

# OUR VOICE

**D**rug trafficking not only knows no boundaries; it also undoubtedly poses the greatest threat for the twenty-first century because, like it or not, the drug trade affects all social layers of most of the world's nations. The mere possibility that this plague could invade our cities and neighborhoods or poison our children is reason enough to consolidate international cooperation as the best way to confront its scope and consequences. Our times demand solutions that go beyond fixing blame.

Both the United States and Mexico have hard-liners. In our country, the most radical argue that the United States, a society with extremely high drug consumption, inevitably becomes a magnet for the drug trade: it is already the world's most important drug market and Mexico is probably the country that most suffers the consequences. Paradoxically, Mexico has no significant narcotics consumption problem today. The U.S. hard-liners, on the other hand, argue that the drug trade has become a problem of state in Mexico, fostering enormous corruption on all levels of government and making it the world's main drug distributor to the U.S.

This means that we must comprehend that the impact of "narco-politics" is so great that it may soon affect society as a whole and become a problem of state in both countries. Drugs are not sold only in poor schools or on the streets of bad neighborhoods. The drug trade has invaded the best schools, the government and even the ranks of yuppies, who take large amounts of drugs. Once we accept that it concerns us all, we must forge a strategy to take advantage of the so-called "third wave" and utilize modern instantaneous information technology to jointly wage the war. The strategies require good will, team work, flexibility and creativity because, as of now, the battle is being lost.

*It is in this sense that we can say that the design and implementation of concrete policies against drug trafficking has definitive consequences on both sides of the border. Therefore, we must confront the common enemy—the drug trade itself—and not waste time on mutual recriminations which only benefits the drug traffickers.*

*In this issue of Voices of Mexico, Mexican specialist María Celia Toro looks at the drug trade. Her article deals basically with the paradox that arises when effectively restricting drugs use pushes the price up, thus spurring production. This, in turn, leads to a higher drug supply and consumption, the well known effect of any "prohibition" policy.*

*The "Society" section of this issue also includes another topic of great interest to U.S.-Mexican bilateral relations: migration. Today, illegal migration is conceived of as a structural problem; this is in itself a step forward. Mexico's General Director of Population Programs, José Gómez de León, and General Secretary of the National Population Council (Conapo), Rodolfo Tuirán, outline the Mexican position on migration based on Conapo studies in an attempt to dispel myths and misunderstandings about the question.*

*The "Politics" section offers two articles dealing with the current state of Mexico's democratization process. Germán Pérez Fernández del Castillo writes about the reform of the state, specifically emphasizing the areas where the most steps forward have been made and the problems and obstacles in those areas where they have been slower in coming. In his opinion, the greatest achievements have been in electoral matters, establishing the basis for effective democratic advancement.*

The results of Mexico's elections next July 6 will probably reflect to the greatest degree in history the real will of the electorate, in the tradition of Rousseau, because, for the first time, they will be based on broad agreements and consensuses among the different political players about the rules of the game. Also for the first time, the head of Mexico City's government—the chief executive for more than 11 million capital residents—will be democratically elected.

José Woldenberg is currently the president of the General Council of the Federal Electoral Institute, a key institution in the this process. In his contribution to this issue, "The Mechanics of Democratic Change," Woldenberg emphasizes the process whereby different forms of organization are being sought to express Mexican society's growing pluralism. He underlines how, although gradually, fundamental changes in democratic policy have been consolidated.

In the past, Mexican immigrants who acquired U.S. citizenship automatically lost their Mexican nationality. Today, a legislative process has begun to establish Mexicans' right to keep their original nationality even though they acquire U.S. citizenship.

Legal scholar Alonso Gómez Robledo, a specialist in international law, concludes the "Politics" section with an article about this topic, analyzing the political and social consequences of the constitutional amendments currently underway.

An article by George Yudice, a New York University expert in American studies, begins the section "Science, Art and Culture." Yudice explains that the U.S.-Mexico Fund for Culture's main goal is enriching cultural exchange and mutual understanding between the peoples of the two countries, and, to that end, fostering

a creative and fertile dialogue between their artistic and intellectual communities is fundamental. Voices of Mexico invites its readers involved in culture and the arts to request this organization's financial support: we agree that it is only through dialogue and deeper mutual understanding that we can establish better and more productive relations between our two nations. We are happy to report that Voices of Mexico currently enjoys the fund's support for its work in building bridges between our two cultures.

