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## President Zedillo Replaces Social Development, Labor Secretaries

by LADB Staff

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In a minor cabinet reshuffle, President Ernesto Zedillo appointed new heads of the Secretaria de Desarrollo Social (SEDESOL) and the Secretaria del Trabajo y Prevision Social (STPS). Zedillo appointed Sen. Esteban Moctezuma Barragan as new Social Development Secretary and Juan Antonio Gonzalez Fernandez as Labor Secretary. Moctezuma, who was interior secretary during the initial years of the Zedillo administration, replaces Carlos Rojas Gonzalez as head of SEDESOL. Rojas left the post to assume the position of secretary general of the governing Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI). He replaces Socorro Diaz Palacios, who was named director of the Instituto de Seguridad y Servicios Sociales para los Trabajadores del Estado (ISSSTE).

Gonzalez Fernandez, outgoing ISSSTE director, will replace Javier Bonilla Garcia as head of the STPS. Bonilla resigned as labor secretary for "personal reasons." Opposition parties criticize SEDESOL appointment Some members of the opposition parties criticized the appointment of Moctezuma, a close friend of Zedillo, to head SEDESOL as an effort by Zedillo to influence presidential elections in 2000. SEDESOL takes on increasing importance during years leading up to a presidential campaign. In these years, social spending by the PRI-led federal government has historically picked up in areas where the party risked losing its lead. Furthermore, legislators from the conservative Partido Accion Nacional (PAN) and the center-left Partido de la Revolucion Democratica (PRD) said Moctezuma's appointment is evidence that Zedillo does not intend to stay out of the 2000 election.

In recent months, Zedillo has insisted that he will not follow the lead of his predecessors who personally selected the PRI presidential candidate. As head of SEDESOL, Moctezuma immediately becomes a top candidate for the PRI nomination, along with Finance Secretary Jose Angel Gurria Trevino and Interior Secretary Francisco Labastida Ochoa. The PRI is expecting its most competitive presidential campaign ever in 2000. The likely opposition candidates are Mexico City Mayor Cuauhtemoc Cardenas of the PRD and Guanajuato Gov. Vicente Fox Quesada of the PAN.

In recent months, the PAN and the PRD have taken every opportunity to eliminate the PRI's electoral advantages and portray the party as corrupt. In late April, the Chamber of Deputies voted 244 to 224 to strip the PRI of the right to use the colors of the Mexican flag in the party emblem. The coalition of four opposition parties, which holds a majority in the lower house, supported the measure. "We are in the middle of a democratic transition," said PAN Deputy Santiago Creel Miranda. "It's time for the PRI to give us back the colors that belong to everyone." But PRI deputies, who voted against the legislation, said the initiative was almost certain to lose in the Senate, where the governing party still holds a majority.

Also in April, a committee of the federal Chamber of Deputies voted 7-0 to support impeachment procedures against PRI Govs. Victor Cervera Pacheco of Yucatan and Roberto Madrazo Pintado of

Tabasco for violating the Mexican Constitution. Madrazo is charged with violations of campaign-finance regulations, while Cervera is accused of ignoring a constitutional clause prohibiting any chief executive from serving more than six years in office (see SourceMex, 04/22/98).

### *Facing impeachment, Morelos governor resigns*

A third PRI governor, Jorge Carrillo Olea of Morelos, was forced to resign in mid-May following charges of human rights violations and corruption. Charges against Carrillo include condoning prisoner torture, protecting drug traffickers, and violating state and federal constitutions in nominating candidates to high posts (see SourceMex, 04/22/98). Carrillo was about to face impeachment procedures in the Morelos state legislature when he tendered his resignation on May 13.

After a heated debate, the Morelos state legislature named Jorge Morales Barud of the PRI to serve as interim governor. The new governor pledged to support the legislature's efforts to continue the political trial against Carrillo Olea. (Sources: Notimex, 04/29/98, 04/30/98; The Washington Post, 05/04/98; Reuters, 05/12/98, 05/13/98; The New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Associated Press, The Dallas Morning News, 05/13/98; Spanish news service EFE, 04/30/98, 05/13/98, 05/14/98; El Nacional, 05/04/98, 05/14/98; Excelsior, 05/07/98, 05/13-15/98, 05/19/98; El Economista, 05/13/98, 05/19/98; La Jornada, Novedades, 05/13-15/98, 05/19/98; El Diario de Yucatan, 05/14/98, 05/15/98, 05/19/98; El Universal, 04/30/98, 05/13/98, 05/14/98, 05/20/98; The News, 05/13/98, 05/14/98, 05/19/98, 05/20/98)

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