

MEXICO ALERT

Vicente Fox's Social Cabinet Selections and their Implications

Part II

George W. Grayson
 Armand Peschard-Sverdrup

Overview

Cabinet	Secretary
Education	José Reyes Tamez
Health	Julio José Frenk Mora
Labor	Carlos María Abascal Carranza
Social Development	Josefina Eugenia Vásquez Mota
Special Advisers to the President	
Chief of Staff: -Strategic Planning/Regional Development	Carlos Flores Alcocer
Citizenry Alliance	Rodolfo Elizondo Torres
Social Development	José Sarukhán Kermez
Human Development	Gilberto Rincón Gallardo
Special Offices	
Chiapas Peace Negotiator	Luis Héctor Alvarez Alvarez
Office for the Development of Indigenous Affairs	Xóchitl Gálvez Ruiz
Office for Mexicans Abroad	Juan Antonio Hernández
BANCOMEXT	José Luis Romero Hicks
Office for the Integration of the Disabled	Víctor Hugo Flores Higuera
Council for Education	Rafael Rangel Sostmann
Physical Education	Nelson Vargas Basáñez

On Friday, November 24, 2000, President-elect Fox selected the 15 individuals-13 men and two women-who will concentrate on policies related to social affairs and human development. Four of

the appointees will hold cabinet portfolios, while the remaining seven will head Special Offices in Los Pinos-the Office of the President. Four of the ten Special Offices are new and devoted to the (1) indigenous, (2) disabled, (3) impoverished, and (4) Mexicans abroad (predominantly U.S. based). The placement of these offices in Los Pinos exemplifies Fox's commitment to constituencies deemed neglected by administrations of the long-ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI).

Cabinet Secretaries

EDUCATION (SEP):

Reyes Tamez Guerra: born Apr. 18, 1952, Monterrey; B.S. in Chemistry, (Autonomous University of Nuevo León, UANL); M.S. in Immunology (Instituto Politécnico Nacional); Ph.D. in Immunology (Instituto Politécnico Nacional); various academic posts and distinctions. Currently he is the rector of UANL, where he created a business-oriented board of directors and a symphony orchestra.

Observation: He is a low-profile but skilled and focused politician, with a reputation as a good negotiator, after having successfully negotiated a federal budget increase for UANL, during the Zedillo sexenio. Reyes Tamez's experience with a public university helped him land this position over the highly regarded Rafael Rangel Sostmann, who is rector of the private Monterrey Technical Institute of Higher Studies (ITESM). The next education secretary must work strenuously to improve the quality of underfunded, strike-prone institutions of higher learning like Mexico City's UNAM, which boasts more than 260,000 students.

HEALTH (SSA):

Julio José Frenk Mora: born Dec. 20, 1953, D.F.; M.D. degree (UNAM), M.A. in public health, M.A. in Sociology and a joint Ph.D. in Medical Care Organization and Sociology (U of Michigan); researcher for the Mexican Institute for Studies on Drug Abuse; various positions in the health-care bureaucracy, including founding director of the Center for Public Health Research (1984-87) and founding director general of the National Institute of Public Health (1987-92); Executive Vice President of the Mexican Health Foundation (FUNSALUD)(1993-2000); executive director for policy, World Health Organization in Geneva(1998-2000).

Observation: Dr. Frenk is a world-renowned expert on public health whose expertise in this field will help him increase federal monies earmarked for the nation's grossly underfunded and inadequate health care system. He will be one of the brightest jewels in the Fox cabinet.

LABOR (STPS):

Carlos María Abascal Carranza: born June 14, 1949, D.F.; law degree (Escuela Libre de Derecho); manager's secretary at Editorial Jus, S.A. (1966-69); various positions, including managing director of Afianzadora Insurgentes (1969-2000); translator (1974-82); adviser to INFONAVIT; board chairman, Proliber; vice chairman, Mexican Institute of Social Christian Doctrine (IMDOSOC), chairman of Foundation for Sustainable Growth in Mexico (FUNDES), former president of COPARMEX.

