



President Carter waves a sombrero given to him yesterday after a wreath-laying ceremony at the Independence Monument in Mexico City.

Mexican President warns Carter

MEXICO CITY (UPI) — Mexican President Jose Lopez Portillo publicly criticized President Carter yesterday for vetoing the sale of Mexican gas to the United States two years ago, warning that "surprise moves and sudden deceit" could backfire on U.S. interests.

Carter, sitting in front of a huge bouquet of flowers and the American flag, looked pained as Lopez Portillo sternly lectured to his guest of honor at a luncheon in the Mexican foreign ministry attended by the diplomatic corps.

Lopez Portillo chided Carter for the sudden U.S. interest in Mexico's newly discovered oil and gas reserves — and warned that the United States should not take the oil for granted.

"Mexico has thus suddenly found itself the center of American attention — attention that is a surprising mixture of interest, disdain and fear, much like the recurring vague fears you yourselves inspire in certain areas of our national subconscious," Lopez Portillo said.

"Among permanent — not casual — neighbors, surprise moves and sudden deceit or abuse are poisonous fruits that sooner or later have reverse effect," the Mexican president said.

Although not directly mentioning gas sales, Lopez Portillo was obviously referring to a 1977 letter of intent signed between Mexico and six U.S. utility companies for the sale of two billion cubic feet of natural gas per day at a cost of \$2.60 per thousand cubic feet.

Energy Secretary James Schlesinger ordered a rejection of the deal on the ground that the Mexican gas price was out of line with the \$2.16 price of Canadian gas.

Only once in his post luncheon speech did Lopez Portillo praise Carter, and

that was for his stand on human rights.

For his part, Carter, also talking about human rights, mentioned the obligation to protect the rights "of all those who for whatever reasons are within the borders of our countries" — a reference to undocumented Mexican workers in the United States, another key topic on the presidential agenda.

Lopez Portillo's critical remarks were in keeping with the cool reception given Carter when he arrived at noon — the coolest reception ever given a visiting American president in Mexico. Missing was the traditional Latin American embrace as Lopez Portillo only extended his hand to Carter and did not kiss Mrs. Carter, although Carter kissed Carmen Romano de Lopez Portillo.

Both men agreed in their airport statements that they had some tough problems to solve during their 7 1/2 hours of scheduled talks.

Lopez Portillo returned to the theme three hours later at the luncheon, saying both countries must take a "long range view" and not settle for temporary solutions.

"Let us seek only lasting solutions — good faith and fair play — nothing that would make us lose the respect of our children," he said.

Lopez Portillo also warned that the United States can't take Mexico's oil — the country has possible reserves of more than 200 billion barrels — for granted.

"The two countries complement each other and need each other, but neither would want to depend on the other to the point of nullifying its own sovereign will, reducing the scope of its international activities or losing its self-respect," he said.

An American official said the first

round of talks between the two leaders was "worthwhile" and held in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere.

But in the luncheon speech Lopez Portillo said:

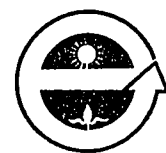
"A good neighbor policy presupposes a general climate of opinion in which respect prevails over prejudice and intelligence over sectarianism.

"No injustice can prevail without affronting decency and dignity."

The American official said that the first round of talks between Carter and Lopez Portillo, which lasted an hour and 40 minutes, centered on multilateral and global issues.

The official said that Lopez Portillo spoke in Spanish and Carter in English. "It was quite a friendly and relaxed" session. "I'm sure it was worthwhile from the United States' standpoint."

White House Press Secretary Jody Powell told reporters aboard the plane that Carter almost postponed the trip to Mexico when leftist Moslems stormed the U.S. Embassy in Tehran and the U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan was slain in a gunbattle between Moslem kidnappers and police. But he decided to continue when the Americans in Tehran were freed.



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R-007

Bhutto's death stayed briefly

RAWALPINDI, Pakistan (UPI) — Pakistan's Supreme Court yesterday set a review hearing for the death sentence against former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto for Feb. 24 and stayed his execution until then.

Chief Justice Anwar Ul-Haq said the seven judges agreed to the petition filed by Bhutto's attorney, Yahya Bakhtiar, appealing for a stay and review of the court's 4-3 decision of Feb. 6.

Had the stay not been granted, Bhutto could have been hanged today.

Bhutto was convicted last March on charges of conspiring to murder a political enemy.

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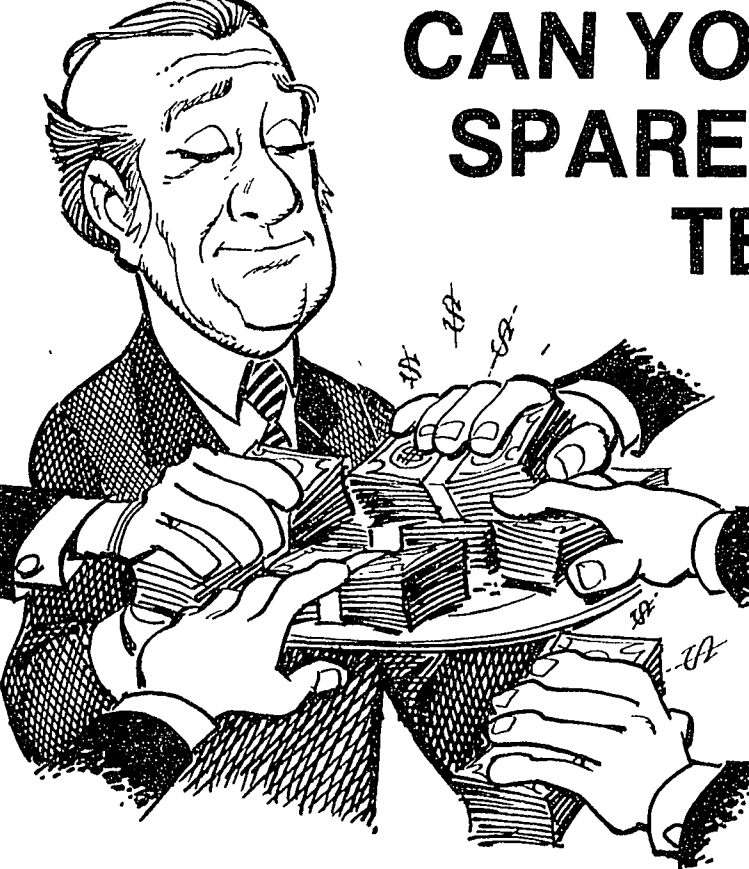
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