

# President Madrid to deliver final message

MEXICO CITY (AP) — President Miguel de la Madrid goes before his countrymen today to deliver a final state of the nation message on a term beset by economic problems he managed to control while presiding over important political changes.

When de la Madrid came to power on Dec. 1, 1982, this nation was nearly bankrupt following a collapse in oil prices. Inflation was rampant and the peso was plunging in value.

De la Madrid feels his "biggest accomplishment was keeping the country from going bankrupt while maintaining the social order," said a close advisor who demanded anonymity. "His frustration was not being able to do the things he would have liked because of the economic limitations."

De la Madrid, a Harvard-trained

economist, renegotiated a foreign debt that now stands at \$104 billion while resisting pressure for a moratorium on payments. His administration took steps to reduce the role of the state in the economy, although many large industries, such as petroleum and banking, remain nationalized.

Some of the steps were painful, and the peso plunge cost Mexican consumers about 50 percent of their buying power during de la Madrid's six-year term.

But it was de la Madrid's efforts to reform a corrupt political system that produced Mexico's most democratic summer since the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party gained power in 1929.

One hundred seats to be divided in proportion to the national vote were added to the lower house of the

legislature, giving the opposition an opportunity to win a larger role. Opposition candidates were permitted to win local elections, especially in the north.

The PRI itself instituted primaries on the municipal level, although a disagreement about presidential primaries was one factor in a split that helped the left-wing opposition, which grouped itself as the Democratic Front.

The result was a July 6 presidential election in which the opposition won nearly 50 per cent of the popular vote and a forceful voice in Congress. However, the election was marred as the opposition claimed that the PRI maintained its grip on power only through massive fraud.

A long wrangle in the Chamber of Deputies ended with the PRI taking 260 seats and a divided opposition

240 — 139 for the leftist Front and 101 for the rightist National Action Party. The left also won four of 64 seats in the Senate — the first time the PRI has ever lost Senate seats.

De la Madrid downplayed Mexico's high profile role in Central America, avoiding open friction with the United States over conflicts in Nicaragua and El Salvador while working for regional solutions.

He had a good working relationship with President Reagan, and argued that Mexico could not be solely responsible for stopping drug trafficking. De la Madrid said the drug problem starts at the consumer level in the United States.

De la Madrid prepared the way economically for his chosen successor, Carlos Salinas de Gortari, who was largely responsible for the regime's economic measures as de la

Madrid's Planning and Budget secretary.

In addition to loosening tight state control of the economy, de la Madrid brought Mexico into the General Agreement in Trade and Tariffs (GATT) to force Mexican industrialists to compete abroad and domestically.

When inflation hit nearly 150 percent in 1987, de la Madrid united government and private business in a belt-tightening economic solidarity pact that helped reduce inflation to 43 per cent in the first six months of 1988. Government figures for August show a rate of below 1 percent.

De la Madrid has suffered harsh criticism from both left and right. Leftist presidential candidate Cuauhtemoc Cardenas called for a moratorium on debt payments, saying that they are hobbling economic

development. The National Action Party wants economic privatization to go farther, faster.

The political reforms changed the political structure of this country and shook the PRI. Salinas, who won with the lowest percentage ever for a PRI presidential candidate, said after the election that "the era of the one-party rule is over."

Referring to the drop in popular support, de la Madrid admitted Tuesday to a group of labor leaders that the party had made mistakes.

But he added, "There is no threat to the system. We will regroup, will fight more strongly. We are strongly enough to keep reactionaries from the left or the right to take power away from the Mexican Revolution."

# Protestant denominations celebrate after 40 years

NEW YORK (AP) — "We intend to stay together." So declared representatives of 17 mostly North American and West European Protestant denominations 40 years ago.

"Christ has made us his own, and he is not divided," said that 1948 founding assembly of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. "In seeking him we find one another."

Their pact has grown to include 307 denominations of virtually all Christian traditions of every race and continent totaling more than 400 million members.

Its formation amid the ruins of World War II raised a worldwide landmark in the cause of Christian unity. "It is the great new fact of our time," said the late Archbishop of Canterbury William Temple.

That mid-century coming together of

Christians signalled a reversal of more than 400 years of church fragmentation, antagonism and rivalry in the West and 1,000 years of uncommunicative separation from churches of the East.

Results have "overcome centuries of indifference and even hatred among Christians," affirming that "we are one people," says the Rev. Emilio Castro, council general secretary.

Now actively allied, they jointly probe their differences, dissolving mutual misconceptions and prejudices, contributing to one another's insights, working in partnership on many fronts.

Marking the council's birthday, old-timers and newcomers to the cause gathered Aug. 20-21 in Amsterdam, site of the founding assembly, to recall that pivotal event and eye its future.

"The conviction that unity is real, and division unreal, steadily grows... over the 40 years," says the Rev. John Deschner, moderator of the council's doctrinal commission on faith and order.

Deschner, a United Methodist theologian of Dallas, says that "beneath the disagreements we find an agreement in a unity which drew us together and will not let us separate."

Miss TAMU will be there!!

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