, is one of the masterworks of Aztec art. It represents Coyolxauhqui, the sister of the Aztec tribal god Huitzilopochtli. According to legend, she harassed their mother and was killed and dismembered by Huitzilopochtli. (Photo by C. Alcazar, *Historia del arte mexicano* SALVAT 2:55)

Nahuatl-speaking groups. They told of their deeds in their long pilgrimage, when their tribal god, Huitzilopochtli, the Left-Handed Hummingbird, told them not to settle permanently until they reached a place in the middle of a lake where, on a stone, an eagle, Huitzilopochtli's totemic sign, would be seen devouring a serpent, the old god Quetzalcoatl's emblem.

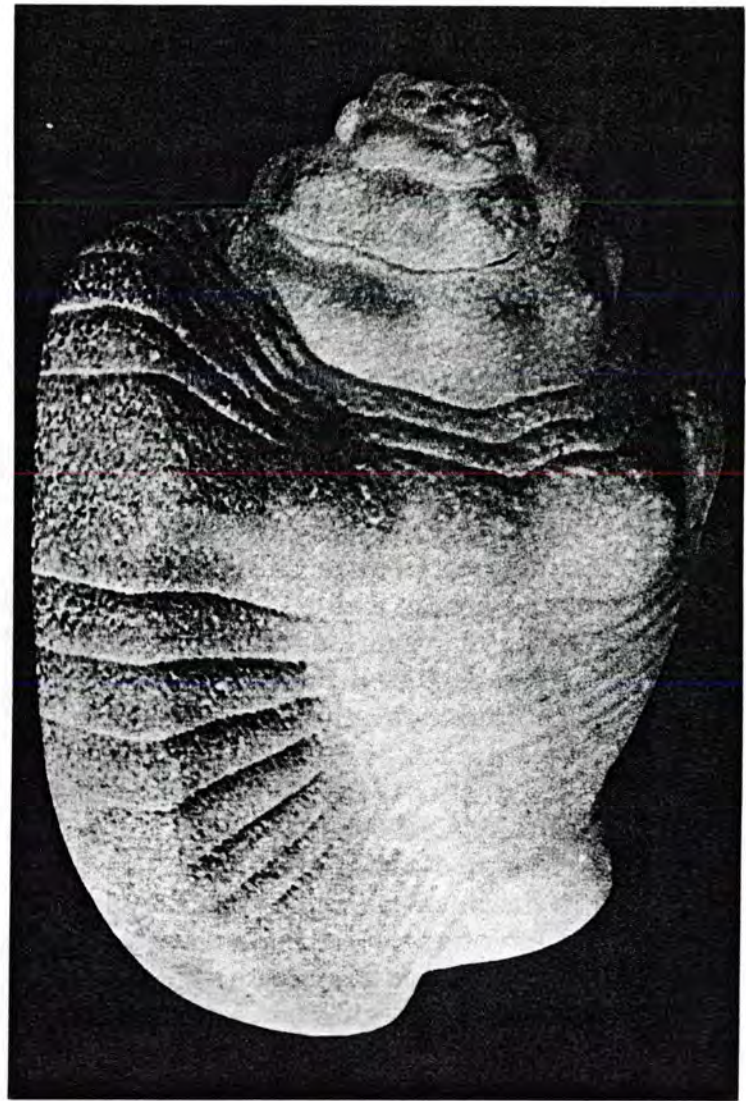
Their trek had many stops and many battles. After overcoming the temptation to stay put in several places, they finally reached the foretold spot and there they founded, under their chieftain Tenoch, Cactus on a Stone, the city of Tenochtitlán, in his name. This was Mexico City, later the center of Anahuac, the known world, the land around water. There they grew powerful until they could conquer the Valley of Mexico, and from that base they became the overlords, the feeders of the gods.

That is the Aztec tradition and, like many official traditions, it contains more than slight exaggeration. The city could hardly have been founded by the Aztec. Proof is abundant of its having been inhabited prior to their

founding date of A.D. 1325. Formative Period figurines from about 1000 B.C. were found during excavations for the building of the Latin American Tower, one of downtown Mexico City's tallest edifices; these figurines can still be seen in the tower's observation room on the fiftieth floor. Teotihuacán remains have been found, though without good controls, within city limits. While the cathedral was being repaired, in the 1970s, archaeological excavations were carried out and pottery from about A.D. 1000 to 1100 was found.

More important, in Tlatelolco, about a mile north of the center of the city, while a subway station was under construction, evidence was unearthed for a settlement from about A.D. 1100. Tlatelolco and Tenochtitlán were small, neighboring islands in one of the lakes

Figure 37. This large stone conch was dug at the site of the Aztec Templo Mayor (main temple) at Tenochtitlán, the Aztec capital, where economic and military power met religious and administrative centralization. This great, teeming metropolis awed the Spanish conquerors. (*Historia del arte mexicano* SALVAT 2:32)



that covered the central part of the Valley of Mexico until the final part of the nineteenth century, when it was finally drained. Tlatelolco, the Place of the Earth Mound, seems to have been an important market center for the Valley long before the date the Aztec claim they got there.

The Aztec themselves could well have come, as they said, from the north, and some authors place their origin in the south of the state of Guanajuato in northcentral Mexico, or from the west, from the state of Nayarit. (There is no evidence for their having come from California.) They could just as well have been another of the many farmer groups that settled in the Valley for thousands of years, acquired their ethnic characteristics after the fall of Teotihuacán, and were able to survive the chaos after Tula's demise. Their culture shows a typical Mesoamerican life with one difference: in their central compound they kept a patch of ground arranged with cacti and stones to remind them of the northern desert.