Observation: Abascal is an authority on labor organization and reform. He has good relations with such modern leaders as Elba Esther Gordillo, Francisco Hernández Juárez, and Sinaloa Gov. Juan S. Millán. Although close to the Roman Catholic Church, associates insist that Abascal is a "believer but not a fanatic."

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (SEDESOL):

Josefina Eugenia Vázquez Mota: Born Feb. 22, 1961, D.F.; degree in economics (Iberoamerican U.); advanced studies at the Instituto Panamericano de Alta Dirección de Empresas; founded the Center for Integral Development Comex; headed the female secretariat of

Coordinadora Ciudadana; elected federal deputy, July 2000.

Observation: Vázquez Mota is perhaps the most obscure cabinet member. She is one of the few female PAN activists whom President-elect Fox has chosen for a visible government post. Her appointment brings to five, the total of PANista in the cabinet; thus far are Sahagun, Ruffo, Usabiaga, Alvarez.

Special Advisers to the President

CHIEF OF STAFF: STRATEGIC PLANNING AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Carlos Flores Alcocer: born December 23, 1961, Irapuato, Guanajuato. BA in Computer Systems Engineering degree (ITESM) ; MA in administration Systems and a Ph.D. in Strategic Administration, (Lancaster University, UK); Systems Manager, Botas Rudel (Leon, Guanajuato)(1983-84) ; General Manager, Construction Firm "Peisa " (Morelia, Michoacán, 1984-85) ; strategic planning advisor to state and municipal governments (eg. PAN's first state government in Baja California); founder and head of the Center for Strategic Studies at the ITESM, León Campus (until 1995); General Coordinator for Regional Development (CODEREG) and General Coordinator of the Planning Committee for the development of Guanajuato (1995-99); he worked with Fox in developing and implementing the Guanajuato 21st Century Plan; from May 1999 on, Flores has been responsible for the campaign's strategic planning and the development of the social policy proposal.

Observation: Flores grew up in Chiapas, and has family ties to Michoacan. It is said that he has the heart of a missionary-in terms of genuinely wanting to help Mexico's poor. He was Fox's star electoral strategist, who will now redirect his talents to ensuring that policies encompass a strategic vision and address Mexico's regional disparities. He is a "numbers man" who lives and dies by statistics, and is therefore less attuned to political considerations.

COORDINACION PRESIDENCIAL PARA LA ALIANZA CIUDADANA:

Rodolfo Elizondo Torres: born July 18, 1946, Durango city Durango; business administration degree (ITESM); MBA (Kansas University); executive with various firms, including Triplay y Madera de Durango, Aerosierra de Durango, Empacadora Cid; served as president of the Mexican Association of Finance Executives (1982), member of CONACO in Durango; joined PAN in 1983; mayor of Durango (1983-86); federal deputy (1988-91/1994-97); twice candidate for Durango governorship (1986,1992); currently a state senator (2000-); member of COCOPA that sought a peace accord in Chiapas; coordinator of Fox's presidential campaign; political coordinator for Fox's transition team.

Observation: Elizondo, is known as adroit at pursuing conciliation over confrontation. In his new capacity, he is likely to play a "bridging role" between Fox and the political opposition. There may be overlap between the roles of Elizondo and that of the Ministry of the Interior. It remains to be seen how much coordination will exist between Elizondo's office and this ministry, Gobernacion (SEGOB)-particularly if Santiago Creel is, as expected, appointed Interior Secretary. Tensions between the two sharpened as they jockeyed for cabinet positions. Elizondo is well-regarded across the political spectrum.

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT:

Gilberto Rincón Gallardo: born May 15,1939, Mexico City; law degree (UNAM); member of Mexico's Communist Party (PMC) (1963-81); member of the Unified Socialist Party of Mexico (PSUM) (1981-87); Secretary General of the Mexican Socialist Party (PMS) (1987-1989); member of the Democratic Revolutionary Party (1989-97); Federal Deputy (1979-82/1991-94); Director, Center of Studies for State Reform; co-founder and presidential candidate of the Social

Democracy Party (DS) (1999-2000).