Patricia Galeana, the director of Mexico's National Archives, has written an article about the times and customs of Diego Rivera and his wife, painter Frida Kahlo, illustrated with original photographs preserved by the institution she heads.

Alvaro Rodríguez Tirado, Mexico's cultural attaché in Washington, D.C., explains efforts to promote Mexican culture in the United States. Rodríguez particularly emphasizes the excellent reception in different U.S. cities of an exhibit of Diego Rivera's work and the interest there in the life and work of two of our most important cultural and artistic exponents: Rivera himself and Frida Kahlo.

This issue of Voices of Mexico—particularly in its "Science, Art and Culture" and "The Splendor of Mexico" sections—is dedicated precisely to this pair of artistic and intellectual geniuses. Despite their stormy relationship and mutual personal enrichment, Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera each made a distinctive and authentically Mexican form of art, leaving our nation and the world a body of work impressive in size, visual vitality and ideological content.

We have included articles describing different features of their daily lives (their tastes and political pref-



erences, their friendships and their times), as well as pieces written by some of the most prominent specialists in their work.

Food is often a good way of getting to know what people's private lives are like, so we offer our readers an article about the recipes Frida used for celebrating certain Mexican holidays. Besides interesting stories about the painters' lives, it tells us about their culinary tastes. This excerpt from the book *Frida's Fiestas* includes dishes that Frida and Diego served their guests in March, when tradition and religious beliefs dictate Lenten menus.

Teresa del Conde and Juan Coronel Rivera, both specialists in the field, write of the magnificent work of Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo. Del Conde, currently the director of Mexico City's Museum of Modern Art and one of Mexico's most important art critics, has contributed an article about Frida the woman, Frida the political activist and, of course, Frida the great painter. Del Conde analyzes little examined aspects of some of Frida's most important paintings, among them their thematic link to Asian philosophy and their magical and mystical content.

Juan Coronel Rivera's article presents thorough research into little known aspects of Diego Rivera's work on the murals adorning the walls of Mexico City's Palace of Fine Arts, the most important contemporary forum for the country's performing arts.

"The Splendor of Mexico" section boasts three more articles about Frida and Diego. While Diego's murals are famous, his cubist period is relatively unknown. Edgardo Ganado Kim and Luis Gallardo, both of Mexico City's Carrillo Gil Museum, fill this gap with their article about Diego Rivera's Cubism.

But, what did Diego think of Frida and Frida of Diego? The last two articles in this section provide an answer with original texts by the artists themselves. They each present their thoughts about the other, about their relationship and their life as a couple.

In "United States Affairs," Juan José de Olloqui, former Mexican ambassador to the United States, expresses his opinion that, more than a rhetorical, confrontational foreign policy, Mexico needs to defend its traditional principles of sovereignty and self-determination, as well as concrete measures to benefit the nation.

De Olloqui also considers that diversifying economic relations is a prerequisite for Mexico to enjoy real autonomy. In his opinion, Mexico's great cultural strength guarantees that greater diversification will not put its national identity at risk.

Our "Canadian Issues" section features an article by Elisa Dávalos, a specialist from CISAN, focusing on interesting features of Canada's economy. On the one hand, Canada is part of the Group of Seven, the world's seven most industrialized countries. But, on the other hand, its economy is based fundamentally on exporting raw materials. According to Dávalos, the economies of the United States and Canada have complemented each other appropriately, but, since the more industrialized countries are those which most benefit from the world economy, Canada needs to design a strategy for producing goods with a higher technological content.

The "Literature" section presents a chapter of a forthcoming book by Diego's daughter, Guadalupe Rivera, describing the motivation behind her father's political development.

Our "Ecology" section presents an article about the medicinal plant popularly known as "the flower of the heart," often used to treat "heartache."

Lastly, our "Museums" section is also dedicated to Diego and Frida, with three descriptions of museums that either house their work or exhibit their collections of Mexican art. The Anahuacalli Diego Rivera Museum exhibits his life-long —above all pre-Hispanic— collection of objects and works of art. The Dolores Olmedo Museum exhibits a great many works of art, outstanding among which are the magnificent collections of Diego's and Frida's work. Its contents were gathered by Dolores Olmedo, the great collector, promoter of Mexican art and friend of Diego Rivera, during her many years of intensely fostering Mexican culture; just being there creates a refuge for the spirit.

The Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo Studio-House Museum, in Mexico City's beautiful colonial San Angel area, allows the visitor to walk into both the place and the atmosphere that permitted Diego to create.

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