

## The scenario for a new 'Cristero revolt'

A year ago, *EIR* published exclusive reports on the details and strategic importance of Jesuit-run peasant violence in the southernmost state of Chiapas. The key ingredients: a backward, largely Indian population; close proximity to Mexico's vital Reforma oil fields; one of the most entrenched positions of the Theology of Liberation Church forces in Mexico; and increasing "spillover" effects from violence in neighboring Guatemala.

Now the region is being plunged into a major crisis under the code name, "the New Cristero Rebellion." In the 1920s, peasants in economically depressed west central Mexico were formed into shock troops against Mexico's national government under the banners of traditionalist Catholic teachings. The uprising was supervised by Wall Street financial and oil interests; The U.S. ambassador at the time, J. P. Morgan partner Dwight Morrow, administered Cristero/government negotiations on the scene. Leading Anglo-American theoretician Walter Lippmann issued marching orders on the conflict direct from the pages of the Council on Foreign Relations' journal in New York, *Foreign Affairs*.

The "New Cristero Rebellion" substitutes "Christian-Marxist" ideology for the traditionalist slogans of the 1920s, and the backward south for the west central highlands. The spark today is spillover from Central America.

### The Guatemala quandary

At the end of June 3,000 Guatemalans entered Mexico's Chiapas state asking for refugee status. The choice for Mexico: let them stay, setting a precedent for further massive influxes which would destabilize the Chiapas region and provide the infrastructure for left terrorist groups that could turn their sights on the Mexican oil fields—or turn them back and face an international outcry about "denial of human rights."

The Mexican government announced three weeks later that only 48 Guatemalans had been found to be legitimate refugees from political persecution, and the rest would be returned.

Mexico's gamut of left and human rights groups, which had mobilized for months in anticipation of such

a government predicament, unleashed a torrent of protest. The head of the Mexican Front for Human Rights, Laureano Luna, told the press that his organization will appeal the ruling to the United Nations. A spokesman for the U.N. High Commission on Refugees, which sent a delegation to the scene last week, stated that returning the refugees to Guatemala was tantamount to signing their death warrant. The Jesuit-run *Uno mas Uno*, the newspaper that is leading the campaign against the government, published an editorial stating that civil war is about to break out in Guatemala and that this is just "the beginning of an endless flow of Guatemalan refugees who will run away from torture and death."

The same week leaders of Mexico's left and "Theology of Liberation" groups met in a summit of the "Christian-Marxist" dialogue in Mexico City. One of the topics was "repression of peasants" by government and army forces in Chiapas, and the Guatemalan refugee issue. On July 23 a leading Jesuit-linked columnist, Manuel Buendía, announced a Northern Ireland technique: 30 peasants in Chiapas were starting a hunger strike.

The personnel at the meeting were identical to the support networks within Mexico for Central American leftist insurgency, a fact of special importance in the midst of renewed terrorism on a regional basis. Pacing the concurrent developments was the retooling of the Socialist International's Eden Pastora in Nicaragua as a new "Che Guevara" of the region, and Pastora's hookup with the "International Brigades" of Panama's Hugo Spadafora.

Who's coordinating the New Cristero Rebellion from the top? Evidence points to Father Theodore Hesburgh, president of Notre Dame University, as one of the most important links in the chain of command.

Hesburgh is in the top echelon of the Rockefeller/Council on Foreign Relations apparatus currently being investigated for ties to the fascist P-2 Masonic lodge in Italy. Chairman of the board of the Rockefeller Foundation and longtime president of the Overseas Development Council, the official sponsor of the Brandt Commission report in the United States, Hesburgh chaired the Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy and shaped its policy of sealing the border with Mexico—a prescription for exploding U.S.-Mexico relations and destabilizing Mexico.

Hesburgh maintains two agents as his "eyes and ears" on Mexico. One is Jorge Bustamante, the Mexican immigration expert parked at the Colegio de Mexico, who studied under Hesburgh at Notre Dame.

The other is Father Claude Pomerleau of Notre Dame's political science faculty, one of the closest individuals in the U.S. to the "liberationist" priests of Mexico's south, and the chief source for the *Wall Street Journal's* July 21 gameplan for creating "civil war" conditions out of Mexican Church-state conflict.

## 'Church-state war is near'

The following quotes were taken from a front-page article by George Getschow in the July 21 issue of the Wall Street Journal. The article was titled: "Religious Conflict—Mexico's Old Rivalry Lingers Despite Truce."

