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### **Title: Mexico's mess [Canadian tourist murders]**

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**Published:** Feb 28, 2006

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Mexico's mess

Tuesday, February 28, 2006, Page A18

A mere 24 hours after two Canadian tourists were savagely murdered in their hotel room, the Mexican state prosecutor emphatically asserted that he had identified the two culprits. A day later, Bello Melchor Rodriguez y Carrillo added that the deaths of Domenico and Annunziata Ianiero were the result of a professional hit, and that the killers had scuttled home to Canada. The next day, Mr. Rodriguez claimed that there were now three probable suspects, and that robbery was also a possible motive, although he did not know whether anything was missing. As Public Safety Minister Stockwell Day declared with remarkable restraint, "This thing is taking on some bizarre proportions."

There are now enough eyewitness reports from the scene of the crime to suspect that Mexican authorities have seriously bungled the investigation. Worse, there are plausible reasons to believe they have produced convenient suspects to preserve their own vital tourism industry. It is time the Canadian government forcefully presented these concerns to the Mexican state and federal governments. And Canada should ensure that no suspects are extradited to Mexico to face charges without solid evidence against them. (So far, the purported felons appear to be two "soccer moms" from Thunder Bay.)

There are serious grounds for worry. In Mexico for their daughter's wedding, the Ianieros were staying in a luxurious Playa del Carmen resort in the state of Quintana Roo, south of Cancun. On Feb. 20, they were found with their throats slit. Although Mr. Rodriguez issued virtually instant bulletins on his miraculous progress, there is a huge

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gap between his blithe claims and reports from the scene. Tourists in the hotel say they were allowed to fly home without questioning. Two of the suspects were among those who boarded their charter flight unimpeded. Maids were mopping up blood in the hall within hours of the grisly discovery. Even the scene of the crime was dubiously secured. Tourists wandered freely along the corridor outside the room; one reportedly saw a corpse on the floor.

As if that were not bad enough, the bodies were apparently removed with haste from the hotel. Although the corpses are expected to be examined in Canada after autopsies in Mexico, they have reportedly been embalmed. The RCMP, although it offered to co-operate early last week, received an official request for assistance only on the weekend. This adds up to a very disturbing picture.

Mexico is our number-one foreign tourist destination. Nearly 500,000 Canadians visited in the first quarter of 2005 alone. After Hurricane Wilma tore through Quintana Roo last fall, Mexican President Vicente Fox toured the region, earmarking millions for reconstruction and tax credits, bidding farewell to stranded tourists with the optimistic wish, "See you again soon." The industry, in fact, is a lifeline. In a report last month, the Mexican Tourism Secretariat declared that it is now a state priority as a source of wealth, jobs and stability, worth fully 8 per cent of GDP in 2004. And Canada is the second-largest source of those tourists.

Quintana Roo's reputation, if not the nation's reputation, is now on the line. Only two months ago, two Europeans were murdered in nearby Tulum. As Mr. Day tersely noted, "They don't want to have any sense there's any dangers in their own country, but clearly at times there are." The Mexican government should take action. It is not just the killings that are marring its name. It is the botched investigation -- and the hauntingly apparent cover-up

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**#1.** To: **out damned spot (#0)**

I'd like to know what idiot would ever go to MX for vacation and give them hard earned money. The corrupt filthy MX that gives its visitors Montezuma's Revenge, unless they are raped and murdered, or unjustly jailed first. MX can go to hell.

**IndieTX** posted on 2006-02-28 23:24:13 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

**#2.** To: **IndieTX (#1)**

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I don't know, any one with a bit of sense sure wouldn't.

I have been to Canada, and Mexico, Canada far out the best place, beautiful place. I think a lot of attraction is they hadn't so far turned into city mergering with city, sprawl every where.

**calawah98** posted on 2006-02-28 23:39:05 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

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**#3.** To: **IndieTX** ([#1](#))

I haven't entered Mexico since 1975 -- and I can drop a rifle shot in that country from my front porch. However, I do admit to pissing through the border fence on frequent occasions.

**JackelopeBreeder** posted on 2006-02-28 23:43:06 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

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