Observation: Rincón Gallardo excelled in the first nationally televised debate of the 2000 presidential election. He is a genuine and respected advocate for social change, and his appointment symbolizes Fox's commitment to the country's have-nots.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT:

José Sarukhán Kermez: born July 15, 1940, Mexico City; BA, biology (UNAM); MA, Agricultural Botany (Chapingo University); Ph.D., Ecology (University College of North Wales); former researcher and rector of the UNAM (1989-96); he is credited for founding the academic study of ecology in Mexico.

Observation: Well regarded across party lines. It is said that all of the headhunters conducting executive searches identified him as a prime candidate. In this capacity, Dr. Sarukhan will oversee education, health, science, human development and culture.

Special Offices

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION:

Rafael Rangel Sostmann: born Jan. 1, 1941, Parral, Chihuahua; degree in mechanical engineering (ITESM); executive with Honeywell; various posts at ITESM, including founder and vice-rector of the Querétaro campus (1979) and rector of ITESM (1994-2000). Sits on the boards of IBM Latin America; World Bank Institute; and Cemex. Since August 15, 2000 Rangel has been the transition team coordinator for education.

Observation: This new council will develop and coordinate a national-level educational system for adults. 36 million Mexicans have completed only primary education and Rangel's mandate is to create a "professional development" system that will enable this segment of the population to function productively in a modern economy. Rangel is a brilliant ideas man; he will need a top-flight subsecretary to handle administrative matters.

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS:

Xóchitl Gálvez Ruiz: born Feb. 22, 1963, Denganzá Tepatepec, Hidalgo; degree in computer engineering (UNAM); M.A. in telecommunications (UNAM); collaborated with Japan's Advanced Institute of Science to design "intelligent buildings"; with \$2,000 founded her own consulting firm, High Tech Services S.A., now valued at more than \$2 million; established the Fundación Porvenir to combat malnourishment, especially in indigenous villages like the one in which she was born; board member of Fundación Hecho en Casa, which emphasizes the value of women within families. This year Economic Forum of Davos (Switzerland) recognized her as one of the world's top 100 leaders; Business Week magazine named her one of seven Mexicans, whose leadership has fostered important change in Latin America.

Observation: Born to an Otomí father and mestizo mother, Xóchitl Gálvez grew up in a dirt-poor Indian village and speaks her father's language, as well as impeccable Spanish and English. Scholarships enabled her to escape poverty and become one of Mexico's most successful female entrepreneurs. Yet, success, wealth, fame, and media attention have not prevented her from a remarkable commitment to assisting the inhabitants of the "other Mexico," who eke out a living in hard-scrabble poverty. Although devoted to the nation's indigenous population, whose numbers are estimated at ten million, she resists political correctness, including granting special privileges to municipalities on the basis of amorphous concepts of "race" and "ethnicity." Gálvez will concentrate on policy aimed at promoting the "well being" of indigenous communities, and has been active in combating the malnutrition and underemployment of marginalized indigenous

communities.

OFFICE FOR THE SOCIAL PROMOTION AND INTEGRATION OF DISABLED PEOPLE:

Víctor Hugo Flores Higuera: born March 27, 1957. Mexicali, Baja California; degree in Agricultural Engineering (University of Baja California, UBAC); graduate studies in Systems Engineering (UBAC); currently presides over the National Council of Organizations for People with Disabilities (CONADI); former president of the Pro-People with Disabilities Foundation; former president of the State Council of Organizations for Disabled People in Baja California; former Technical Coordinator in the Office for Disabled People for the National System of DIF.

BANCO DE COMERCIO EXTERIOR:

José Luis Romero Hicks: born April 8, 1957, Guanajuato; law degree (Guanajuato University); studied political science (Lawrence University, Wisconsin); MA in Economics (South Oregon University); PRI gubernatorial candidate in Guanajuato (lost to PAN candidate, Ramón Martín Huerta); Mexican Diplomatic Service with counselor-level postings at Mexican embassies in India and Japan; director of planning for the University of Guanajuato; director general for Policy and Housing Development at SEDESOL under the late Luis Donaldo Colosio; executive with construction firm, Grupo Demet; served with distinction as Fox's Planning and Finance Secretary for Guanajuato state (1995-99); his brother, Juan Carlos, is the former rector of the University of Guanajuato and current governor of Guanajuato.

