

to Mexico in May, failed to end this aspect of crisis. New accusations of the involvement of Mexican diplomatic and military figures in the export of a "ton" of cocaine in mid-May kept the flow of dirty water in full flood.

* *the desintegration of military credibility*: the arrest (February 8) of the newly-appointed head of the Mexican National Institute for the Combat against Drugs (INCD), General Jose de Jesus Gutierrez Rebollo, for protecting the most notorious of Mexico's drug traders -- the "Lord of the Skies" Amado Carillo Fuentes -- was given piquante detail by the revelation that the General was the beneficiary of a luxurious Lomas de Chapultepec apartment not only owned by Carillo, but just a few floors away from the apartment of the "Lord" himself. The charges outlined a network of relationships which involved the military and the drug traffic in such states as Sinaloa, Chihuahua, Nayarit, Jalisco, Sonora, Durango and Baja California. The disappearance of a leading government official, the load bleatings of the Times-accused governors of Sonora and Morelos and the arrest of a further military leader in March, did little to patch the credibility of the government or the military.

This festering outgrowth at the top combines with a fear and disrespect for the military as it extends its presence at community level in both city and countryside. To the widespread belief that the police are involved in crime, habitually intimidating, corrupt and violent, is added the conviction that the military act with impunity and for profit. Many fear a larger role for the army, already being implemented. As Robert Kaplan describes the potential, if not for violence then for profit "given the pervasiveness of narconotics money in the economy, the Mexican army, with its airplanes and high-tech communications gear, would simply become the world's most formidable drug dealer." (Kaplan, "History...", p. 24)