

If the vote itself was relatively clean, it cannot be said that the elections were fundamentally fair. Inequities persist in party access to funding and media time, and political coverage by the electronic media is often biased in favour of the ruling party. It should also be noted that the Presidency and administrative control of IFE remain in the hands of the government.

Corruption within Mexico's various police forces persists. In spite of the efforts of a series of Solicitor Generals to purge local and national police forces, narcotraffickers have developed extensive networks of influence. This was brought home in 1994 by a fatal narco-related car bomb attack in Guadalajara, by the continued failure of the authorities to find and arrest those responsible for the May 1993 killing of Cardinal Posadas and by the October assassination of José Francisco Ruiz Massieu — a killing in which both narcotraffickers and politicians appear to have been involved.

Complaints to the National Human Rights Commission (CNDH) rose 2.05 per cent in the year ending in June 1994; a significant drop (50%) was observed in complaints relating to arbitrary detention, torture, false accusation, and denial of justice.

#### CANADIAN POSITION

As soon as the Chiapas crisis erupted, senior Canadian officials were in touch with their Mexican counterparts to raise Canadian concerns. The topic was discussed at length at the Joint Ministerial Committee meeting in Mexico City in March, and Minister Ouellet met with CNDH President Madrazo in order to discuss bilateral cooperation in the area of human rights. Dr. Madrazo's duties as peace commissioner for Chiapas prevented him leaving the country this year, but in early 1995 he will visit Canada to establish relations with Canada's Human Rights Commission and Canadian NGO's. Expenditures by the Canadian Embassy's Canada Fund for Local Initiatives reached \$100,000 in Chiapas this year, and Mexico's indigenous peoples were identified as the fund priority. Chiapas-related activities by a number of Canadian NGOs, including the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development, were supported by CIDA. Officials from the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Canadian Embassy paid regular liaison visits to Chiapas, the most recent being in early December 1994.

Canada's Chief Electoral Officer established close relations with Mexico's Federal Electoral Institute and served as an informal adviser in the run-up to the August elections. It was felt that Mexican NGO's were best equipped to observe the elections, so no direct support was given to Canadian NGO's for this operation. The Canadian Embassy mounted its own 12-person observation exercise.