Observation: His background in finance will prove essential to these tasks.

MIGRANT AFFAIRS:

Juan Antonio Hernández: born August 24, 1955 in Fort Worth, Texas to an American mother and Mexican father, raised in Guanajuato; began his BA at the University of Guanajuato and concluded it at Lawrence University in Wisconsin; MA and Ph.D. in English Literature (University of Texas); professor at the University of California State in Long Beach, University of Texas Christian, and the Director of the U.S.-Mexico Center at the University of Texas at Dallas. In 1996, Hernández was the representative of Guanajuato state in Texas, and the director of the Guanajuato Trade Office in Dallas. Hernández implemented migrant-related programs in Guanajuato when Fox was governor; initially joined Fox's international affairs campaign team, and subsequently became the candidate's private secretary and scheduler. After July's victory, he worked with the international affairs transition team.

Observation: It can be said that he is a true-blood Foxista (Foxista de hueso colorado). In his new capacity, Hernández will establish an ongoing dialogue with Mexicans abroad and incorporate their interests into Fox's presidential agenda. In order to successfully address the wide-ranging interests of this constituency, he will create an inter-ministerial commission that will include the Foreign Ministry (SRE) -and consulates, Border Czar, Government/Interior (SEGOB), Labor, Health. Hernández is likely to strengthen what was formerly known as the "Paisano Program". High on his agenda is crafting a mechanism to permit Mexicans living abroad to send dollars back home at a cost cheaper than Western Union and other similar services.

CHIAPAS PEACE NEGOTIATOR:

Luis Héctor Alvarez Alvarez: born Oct. 25, 1919, Camargo, Chihuahua. B.A. in Business Administration (UT Austin); M.A. in engineering, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT); PAN gubernatorial candidate in Chihuahua (1956); PAN presidential candidate (1958); Chihuahua mayor (1983-86); president of the PAN (1987-93); senator (1994-2000); member of the Congressional Committee for Peace & Harmony in Chiapas (COCOPA);

Observation: Alvarez initially declined Fox's invitation to the cabinet because of the complexity of the challenge and his age, 81. He finally accepted the post at Fox's insistence. He is a PAN icon, and someone who has earned a cabinet position after years of public service and PAN

leadership. The wealth of wisdom, experience, and respect that he brings to the position of Chiapas Peace Negotiator highlights Fox's commitment to resolving the conflict with the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN).

NATIONAL SPORTS COMMITTEE (CONADE):

Nelson Vargas Basáñez: born May 7, 1942, Mexico City, physical education degree (National School for Physical Education) (1976); director general for athletics, Ministry of Education; president, Mexican Aquatic Federation; member of the International Physical Education Federation.

About the Authors

George W. Grayson, the Class of 1938 Professor of Government at the College of William & Mary, has made fifty research trips to Mexico since 1976, and lectures regularly at the National Defense University and the Foreign Service Institute of the U.S. Department of State. He is an adjunct fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies and an associate scholar of the Foreign Policy Research Institute. He is also Senior Adviser on Mexican Affairs for the Washington D.C.-based Capital Insight Group. Professor Grayson earned his Ph.D. at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies of The Johns Hopkins University and his J.D. at the College of William & Mary. He has served as a member of the Virginia state legislature for twenty-five years.

Armand Peschard-Sverdrup is the Director of the Mexico Project at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), responsible for analysis of Mexico's domestic politics, trade, investment, and U.S.-Mexico bilateral relations. He frequently lectures at both the Mexican Advanced Area Studies Seminar at the Foreign Service Institute of the U.S. Department of State and at the National Defense University. His primary research interests are Mexican domestic politics and U.S.-Mexican relations.

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