Otherwise, though, their cultural traits were those of their neighbors:

their pottery, Tenochtitlán Black-on-Orange, is a variant of an earlier ware, Tenayuca Black-on-Orange, which was widely distributed in the Valley until fashion changed and the new design was introduced. Cholula Polychrome, also associated with them, was an imported ceramic ware that had a wide distribution for some two hundred years before the Aztec came forth. It is also associated with other types, from the south and west, like Tlahuica Polychrome and Tenango Brown-on-Tan.

Their double temples on top of pyramids, dedicated, respectively, to the Rain God and to their tribal hero, although not found in Toltec construction, were common in the Valley of Mexico long before the Aztecs arrived. They were erected in other places as well, like Tenayuca and Santa Cecilia, north of Mexico City, where well-preserved and restored buildings still can be seen. Human sacrifices, of course, had been common earlier, although the Aztecs performed this ritual on a much larger scale. Their god, Huitzilopochtli, was their own version of Tezcatlipoca,

whom they also worshiped, but other groups had equivalent tribal ancestors as deities.

The story about their conquests, on the other hand, is mostly true. After taking over the Valley by forming an alliance with two other towns, Tlacopan and Texcoco, they extended their domain to most of Central Mexico and south to the confines of the Maya area. Their city grew to a size and magnificence that astounded the Europeans who saw it, and they established an empire that was sustained by tribute paid in large quantities and by trade channeled through the Tlatelolco market.

Aztec conquest and its consequent tribute brought to their city many riches, which made it a highly cosmopolitan settlement very much like Teotihuacán. Goods from many provinces were brought in for payment of taxes, and these were exchanged in the market for other merchandise and re-exported to far places. The distribution of Tenochtitlán Black-on-Orange and Cholula Polychrome throughout Mesoamerica is witness to their activity.

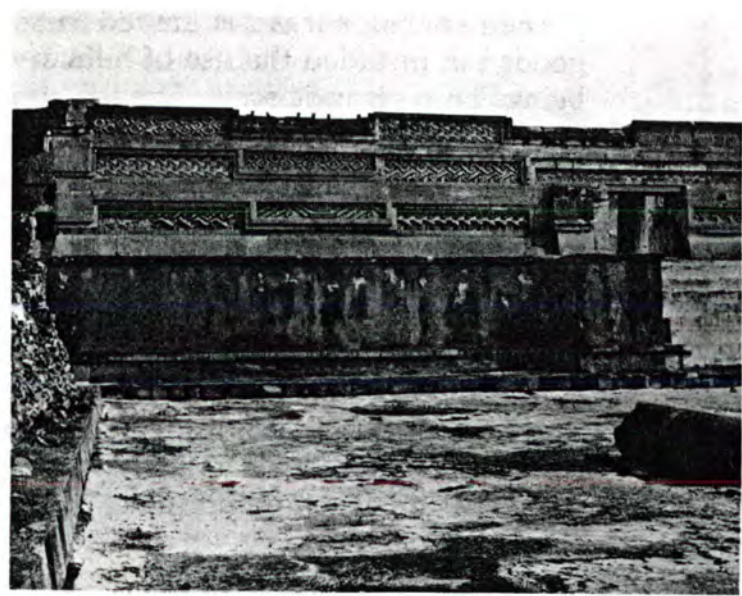


Figure 38. Mitla, a Late Postclassic site in Oaxaca, was inhabited at the time of the conquest. Its walls are famous for their decoration. In local lore Mitla was associated with the underworld and the souls of the dead. (Photo by William M. Ferguson and John Q. Royce)

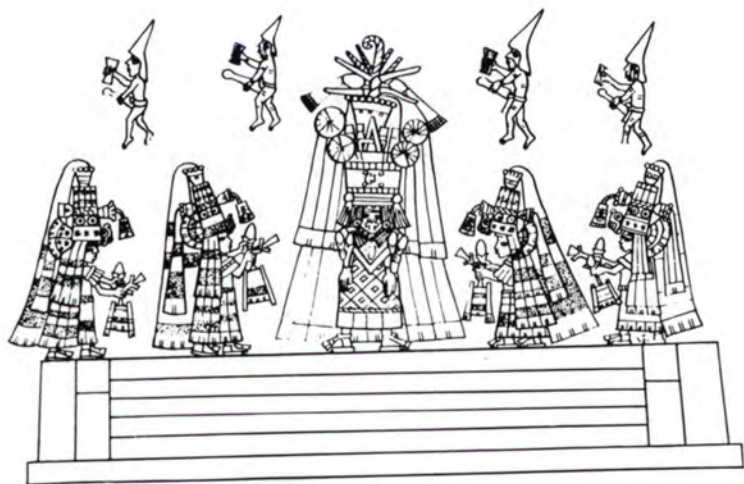
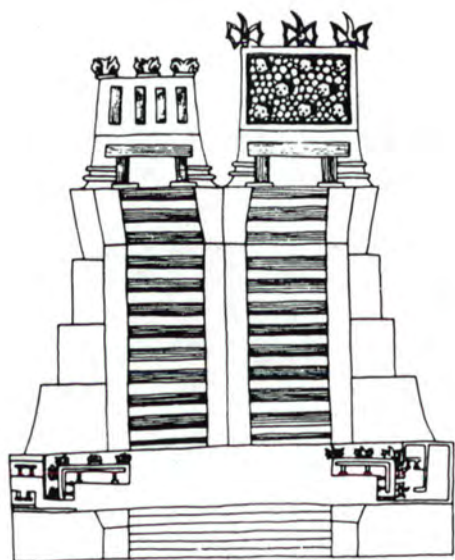
Their splendor was not limited to goods but included the use of human beings on a gigantic scale. The tribute they received in labor enabled them to build huge public works and private palaces. Caravans of hundreds of human carriers moved through the city. Prisoners from many wars were brought for sacrifice; with their blood and hearts the gods, especially the sun, could be fed and thus the universe kept from collapsing again, as the Aztecs believed it had already done four times before present mankind was placed on earth. Ambassadors from many towns came to be awed by the spectacle; they returned to their lands with the message that it made sense to acknowledge Aztec might.

