



Metro/EL OBSERVADOR

Glosario Glossary

adelantar - advance
aprobación - approval
bancas - banks
derrocar el gobierno del presidente - overthrow the government of the president
desapercibido - unprepared
desarrollo tecnológico - technological development
durante varios momentos - during various moments
El vicepresidente argentino - The Argentinian Vice President
El presidente de Brasil - The Brazilian president
El temor de problemas - the fear of problems
Enero - January
énfasis - emphasis
graves incidentes - grave incidents
jornada - day's journey
justicia federal - federal justice
los mercados - the markets
los ministros peruanos de economía - the Peruvian minister of Economy
mensajes anónimos - anonymous messages
nuevo proyecto regional - new regional plan
once colegas de la región - eleven colleges of the region
opositor - opposition
otros movimientos sociales - other social movements
peor crisis en los 170 años - worst crisis in 170 years
"plan secreto" - secret plan
reunión con empresarios - meeting with managers
senadores - senators
últimos años - latest years
un plan completo - a complete plan
una década - a decade
vial - road

Learn Spanish reading the news

Proponen adelantar comicios en el Senado

Buenos Aires (Reuters) - El vicepresidente argentino propuso ayer adelantar los comicios del 2001 para la renovación del Senado, debido al escándalo desatado por el supuesto cobro de sobornos por parte de legisladores. "Habría que pensar si la Constitución no deja alguna luz para adelantar las elecciones de senadores", dijo el vicepresidente Carlos Álvarez a una radio local. Ocho senadores, siete del *opositor* Partido Justicialista (peronista) y uno de la gobernante Alianza, están siendo investigados por la justicia debido a su participación en un presunto pago de sobornos a cambio de la *aprobación* en abril de una ley laboral impulsada por el Gobierno. El viernes, tres senadores renunciaron a su inmunidad parlamentaria para someterse a la justicia y otros cuatro ofrecieron dimitir a sus *bancas*. La crisis comenzó con una nota periodística y *mensajes anónimos* que acusaban a los senadores peronistas de haber aceptado sobornos de funcionarios oficiales para que aprobaran la ley laboral en abril. Más tarde, Álvarez hizo una denuncia ante la *justicia federal*. El caso golpea a la administración de Fernando de la Rúa, quien llegó al poder en diciembre prometiendo poner fin a una *década* de denuncias de corrupción en el gobierno del peronista Carlos Menem. Ahora es la propia Alianza la protagonista de uno de los mayores escándalos de corrupción de los últimos años.

Mexican president touts open borders

CONTRIBUTOR STORY
FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Vicente Fox, on a splashy first visit to the United States since his landmark election as president of Mexico, barnstormed through Washington promoting his vision of a more united North America.

Whether meeting with President Clinton in the Oval Office, Vice President Gore at his residence or human rights activists at a downtown hotel, Fox spread the same message: In this new global era, it is time to begin slowly knocking down barriers along the 2,000-mile border between the United States and Mexico.

Clinton did not discuss specifics of Fox's proposals but spoke of the inevitability of ever closer ties between the two countries. "I think over time, you will see a growing interdependence in our hemisphere," Clinton said in the White House Rose Garden as he stood shoulder to shoulder with Fox, who was wearing the black cowboy boots that have become his trademark. "It will be the way of the world. I regret I won't be around for a lot of it. But it is a good thing."

Fox, whose unexpected July 2 election ended 71 years of unbroken rule by the Institutional Revolutionary Party, takes office in Mexico City on Dec. 1, seven weeks before Clinton leaves office.

Gore praised Fox's "fresh ideas and new energy," but he also expressed concern that "certain aspects of this [open border] proposal could prove problematic in the United States," one of his aides said.

Outspoken and charismatic, Fox has established himself as the face of a new Mexico, a leader who is aggressively promising the United States an era of more fruitful relations with Mexico, the second-largest U.S. trading partner after Canada.

The three nations have been grouped in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) since 1994. Fox's big-picture ideas for radically expanding NAFTA into greater economic integration, although expressed before, generated a buzz as he voiced them in Washington on his first trip here as president-elect. Part of Fox's appeal here is curiosity:

Who is the 6-foot-4 former rancher and Coca-Cola executive who defeated the world's longest-running political machine? But part of the interest also seemed to flow from the novelty and sweep of his ideas.