The centuries-old conflict between the Mexican Roman Catholic Church and the state lives on. The hostilities generally aren't bloody today, but the possibility that some spark could ignite another civil war is always present, for the conflict has left festering scars.

As a result of the power struggle, Mexico has imposed the most anticlerical and antireligious laws in the non-Communist world.

But the "Mother Church" still represents to millions of Mexicans an attractive antithesis to the government's atheistic dogma.

"... Its choice is to either continue as a quiet defender of the status quo or become a strong voice against political and economic injustices in Mexican society," says Father Claude Pomerleau, a Latin American Church specialist at the University of Notre Dame in Indiana. . . .

Rising unemployment, income disparity and political repression in the oil-rich land are stirring revolutionary sentiment among a few bishops and many lower level clergy. In fact, in southern Mexico, an area of widespread poverty, violent clashes between the army and hundreds of peasants have embroiled the clergy in the most bitter struggle since the Cristero Rebellion in the 1920s.

"The repression is as severe as anything in Latin America," Arturo Lona Reyes, the bishop of Tehuantepec in the southern state of Oaxaca, charged. . . . Bishop Lona Reyes and several other southern bishops espouse the "Theology of Liberation," which preaches popular resistance to politically and economically repressive governments.

"There's growing enmity among poor people, and their local clergy toward the government," says David Ungerleide, the editor of *Christus*, an influential Mexico City-based Jesuit magazine. "If it doesn't change, civil war may be unavoidable."

## Hesburgh aide: 'Jesuits best'

The July 21 *Wall Street Journal* article on the potential for new, fratricidal Church-state conflict in Mexico was datelined "Dolores Hidalgo, Mexico." But *EIR* investigations reveal that it was actually planned in South Bend, Indiana, by Father Theodore Hesburgh's expert on the

Mexican Church, Claude Pomerleau. Pomerleau confessed that author George Getschow discussed the article frequently with him over the past month and that he shaped Getschow's thinking on the major points in the article. Getschow cites Pomerleau in the article.

Pomerleau, an unabashed promoter of the "Theology of Liberation" doctrine with intimate first-hand knowledge of the Mexican Church, is, like Hesburgh, an ordained priest of the Holy Cross order. The order, he states, was established in the late 19th century "on some of the same principles as the Jesuits."

In a recent conversation, Pomerleau made the following points:

"I've spent considerable time in the south, in Chiapas and Oaxaca. There is simply no participation by the people on the bottom, and the pent-up anger could explode at any time. I don't want to make an unqualified claim that rebellion is at hand, but if economic pressures suddenly worsen, the anger could well up.

"The only alternative organization to the [ruling] PRI [party] in these areas is the Church. The Church and state are competing for loyalties, and in a showdown, I see no doubt that the peasants and Indians will leave the PRI and maintain their 400-year-old religious loyalties.

"Arturo Lona, the bishop of Tehuantepec, has the most authentic credentials as a popular leader. The Communist Party, which has gotten the headlines, is the most naive, unradical, unradicalizing, group. Samuel Ruiz [bishop of Chiapas] is the most important intellectual leader. In Chiapas under Ruiz, there is a sense of cooperation among militant Church people that doesn't exist anywhere else.

"In Mexico the best group working in the Church area—scholarly, well informed, active—are the Jesuits. I say this without any qualification, even though I'm a member of a rival order. Of the Jesuit organizations, the two best are the Centro de Estudios Educativos [CEE] and the Centro de Estudios Sociales [CES]. The CEE is privately funded, by the Jesuits, fronted by lay people. Then there's *Christus*, another Jesuit publication. That's a different animal, much more radical, explicitly Theology of Liberation. The Jesuits' best theologian works there, a good friend of mine, Luis del Valle.

"There is serious division in the Jesuits, but less than in any other group. They've most successfully gone through a renewal, to give more resources to the poor than the rich. It's a very interesting approach, of rather radical social renewal.

"The other Church person to keep in mind is Pepe Alvarez e Icaza, head of Cencos. He's a longtime lay leader, also a good friend of mine, and very, very close friend with [bishop of Cuernavaca] Méndez Arceo. As an intellectual he's somewhat exhausted, he hasn't found his point of focus and integration. But he's the best guy for contacts, and is especially good for liaison with Protestant groups."