Aztec strength had its limits, though, and the Spanish conquerors seized on these weaknesses. Distance, as with Teotihuacán's domain, was one. The empire stretched so far that it was hard to control it. Some part or another was constantly in rebellion and the central government had to intervene in innumerable local wars if it was to remain dominant. An

efficient messenger service had to be established to carry news to the central government by relays of runners. These served to advise Moctezuma of the arrival of the Europeans but were not enough to raise the countryside to the defense of the capital.

Military organization was another shortcoming. The Aztec empire was based on military rule and paid for it by having to garrison provinces and borders. Roads had to be patrolled and caravans protected. The army was not enough for the task, and more and more of the work had to be carried out by Otomi mercenaries who, when the time came, did not defend Mexico City from the Europeans. Unconquered groups, like the Tarascan in the West, the Mixtec in the South, or the Tlaxcaltec, uncomfortably near their heartland, had to be continually fought and contained. With the coming of the Spanish, some groups saw their opportunity to defeat the Aztecs. The Tlaxcaltec became their allies; others did not resist them.

Social imbalance was one more weakness. With the growth of the



empire, the original nobility was unable to cope with the job of administration, yet they continued to do so until the end of the fifteenth century. By that time the work of running the world was so big that the Aztec ruler Ahuizotl started appointing commoners to high posts. An enormous bureaucracy resulted. At his death his successor, Moctezuma, after putting down many local revolts, tried to reverse this policy. When the Spanish arrived, though, the reorganization had not been completed. This transitional situation greatly helped them.

Political entanglements were probably decisive, too. The original alliance of the Aztec with Texcoco and

Figure 39. The Great Temple of the Aztecs towered 135 feet high and dominated the ancient ceremonial center of Tenochtitlán. The Spaniards built over the sacred site in creating today's Mexico City, but between 1978 and 1982 the area was excavated.

Tlacopán developed into a fine game of intervention politics. Zones of influence were always contested, and finally the Aztec were able to determine their allied rulers' succession by forcing the election of their preferred candidates. At the arrival of the Spanish, opposition had developed and, in Texcoco it was decisive in allowing the Europeans time and resources for the siege of Mexico City.

The Aztec had really fallen into a trap of their own making. In achieving their greatness, they became too large and prepared their own downfall. Their conquests, which they themselves believed were holy quests, were only futile movements in an unending and hopeless cycle for survival. Their first conquest, the Valley of Mexico, had subjected a number of towns that produced the same goods as the Aztecs themselves. When the produce came to market as tribute, it competed ruinously against the Aztec farmer. All movements after that were ill-fated.

Their next conquest was the Valley of Morelos and the Balsas River region

to the south, which brought them cotton, cacao, copper, and gold, goods that were used as coinage in pre-Hispanic Mexico, which unbalanced the market further. The solution might have been, perhaps, a period of peace, to enable them to digest and adapt to the new scale of their economy, but instead they embarked on successive enterprises, each of which progressively weakened their real power. At the arrival of the Europeans, regardless of the Aztecs' apparent grandeur, they were in disarray.

U.S. First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton

(Opening Remarks at the Women's Roundtable--Harare--3/21/97)

Thank you for joining me this afternoon. I am looking forward to learning more about what you are doing, and the activities you are undertaking here in your country.

On our trip to Africa, my daughter Chelsea and I have been privileged to see, first-hand, Africa's democratic and economic renewal. I look forward to learning about the progress that is happening here in Zimbabwe.

I know, and all of you do as well, that a democracy depends on the full integration of women into society, especially on seeing to it that women have equal access to the same tools of opportunity as men do. Tools such as education and health care, legal rights and political participation, a chance to participate fully in the economy, and to have their economic contributions appropriately valued. I have had an opportunity to learn more in just a brief time I've been here and talking with the women who met me at the airport and the wonderful conversation that I had with President and Mrs. Mugabe and the reception that the President hosted for me at which he introduced me to a number of prominent women here in your country.

I know from what I have already learned and what I expect to see in my visit here that you have been making remarkable progress at both the grassroots level and the highest levels of government on issues ranging from education to health care, from employment to AIDS. I'm particularly interested in hearing how each of you in your various capacities have seen the progress that has been made here in your country and what obstacles are still to be overcome and how we might work together as women supporting one another in areas such as micro-credit and healthcare that were highlighted at the Beijing Conference on Women.

As I have travelled around the world and I saw it again here on this continent in Senegal and South Africa, women are coming together in a spirit of solidarity to solve problems for themselves, to work with the men in their families and their communities, to create better opportunity for girls and boys. So I would like to hear from each of you as to what you see as the accomplishments and the continuing challenges that confront women and men in your society.

U.S. First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton

(Closing Remarks at the Women's Roundtable--Harare--3/21/97)

Well this has been very interesting to me. I hope it's been of use to you to hear each other speak about all of these issues and to know how committed you are to resolving a lot of these problems that have been posed, and I do hope that there can be a continuing dialogue, not only within Africa, but around the world, so that when it comes to economic empowerment or micro-credit, we learn from each other.

You know Bangladesh is not the only model. That's a good model, but India has some good models, and Latin America, and the more information, to go back to your point, the more we can make and form choices about what will work best in our various situations. So I hope that we will be able to continue this kind of dialogue and that more and more women will find their place in it and be able to make the changes in their own lives and in their families and in their communities that would benefit them and their children in the future.

