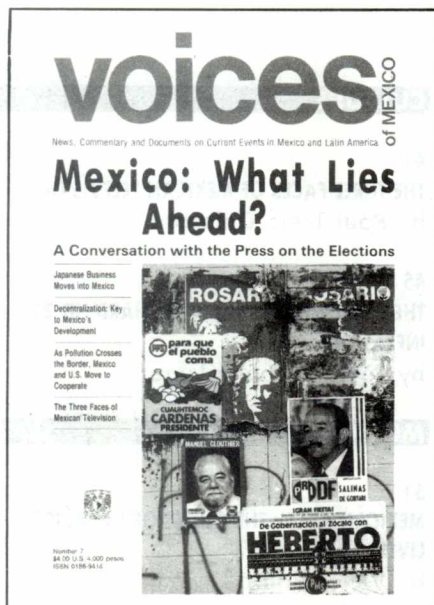


THIS ISSUE



Cover photo by José Fuentes.

In this issue, which marks two years since **Voices of Mexico** began publication, we present three important themes in Mexico today: the electoral process; bilateral relations with our most important trade partners, the United States and Japan; and the cultural industry and its impact on the nation's life. These three issues, marked by the greatest economic crisis through which our country has lived, are facets of one problem. From different angles, they demonstrate how Mexico's society and government are confronting the dual fact of being a developing country and, at the same time, the neighbor of the most important capitalist power in the present world. This fact requires us to simultaneously resolve old problems and face new challenges.

In *Features*, we present three articles dealing with our relations with the United States and Japan as well as an article on the urgent need to decentralize Mexico's government and the country's economy in order to move toward modernity. In this section, we also highlight the conflict in Panama: a situation which constitutes a serious problem for Mexico's national security.

Point of View is dedicated to Mexico's electoral process which will culminate in elections in July. In an interview with three prominent political columnists, we approach the issues of possible changes within the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), the advances of the political opposition, the role of the press in this political year and the possibility of U.S. influence in the electoral process.

The *Report* deals with the problem of pollution along the Mexico-U.S. border: a highly sensitive issue which demands immediate solutions from both nations.

Finally, in *Culture*, we publish a panorama of the present state of television, book publishing and rock and roll in Mexico. Each of these three areas express the richness of Mexico's contemporary culture but also reveal Mexico's inherent contradictions and the effects of the present crisis.

Mariclaire Acosta