

RELEASED IN FULL 4

(x7)

March 26, 1976

MEMORANDUM

TO: ARA - Mr. George Lister  
FROM: ARA/MEX - John T. Dreyfuss  
SUBJECT: Human Rights Report

Attached is the requested human rights report for Mexico.

Attachment:

As stated.

ARA/MEX:H.B.Lane:ac  
X 29480

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
REVIEW AUTHORITY: SAM A. MOSKOWITZ  
DATE/CASE ID: 26 AUG 1998 199403559

780297  
BOX 7812

MEXICOI. Political Situation

President Echeverria's term expires December 1, and he cannot succeed himself. The candidate of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) in the July 4 Presidential election, Jose Lopez Portillo, has no real opposition. The PRI has been the dominant political force in Mexico since 1929; not only all of its presidential candidates but almost all of its candidates for state, municipal, and congressional offices have been elected. Its members currently hold all Senate seats and all governorships. The PRI is reformist oriented and has attempted to balance economic growth and social justice.

A disturbing wave of terrorism, which in 1974 and early 1975 captured headlines, has since abated although there are still occasional kidnappings, politically motivated murders, bombings, and bank robberies. Most terrorism has been directed at industrialists and wealthy or important political personalities. The Mexican Government refuses to accede to terrorist demands and strong enforcement action appears to have thinned terrorist ranks. The GOM believes that such persons whatever their professed motivation, have committed crimes and are therefore sought and punished not for their beliefs but for their illegal acts.

In recent months, contradictory demands and clashes between landless peasants and commercial farm owners have caused the government concern. While the course to be followed is still unclear, it appears that the GOM will not tolerate illegal land seizures, but will rejuvenate and speed up its land reform program.

II. Legal Situation

Mexico is a party to the U.N. Charter, the OAS Charter, the Vienna Consular Convention, the Geneva Convention of

1949, the Genocide Convention, and various U.N. Human Rights Conventions. The Mexican Constitution of 1917 grants protections to the exercise of the various freedoms. Mexican legal practice provides the right of amparo, a uniquely Mexican protection provided the citizen against "coercive and abusive acts of authorities." The Mexican Constitution and legal practice are consistent with the principal articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Constitutional provision for State of Emergency exists, but has never been invoked.

### III. Official Attitude and Practice

#### A. Integrity of the Person

The official attitude of the GOM does not condone human rights violations, and denies that human rights are ever seriously violated by the GOM.

#### B. Other Important Freedoms

Expression of political belief or opinion contrary to official policy or public positions of the Mexican Government is usually tolerated within relatively wide limits. Opposition publications have reportedly at times experienced difficulty in obtaining as much newsprint as they need but there is no official censorship.

### IV. Non-USG Human Rights Reporting

Only Amnesty International has shown interest to our knowledge. Their report for 1974-75 appears to be generally accurate. We note that their reporting states that all torture allegations refer to the period following detention but prior to formal arraignment before a judge. It is during this same pre-arraignment period that a substantial number of allegations of abuse are received from U.S. citizens arrested on various charges (usually narcotics violations) in Mexico.

ARA/MEX:H.B.Lane:ac  
3/24/76 X 29480

ARA/MEX:J.T.Dreyfuss