MEXFAM Site Visit

MEXFAM is a non-profit organization dedicated to social service and directed by volunteers. It was founded in 1965 and is a member of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF). MEXFAM, with USAID funding, provides high quality family planning and health services, as well as sex education, in 26 states of Mexico and to over 400,000 families. Its programs include:

- **Medical Services Centers:** Clients of these centers, located in both rural and urban areas, receive specialized medical attention in family planning, gynecology, urology, maternal and child health, and other medical specialties. Laboratory services are provided as well.
- **Community Doctors:** These MEXFAM doctors are placed in urban marginal areas where there is a consistent lack of medical care, and provide general medical and family planning services.
- **Industry Program:** MEXFAM provides family planning information and services in the workplace.
- **Community Health Promotion:** MEXFAM trains and provides basic medical equipment to volunteer promoters in rural communities, who in turn offer information, and primary health and family planning services.
- **"Gente Joven" (adolescents) program:** Information and orientation for young people on human sexuality and family life.

Mrs. Clinton's visit would be to an activity of the Gente Joven program, at the Juvenile Recreation Center "La Conchita" in a lower class neighborhood of Mexico City. The site consists of two soccer fields, two basketball courts, and one building, which houses the administrative offices, several small rooms for workshops, and two large meeting rooms. The site belongs to the government of the Federal District, which sponsors a day care center for the elderly, and aerobics, sewing, handicrafts, and boxing classes free for community members. There is a MEXFAM psychologist on site during working hours, and she provides reproductive health and family planning information to anyone requesting it. MEXFAM also carries out group activities there, such as educational talks and community theater.

The amount of time needed for the visit is 30 minutes. The first activity would be a 10-minute skit, performed by MEXFAM personnel, and dealing with adolescent reproductive health issues. The skit will be participative in that, besides the performers on the stage, other performers will be planted in the audience to ask questions. Mrs. Clinton will then move to the meeting room where she will meet with MEXFAM personnel, the performers, and several youth leaders from the community for 15 minutes for a discussion of relevant issues. Mrs. Clinton will then make a five-minute walk-through of the Recreation Center to see the other activities taking place.

MEXFAM - "La Conchita" Juvenile Recreation Center

Location: The site is approximately 5 kms. from Los Pinos and travel time is roughly 15 minutes. The recreational facility is located on Calle "1st de Noviembre" off the road to Santa Fe, turn in front of the IMSS housing complex. Proceed down the hill 300 yards and the recreational center is on the right. The FLOTUS' car can be parked just inside the gate entrance.

Description: The community recreational center was built 10 years ago by the local delegation (Alvaro Obregon) of the Mexico Federal District Government. The area's population is approximately 1.2 million inhabitants, many of which are lower income families. There are 7-8 centers of this type in the Obregon service area that provide importance social support services to its population. The area is characterized as being a "working class neighborhood", whose inhabitants have had limited educational opportunities, moderate to high unemployment, particularly among the youth, and have suffered the brunt of the economic recession that started in 1994.

"La Conchita" facility consists of a simple building, which houses administrative offices, library, dental clinic, seniors meeting room, and classrooms of various types including auto mechanics, handicrafts, beauty school, sewing and computer training. On the outside a large area is devoted a multipurpose use area (theater) and active sport fields - two soccer fields, two basketball courts and exercise area.

USAID Support to MEXFAM:

1. Overall Institutional Support

MEXFAM is a non-profit organization dedicated to social service and directed by volunteers. It was founded in 1965 and is a member of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF). MEXFAM provides high quality family planning and health services, as well as sex education, in 26 states of Mexico and to over 400,000 families. USAID has supported MEXFAM for over 9 years, mainly with technical assistance, management and marketing training. Its programs include:

- Medical Services Centers: Clients of these centers, located in both rural and urban areas, receive specialized medical attention in family planning, gynecology, urology, maternal and child health, and other medical specialties. Laboratory services are provided as well.
- Community Doctors: These MEXFAM doctors are placed in urban marginal areas where there is a consistent lack of medical care, and provide general medical and family planning services.
- Industry Program: MEXFAM provides family planning information and services in the workplace.
- Community Health Promotion: MEXFAM trains and provides basic medical equipment to volunteer promoters in rural communities, who in turn offer information, and primary health and family planning services.
- "Gente Joven" (Adolescents) Program: Information and orientation for young people on human sexuality and family life.

2. Specific Support of the "La Conchita" Adolescents Program

MEXFAM has been working with local social workers from the delegation to supplement their efforts to provide the area's youth information and orientation on human sexuality and family life.

This service includes the provision of a MEXFAM psychologist on-site during the working hours (8 a.m. to 8 p.m.) to provide reproductive health and family planning information to anyone requesting it. MEXFAM also carries out group activities, including educational talks and community theater skits.

USAID's technical and financial support was instrumental in assisting MEXFAM in first introducing community youth between the ages of 12-20 years with educational materials and professional consultative services on human sexuality and family planning matters. The La Conchita program has been in operation for approximately 2 years. It serves 2,000 youth on a regular basis.

In the long-term, USAID's most important contribution to Gente Joven has been assisting MEXFAM centers to be sustainable since their survival depends on their ability to mobilize financial support, including the subsidized social programs for the poor and adolescents.

Expected Scenario of First Lady's Visit

Total time required on-site for the visit is 30 minutes. It is not clear right now if Sra. Zedillo will accompany Mrs. Clinton to this site.

The first activity would be a 10-minute skit, performed by MEXFAM personnel, and highlights adolescent reproductive health issues. The skit will be participative in that, besides the performers on the stage, other performers will be planted in the audience to ask questions. Mrs. Clinton will then move to a meeting room inside the building (adjacent to the Library) where she will meet and have informal dialogue with a small group of youth and 1-2 MEXFAM staff members for 15 minutes of discussion on reproductive health issues and the program's impact on their lives. Mrs. Clinton will then make a five-minute walk-through of the Recreation Center to see the other activities taking place before departing the site.