Repeating what has become a mantra, he said the way to curb the flow of people who want to enter the United States from Mexico is to create more employment opportunities for them

at home—and he vowed to do that, saying his immediate aim is to create more than 1 million jobs. "It is the obligation of Mexico to improve the conditions and quality and standard of living in Mexico," Fox said. But he added that that would occur more quickly if all three North American countries work together.

Fox also said his trip is not aimed at signing accords or offering specific proposals. Rather, he said, it is designed to raise new ideas on vital issues.

One of Fox's ideas is for the United States and Canada to help finance job creation and development in Mexico—following a pattern set by the European Union—so Mexicans would have less reason to migrate north. But he got a tepid response in Canada on Tuesday and Wednesday from Prime Minister Jean Chretien, who voiced doubt about whether an EU-style association for North America is realistic in the near future. Responding to Canadian reservations, Fox said at a crowded news conference that there was some confusion about his vision for a more integrated North America. He specifically said he is not advocating a common currency along European lines. "We don't see dollarization," he declared. There is "no way we would propose that."

There also has been grumbling in Washington that Fox's vision of an open border between the United States and Mexico is more fantasy than policy.

"If we start making the border more porous—and it is already like a sieve blasted by buckshot—you will have one-quarter of Mexico's population in the U.S. Sun Belt within a couple months," said George W. Grayson, a Mexico scholar at the College of William & Mary. Even in 20 years, Grayson said, "you are not going to see the stark wage differential narrow sufficiently so you could have an open border."

In addition to his novelty, Fox is benefiting from growing awareness in the Republican and Democratic parties of the power of the Hispanic vote in this country. More than 7 million Americans are of Mexican origin, one of every four foreign-born immigrants.

"This creates an opportunity, perhaps a bidding war, between Gore and Bush over who can do more for Mexico," said Delal Baer, director of the Mexico Project at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. Fox is scheduled to fly to Dallas Friday to meet with Texas Gov. George W. Bush, the Republican presidential candidate. Fox is also buoyed by the good fortune of being the first

incoming Mexican president in nearly a quarter-century to inherit a relatively healthy economy. That is a huge relief for U.S. officials, who have had to help Mexico out of a string of financial crises.

The Mexican economy has grown steadily over the past four years and is now clipping along at an annual growth rate of more than 7 percent.

Direct foreign investment, much of it from the United States, is flowing in and foreign reserves are at historic highs. While Fox cannot take credit for any of this, he is certainly enjoying it. Clinton and Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright, who also met with Fox, thanked him for his willingness to reach out to human rights groups. Human rights abuses

have been a problem with past Mexican governments, and many nongovernmental organizations have complained that visa regulations have kept them out of the country. When Fox met with environmental and human rights groups, he promised them he will "make sure the doors are always open for them in Mexico."

Looking for a home



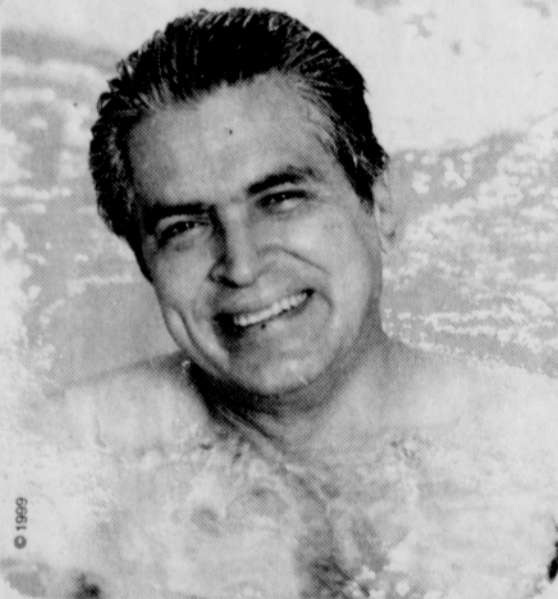
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