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Foreign Press Chatter

August 21, 2026

A stridently opinionated op-ed in the Wall Street Journal by Mary Anastasia O'Grady about the Mexican government's controversial proposed legislation to protect audience rights (or "gag Mexico's media", as O'Grady put it) provoked a reply from Secretary of Foreign Affairs Roberto Velasco, whose rebuttal, which stated "Mexico's press isn't silent", was also published in the paper. Mexican under Morena has sought to rebut Mary O'Grady before, including AMLO personally in the manañera in 2020 regarding alleged Iranian influence in Mexico and ‘’Quién es quién en las mentiras’’ in 2022, but this is the first letter published in the paper complaining about her coverage that we are aware of.

The right-wing, free-market O'Grady is unabashedly anti-Morena, claiming that Sheinbaum and her party are responsible for the "slow strangulation of democratic pluralism" in the country, so her criticism was hardly surprising. This was not Velasco's first time responding directly in a foreign newspaper's pages. While serving as the foreign ministry's head of press under then foreign minister Marcelo Ebrard in 2020, he wrote to The Economist to rebut a critical Bello column of López Obrador's government. As a former flak, defending Mexico's government in the foreign press comes naturally, but unlike his former boss and once mentor Ebrard, he chose to do this himself, rather than get his press secretary to write in. A media-engaged Minister.

And Velasco joins company: on 31 March, 2026, Hacienda created a local media storm in a teacup by formally responding to The Economist after it published an article characterizing Mexico as having a "broken economy", arguing that the magazine had exaggerated cyclical weakness, underplayed external shocks and ignored structural strengths such as macro stability, wage gains and social-policy changes.

The top political story in foreign press coverage this week was the cancellation of Andrés Manuel López Beltrán's US visa. AMLO's son made this news public, along with a florid, much derided and hugely enjoyable open letter he addressed to President Trump that decried the move as "Hitlerian" and said he should fire Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Deputy Secretary Christopher "El Quitavisas" Landau.

While no public reason has been provided for the revocation, the LA Times noted that "loss of a visa is widely viewed as raising suspicions about a politician's character", making it precisely the kind of stealth weapon that the administration enjoys deploying. Sheinbaum has described this as yet another example of US meddling in Mexican politics. Given that most Mexicans do not have US visas, and recently not a few have seen theirs revoked for immigration not political reasons, Andy may be betting that the broader public will prove more sympathetic to his case, in contrast to Mexico's elite, which has been almost universal in its condemnation.

Mexico has reportedly been contemplating increased tariffs on Chinese goods to better align with Washington, even as a sudden trade rapprochement between Canada and the US (which, according to Bloomberg, "caught Mexican officials and business leaders off guard") has altered the USMCA negotiation landscape this week.

Bloomberg was overall quite busy this week. It published an in-depth report about the Mexican government's high hopes for the Interoceanic Corridor of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec (CIIT) and its bid to become an alternative to the Panama Canal. In a global context of heightened concern about shipping lanes, the CIIT offers geographic advantages, but its capacity is still far below its peers. "Global trade has a lot of inertia, and to change this inertia requires a lot of pushes", one academic quoted in the piece noted. And its LatAm Opinion columnist Juan Pablo Spinetto and urban planner manqué argued that Mexico needs a “high-rise revolution” to reverse decades of costly urban sprawl. Denser housing in city centres, supported by modernised building rules and faster permitting, could shorten commutes, improve access to jobs and talent, make better use of infrastructure and ultimately create more productive, liveable cities.

AP reported that over 2,300 Mexicans have been deported from the US to Guatemala and Honduras before being sent back home this year; this is a shift from the start of Trump's second term, when such transfers were minimal. The INM said the aim is to stop them crossing back over the border, while migrant advocacy groups see it as a scare tactic and a way to pressure the Mexican government.

Notable blogs in English on Mexico

Ioan Grillo published part two of his series about Iván Guzmán (son of El Chapo) and his ascent from "junior to kingpin" and his control of Culiacán. In Mexico Decoded, Viri Ríos sought to explain in what some might consider a tendentious piece on how Carlos Slim became Mexico's wealthiest man, in her view by being "remarkably adept at staying on good terms with whoever governs Mexico". The Mexico Political Economist examined the lack of opposition to the USMCA in Mexico (which, as NAFTA, once inspired a healthy backlash), and how this has potentially put the country in a less advantageous negotiating position. And Miranda Intelligence's daily Substack covered key developments in energy, fintech, public affairs and politics in Mexico.

Top Stories on Mexico

Opinion | Sheinbaum Moves to Gag Mexico’s Media
16/08/2026, WSJ, Mary Anastasia O’Grady

‘Coordination, not subordination’: Sheinbaum attacks U.S. ‘meddling’ in Mexico’s politics
14/08/2026, LA Times, Patrick J. McDonnell

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U.S. Cancels Visa for Son of Former Mexican President, Straining Ties
14/08/2026, WSJ, José Córdoba

US-Canada Trade Draft Piles Pressure on Mexico to Match Terms
20/08/2026, Bloomberg, Gonzalo Soto

Mexico weighs tougher trade rules for China, as US talks grind on
18/08/2026, Bloomberg, Gonzalo Soto and Mie Dahl

As Global Waterways Face Squeeze, Mexico Pitches Alternative Corridor
15/08/2026, Bloomberg, Gonzalo Soto

More than 2,300 Mexicans sent to Guatemala and Honduras as Trump ramps up third-country deportations
20/08/2026, AP, Sonia Pérez D., María Verza and Marlon González

A High-Rise Revolution Can Tame Mexico's Urban Chaos
20/08/2026, Bloomberg, Juan Pablo Spinetto

Oil Giants Eye Jurassic Rocks off Mexico in Search of Bonanza
20/08/2026, Bloomberg, Scott Squires

Mexico central bank signals prolonged pause in rates
20/08/2026, Reuters, Kylie Madry

Can Mexicans be weaned off an addiction to cash?
18/08/2026, FT, Christine Murray

Liverpool Bets on Nail Salons, Financial Products to Offset Mexico Slowdown
18/08/2026, Bloomberg, Valentine Hilaire

Salinas Turns to Home Court in Battle With TV Azteca Bondholders
19/08/2026, Bloomberg, Michael O'Boyle

Braskem's Mexico Unit Files for Chapter 11 Bankruptcy in US
18/08/2026, Bloomberg, Dorothy Ma and Giovanna Bellotti Azevedo

Mexico Explores Ways to Regulate Social Media Among Children
17/08/2026, Bloomberg, Alex Vasquez

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US Sanctions Fishing Fleet Accused of Shipping Cocaine to Mexico
20/08/2026, Bloomberg, Maya Averbuch

Flying for El Chapo's sons: The rise and fall of a mysterious cartel pilot
21/08/2026, LA Times, Keegan Hamilton

Mexico's Extortion Level Hits 11-Year High as Other Crimes Fall
17/08/2026, Bloomberg, Maya Averbuch

Avocado pickers in Mexico welcome restart of exports to US, but security fears remain
16/08/2026, AP, María Verza and Armando Solís

Notable blogs in English on Mexico

- CrashOut Media – The Narco Graduation of Iván
- MXPE – Against the USMCA
- Mexico Decoded – How Did Mexico's Wealthiest Man Build His Fortune?
- Miranda Intelligence daily reports on Substack

Photo of the Week



The Interoceanic Corridor of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec in Coatzacoalcos. *Photographer: César Rodríguez/Bloomberg*