Principal Representatives at the Site

USAID Site Coordinator: Jeff Boyer

MEXFAM Representatives: Sra. Ramona Pando de Cosío
(President)
Lic. Alfonso Lopez Juarez
(Director)
Lic Higinio Dominguez Mondragon
(Metro. Prog. Coordinator)
Lic. Maria del Carmen Leyte Guerreo
(Local Coordinator)

La Conchita
Representatives:

Obregon Delegation:

Sr. Carlos Mejia, Center Director
Sr. Arturo Baez, Area Director
Sr. Manuel Diaz Infante
 (Chief Delegate)
Lic. Leticia Coello Garrido
 (Sub-Delegate)

Family Planning Scene Setter

Setting: The visit coincides with the halfway point of Mexico's National Population Program 1995-2000 and USAID's Population Strategy in Mexico. Government of Mexico support for population and reproductive health activities is very strong despite current economic conditions. Mexico is to be commended for being absolutely committed to the international call for "Health for All."

Article 4 of the Mexican Constitution affirms that each person has the right to decide the number and spacing of their children freely, responsibly, and in an informed manner. Mexico historically and currently puts this into action through its National Population Program. Natural population growth has declined since 1972 from 3.39 percent to 2.05 percent in 1995, and net population growth after migration is 1.8 percent. The average number of children per family has declined in this same period from 6.36 to 2.81. USAID support, currently scheduled to terminate in 1998, represents less than 5 percent of Mexico's overall annual expenditure on population programs. Mexico's financing of 95 percent of the costs of these programs is a tangible sign of their commitment and self-reliance.

The USG/Mexico partnership in the population arena is a true success story. Thanks in large part to USAID assistance, ever increasing numbers of men and women have access to safe and efficacious methods of family planning; 56 percent of married women of child bearing age now use modern contraceptives, almost double the rate since 1978. The support of USAID has been critical in increasing the quality of care, and in expanding services, especially in the economically depressed rural areas of southern Mexico and in urban-marginal neighborhoods of Mexico City, where USAID efforts have been targeted.

President Zedillo declared in his 1996 State of the Union Address that Mexico's greatest challenge is providing health care services, including reproductive health, to those who lack access to them. A visit to population programs would demonstrate similar support for reproductive health programs on behalf of the USG, and would also provide concrete evidence of the benefits of this support.

Theme: A strong message of support for health programs in Mexico, especially reproductive health. This also would be an opportunity to get an "up-close and personal" look at what the recent vote in Congress to release population funds was all about.

Supporting Events: Good examples of Mexico's efforts in providing family planning and reproductive health services for both the insured and uninsured can be seen anywhere, both in large urban areas and in the smallest rural communities. Visitors will be able to see first hand the impact which the USG, through USAID, has had in improving the lives of poor women through increasing the access to and quality of family planning and other reproductive health services.

IMSS Site Visit-Mexico City

The Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social (IMSS) Obstetrics and Gynecology Hospital "Luis Castelaza Ayala," founded in 1978, is located in the San Angel section of Mexico City, approximately 5 miles south of the proposed MEXFAM site. This third-level hospital has 2,350 employees and serves 430,000 IMSS affiliates from the Federal District, and the states of Chiapas, Morelos, Guerrero, and Querétaro. The hospital has 448 beds - 314 for ob/gyn, 30 for surgical oncology, and 104 for pediatrics. The occupation rate for the entire hospital is 89%, and for gynecology 99.8%, obstetrics 82.1% and pediatrics 115.8%. Every day, fifty to sixty babies are delivered and 500 patients are seen in outpatient consultations.

USAID has trained doctors and nurses in reproductive health, helped develop evaluation of reproductive health counseling, supported outreach to schools and communities and worked with them on decentralization to the state.

Mrs. Clinton's one-hour visit to this hospital would be as follows:

1. Presentation and welcome in the ground floor auditorium.
2. Visit to the outpatient consultation section, on the basement level and ground floor. There are 26 physicians' offices, or *consultorios* on these floors, but we suggest a visit to the *consultorios* on the basement level since this is where reproductive health and family planning services are provided.
3. Elevator/stairs to the third floor for tour of postpartum area. This hospital was certified by UNICEF in January 1997 as a Mother and Child Friendly Hospital. While touring this floor, Mrs. Clinton can observe rooming in and exclusive breastfeeding-two important criteria for UNICEF certification. There are three beds in each room, and Mrs. Clinton will have the opportunity to speak with postpartum women.
4. Elevator/stairs to second floor for tour of premature baby area. Premature babies are placed in four separate sections, depending on their health status: incubators (20), thermal beds (52 in two sections, one for babies with infections), and normal cribs for those babies preparing to leave the nursery. Mothers are invited to be with their babies until 1:00 p.m. daily, and while there, they are given instructions on breastfeeding and child care, and extract their breast milk for storage in the hospital's seventh-floor milk bank.
5. Elevator/stairs to first floor administrative offices and meeting room for discussion with hospital employees and patients.

Locals call Mexico City "el DF" – short for the Federal District – though it has spilled over into the neighboring State of Mexico and is gradually encroaching on all the neighboring towns and villages in the valley. It is a sprawling megalopolis screaming for a caesarian section. It has to be delivered of the monstrous bureaucratic baby that has inflated it to bursting point. Foreigners can only conceive what it has become if they can imagine New York, Washington and Chicago all packed into the District of Columbia and surrounded by the Rockies. Unless the smokestack industries are banished from the valley and the federal government is moved far enough away to place it out of the reach of commuters, Mexico City is doomed.

This is the dismal truth. The incomparable mountain valley of Mexico – Tenochtitlán – that Alfonso Reyes once called "the air's most limpid domain," is now the biggest bowl of smog in the world. The iron-clad Spaniards who once beheld it from the pass between the snowtopped volcanoes, remembered in their old age the astonishing clarity of the air that allowed them to see from such a distance the enchanted city on the lake. And today many Mexicans, now middle-aged, can still remember the view from the opposite end when the air, like a huge lens, provided them with a panoramic vista of the snowy mountain tops, sometimes massive and clear, at other times floating in the sheer blue sky. Now their presence there has to be taken on faith alone.

The days themselves had a clearer shape then. Mornings were lofty and blue. Then, after lunch, storm clouds dragged a sudden deep dusk over the city. Rolling down Reforma or Insurgentes – you could set your watch by them – they would burst in unison over palaces and slums, drowning the geranium pots in the patio railings, flooding the narrow streets until it seemed that the primeval lake had once again reclaimed the city. They generally disappeared in time to reveal a sumptuous, slightly vulgar, sunset. Then the huge lens, washed clean, brought the night sky down to the rooftops, where lucky children got a close up of every star in the galaxy.

All that, alas, is a thing of the past, though of a remarkably recent past. The Mexican painter José Maria Velasco's matchless nineteenth-century landscapes prove that the valley had not changed much in the previous hundred years. The industrial takeoff of the fifties transformed it, turning Mexico's once crystalline penthouse of a city into a disaster area.

The facts alone are frightening. The valley of Mexico contains the D.F. plus twelve industrial municipalities pertaining to the neighboring State of Mexico. In Mexico, the word "Mexico" may refer to three different things: the country, the state or the city. To avoid confusion we will abide by the following rules. "Mexico" alone will refer to the entire country; the "State of Mexico," to the federal unit and the "DF," or "Mexico City," will refer exclusively to the capital. The DF, incidentally, was created out of a rib taken from the State of Mexico in 1824. The valley area represents a mere 0.005% of the national territory (or about 10,000 square kilometers) but lodges 17 million inhabitants, which is 25% of Mexico's total population; 50% of the country's industrial capacity is located there as well as 58% of all vehicles and 42% of the country's permanently employed work force, which receives 53% of the total wage bill. The city buys 49% of all durable consumer goods and has 60% of all the telephones. About 50% of the population consists of government employees and their dependents.

Mexico can barely hold its head up now. It has become an octopus, every arm busily scavenging and feeding the insatiable capital, which swallows up everything in sight with scant respect for our so-called federalism and our sporadic attempts at grassroots democracy. The DF is the brain, heart and belly of the entire organism.

Being both the ceremonial center and the administrative plexus of the republic, the town is always packed with petitioners, especially in the government offices. The religious center of Mexico is also there, not in the Cathedral, as one might think, but in the shrine of the Virgin of Guadalupe. This is the magnetic pole for all true Mexicans, including Marxists and practicing atheists. Every year on 12 December, the anniversary of the Virgin's apparition in 1531, pilgrims troop in from every part of the country, some advancing on their knees and wearing scapularies of spiny cactus leaves. The whole city comes to a standstill.

The failure of the agrarian reform has poured millions of peasants into the valley area, where misery at least has company and even the unemployed have a sporting chance of getting some money *somehow*. About 5 of the 17 million inhabitants live at a bare subsistence level. Their squalid shanty towns in sand pits or cheek by jowl with some of the more august residential districts, are a vivid reproach to the system.

For the bright, ambitious youngster from the provinces, with no private means to sustain him, Mexico City has traditionally been the only option. An internal brain drain toward the capital has existed since the earliest days of the republic, which led a famous female wit of the time to say "outside Mexico City, it's all Cuautitlan" – the sticks. There is reason to hope, though. The new ecological consciousness is giving these young provincials second thoughts. They are beginning to treasure the clear air and blue skies of their home towns. The risk of succumbing to galloping inertia in the provinces is far outweighed by the threat of lung cancer in the capital. Even the authorities are taking notice. After decades of allowing speculators to destroy landmarks in the city, they have now created an office to restore the buildings and protect them from further vandalism. Thanks to this official change of heart, (vigorously implemented during the López Portillo regime by the regent of the city, Carlos Hank González, as well as by the efforts of various private foundations), enough has been preserved to show why in 1803 the German traveler and polymath Alexander von Humboldt, was moved to call our capital "the City of Palaces."

Chapultepec

One spot of abiding charm is the promontory and castle of Chapultepec, which as every Mexican schoolboy knows, means "Grasshopper Hill." Four centuries ago, the hill stood on the western shore of Lake Texcoco. Until fairly recent times, it marked the western limit of the city, but now it is merely the western limit of the downtown area. The castled hilltop rises above a park of *abuehuetes*, those aged cypresses that are the moss-bearded ancients of the Mexican forest. The park is Mexico's homage to the Bois de Boulogne. The Emperor Maximilian, who gave the castle its present appearance and devoted much attention to the grounds, had much admired the Bois on his first visit to Paris and sought to reproduce the effect here.

Like the Bois, Chapultepec is a naturally spreading expanse of woods, meadows and lakes. It is a place for children's parties, *piñatas* and toy balloons, for flying kites, impromptu soccer games and monumental museums. The most ancient artifacts can be seen in the Museum of Anthropology, the most modern – including a frail wicker op-art semblance of a Rolls-Royce – in the Rufino Tamayo Museum. (The Museum of Modern Art across the street comes a poor second in the avant-garde stakes.) The museum architecture is either masonry-impressive (Anthropology and Tamayo) or black-glass curvilinear (Modern Art). The perilously polished marble floors are their most visible trait in common.

Cars now whiz by the Reforma thoroughway and plunge into what were once the

Spaniards, the Indians were sent literally beyond the pale. The canals were filled in and eventually the lake itself was drained to avoid the periodic and disastrous floods. Inevitably, the land filled in between the original islands was soggy. Just how soggy can be deduced from the swaybacked cornices and rooflines of many a colonial building: the prime example is relatively new, the Palace of Fine Arts which has sunk several feet below street level. (Modern engineering has solved the problem by using pilings or "floating" foundations.)

The National Palace

For political reasons, Cortés insisted on building the capital of New Spain directly on top of the Aztec capital. It would not do to move elsewhere and leave the natives free to return to the shrines of their ancient allegiances. The land itself was endowed with spiritual authority, so the true source and seat of power must remain where it had always been. For the same reason Cortés built his own palace on the site and foundation of Moctezuma's. Known as the "New Houses of Cortés" – to distinguish it from the "Old Houses" on the site of Axayatl's palace across the square – it was bought by the Spanish Crown from Cortés's son and heir, Martín, to be used as the official residence of the viceroys (one of whom was a descendant of Moctezuma, and another a descendant of Cortés).

It is curious to note that the viceroys held court seated on a velvet pillow under a portrait of the reigning monarch (an iconic custom now made universal by photography). This Moorish custom of sitting on cushions and carpets on state occasions survived in New Spain until 1700, when Philip V, the first Bourbon King of Spain, introduced some newfangled contraptions to the Spanish court: chairs.

In 1692, Indian rioters set fire to the Palace (there was no corn, no money, and a suspicion of hidden stores in the Palace itself). The damage to the building was soon repaired, but the surroundings remained squalid beyond belief. Contemporary records tell us about public latrines and vegetable stalls next to each other in the middle of the square. In 1789, almost a century after the Indian riot, a recently arrived viceroy, the second Count Revillagigedo, shocked by the filth he saw and smelled from his windows, set about cleaning up the mess. He cleared away the stalls and the itinerant merchants, ordered the level of the square to be lowered, then paved and fitted it with covered gutters for sewage and rainwater. During these excavations, the old Aztec calendar stone came to light, undoubtedly part of the sacred treasure the Aztecs had concealed during the last days of Tenochtitlán. By similar accidents, other important discoveries have been made. The building of the metropolitan subway, aside from casting up numerous idols and other objects, uncovered the small round temple in the Pino Suárez station, while a couple of electricians setting up a lamp post near the Cathedral hit solid rock instead of the mushy subsoil they expected and found another archeological stone that led to the Aztec Templo Mayor, now being excavated.

In 1793, during the same Viceroy's term of office, the square as we know it was taking shape, the south and west sides being much as they are now. In 1803, Tolsà's equestrian statue was unveiled on its handsome pedestal in a small-oval garden at the south-east corner of the square. After having been moved, since then, to various sites in the city, the Caballito seems finally to have found a permanent resting place in a small plaza facing the Neo-Classical palace built by his own maker for the School of Mines. The horse, incidentally, was a percheron by the name of *Tambor*, "Drum." The illustrious Baron von Humboldt was present at the unveiling. Mexico City was at the peak of prosperity at the time. It was the golden age of the hacienda and the wealth of the second silver boom had not yet been dissipated. The hacendados and the mining millionaires, as well as the merchants and bankers who

married into the aristocracy showed their wealth by building palaces and endowing convents, hospitals, schools and churches in the capital. Revillagigedo was a man of the Enlightenment, patron of arts and sciences, sponsor of expeditions, energetic enforcer of law and order. Alexander von Humboldt looked around him and was impressed. This was when he called Mexico "the City of Palaces," a description we cannot forget despite the mounting evidence to the contrary.

Like all wars, the struggle for Independence brought disorder, poverty, and destruction. No renaissance followed the peace; instead a series of revolutions and palace coups from which Mexico has never entirely recovered. In spite of the revolutionary blather, the country has so far only succeeded in finding stability and prosperity under the one-man rule of Porfirio Díaz, and under the one-party rule of the PRI.

Curiously enough, when independence was finally achieved, the spotlight of history turned away from the National Palace to blaze upon the nearby Palace of the Marquess de Jaral de Berrio, the owners of Tambor, incidentally, the percheron of Tolsà's equestrian masterpiece. An incomparable example of Mexican Baroque at its richest and most elegant, the palace had passed through marriage to the princely Sicilian house of Moncada. It was then occupied by a Conservative Creole officer, Agustín de Iturbide. Alarmed at the liberal turn that post-Napoleonic politics were taking in Spain, he decided to join forces with the Insurgent leaders to effect the definitive break with Spain in 1821. The Decree of Independence was ceremoniously signed in the palace which he occupied.

Iturbide showed his colors soon enough, promoting himself to Emperor and granting himself and his family huge possessions and impressive cash rewards. He insisted upon being addressed as "His Most Serene Highness" and adopted all the Napoleonic trappings of empire. Thus arrayed, he and his wife posed for countless portraits. A scant year later, he was tumbled from his pasteboard throne and sent into exile by the rebellious Antonio López de Santa Anna (of Alamo fame). Iturbide's empire did not last, though the palace from which he organized it, fortunately did. It has since been known as the Palacio de Iturbide and might again have become an imperial palace had Maximilian survived because Maximilian, having lost all hope that Carlota would give him a son, adopted one of the Iturbide grandchildren and named him heir to the throne.

When Iturbide's brief empire came to a close, the National Palace became once again the residence of the head of state. While preserving all its traditional functions, with the institution of the Republic, the palace now acquired many new ones. It had always housed the ceremonial apartments, the various ministries, the mint, the palace prison and the garrison, and now room was also found in its endless loggias, corridors and patios, to accomodate both the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies, as well as the Supreme Court. The separation of powers was clearly not taken literally in the early days.

Juárez was ousted from his quarters in the palace by the French Intervention, but returned after the defeat of Maximilian's empire. He died in office, in the bedroom he had always occupied in the palace. In Mexico, no armed takeover is ever considered successful if it does not culminate in the physical possession of the National Palace. The American troops realized that and flew the American flag from the central flagpole on the Mexican Day of Independence, two days after the Battle of Chapultepec. The 1910 Revolutionary factions fought over it as if it were the Republic itself. A cheery image from the early days of the Revolution has been preserved by the photographer Casasola's ubiquitous camera. After taking Mexico City, a group of revolutionaries took possession of the palace. They pose with their

rifles and sombreros behind Pancho Villa and Zapata. Pancho Villa is sitting on the gilded Presidential chair, bursting with glee, while the mustached Zapata on his left stares somberly into the camera's eye.

The palace is too old and has served too many masters to have come through history with its image untarnished. It is too big, and has always been too densely populated, teeming at all hours with equerries and maids and pages and soldiers and ladies-in-waiting and ushers and body-guards, and today with motorcyclists and secretaries and helicopter pilots and applicants for jobs and solicitors of official favors. One can imagine almost anything happening in the more florid periods of its past. Even Maximilian, a rather insipid paragon of a prince, turns out to have had a little side door for certain court ladies. His infidelities were no secret. In the country that invented *machismo*, even the Emperor had to prove that he could be unfaithful. The Palace now, however, under an uninterrupted series of PRI presidents, has become increasingly straitlaced and formal, in fact rather like what it was in don Porfirio's day.

The scattered remnants of our sumptuous past are many, but they tend to be overlooked amidst the far more numerous reminders of our stricken present. Skyscrapers rise where there is no room for a single additional car to park. Gardens mysteriously disappear. Communications are hideously clogged. Mexico City has been undergoing open-heart surgery since the early sixties when it was decided to revive its circulation by installing a metropolitan subway system (*el metro*) sufficient to its needs. The metro now moves millions of passengers a day, but is still only a by-pass. The population explosion is unabated: the heartbreaking truth seems to be that it is the poorest and the most deprived that multiply fastest of all.

Take the "Marías," for instance, those tiny Indian women who come down to the city from their native mountains rarely knowing more than a couple of words of Spanish. You find them always in the more affluent commercial neighborhoods, wherever there are people who can afford to be sensitive and charitable with their small change. They sit on the sidewalks of the *Zona Rosa* (the "pink-light" district, with everything that that implies), carrying their sucklers and surrounded by crawlers and toddlers in various states of undress. Many simply beg, though the more enterprising sell black avocados, peanuts or rape root (*jicama*), or else peddle packs of *real* American chewing gum and cigarettes (smuggled, of course, though one wonders who provides them with their stock in trade). They tread the same pathways toward Tenochtitlán and speak the same language as their Otomí forebears, and they are barely tolerated by the authorities, and exploited by them, exactly as they were in Moctezuma's days.

We are all Mexicans just the same. The problem now is simply that the melting pot is overloaded and cannot do its job.

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HEADLINE: MUSEUM OF TREASURES TRACES MEXICAN CIVILIZATIONS

BYLINE: BY JACK BROOM

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BODY:

Even people who don't consider themselves museum buffs are likely to enjoy a visit to the National Anthropology Museum, home of Mexico's greatest archaeological treasures.

Exhibits in this handsome building in Chapultepec Park present the history and relationship between Mexico's major civilizations, including the Teotihuacans, Toltecs, Aztecs and Mayans.

The success of the 24-year-old museum lies only partly in the artifacts themselves. Equally important is the thoughtful way they are displayed; lighting, positioning and the use of maps, replicas and scale models all play a part.

For example, to see the pyramid city of Teotihuacan, visitors pass under a low arch in front of a full-size reproduction of a 30-foot-tall section of one of the city's major temples.

Carved faces of the gods are painted in the original shades of rose and turquoise. Nearby, a topographical map and 60-foot-long scale model help convey Teotihuacan's size and layout - useful preparation before a visitor actually travels to the ruins, 30 miles northeast of Mexico City.

These days, some of the museum's oldest treasures are also some of its newest: about 120 pieces disappeared in a daring burglary in the early hours of Christmas Day 1985.

For museum officials, the caper was both a shock and an embarrassment: reports indicated the few guards on duty were sleeping off a Christmas Eve revelry.

Some experts pegged the market value of the irreplaceable items at \$ 10 million; others put the estimate much higher. Archaeologists and government leaders feared the pieces may have been spirited from the country and lost forever.

So it was a huge relief, and a salve to Mexico's national ego, when detectives recovered nearly all of the missing items in excellent condition last year. The caper was blamed on two novice thieves about 30 years old who allegedly traded a few pieces for cocaine.

The Seattle Times, October 7, 1990

"We have recovered part of our injured pride," said President Carlos Salinas de Gortari, presiding over a ceremony at the museum after the relics were returned.

Not all of the pieces are yet back on display. For example, a new, more secure exhibit area is being prepared for the jade burial mask of a Mayan ruler.

Throughout the museum, visitors have room to stop and ponder some of larger and more powerful pieces, including the round, 12-ton stone used by the Aztecs as an altar for the sacrifice of human hearts.

The museum's most striking piece is the 12-foot-wide Aztec Calendar Stone weighing 24 tons and displayed vertically on a 5-foot-tall pedestal. Flanking the stone are panels that depict the piece in its original vibrant colors, showing the gods and representations of the seasons.

The major floor of the anthropology museum consists of 12 rooms around a large courtyard. Proceeding counter-clockwise, the visitor first gets an introduction to the concepts of anthropology, then progresses through a series of rooms dedicated to Mexico's major pre-Hispanic cultures.

The second floor depicts the lifestyles of today's major Indian groups in Mexico.

All of the museum's charts and displays are in Spanish, but tours in other languages, including English, are conducted frequently through the day at no charge other than the museum admission price of 10,000 pesos (\$ 3.50). Times of the tours are posted near the museum's ticket booth.

The museum is closed on Mondays, open from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. on other weekdays and Saturdays and from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Sundays. Admission is free on Sundays, but foreign-language tours are not conducted.

Another important archaeological museum in Mexico City is the Templo Mayor (Great Temple) in the city center. This temple foundation was excavated after a utility digging crew struck a stone carving on the site six feet underground in 1978.

Walkways lead the visitor over a large, open excavation and then into the museum, where displays explain the significance of the site and its temples, carvings and shrines.

GRAPHIC: PHOTO

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH