

Central America

'Population warfare' takes bloody toll at behest of Haig, Socialist International

by Dennis Small, Latin America Editor

A strong sense of déjà vu was aroused by the press coverage Christmas week of the latest tour through the Central American region of Sr. Felipe González, the head of the Spanish Socialist Party and one of the leading lights of the Socialist International. González hopped around Panama, Cuba, Mexico, and Nicaragua for a week in mid-December, where he met with Panamanian President Arístides Royo, Castro (twice), Mexican President López Portillo, Nicaraguan Junta member Daniel Ortega, and various socialist political figures in the area. González's subject with each was the crisis in Central America, and the upcoming March 1982 elections in El Salvador in particular.

That sense of déjà vu stems from González's nearly identical shuttle activities precisely one year ago, in December 1980. At that time, the Spanish Socialist was the principal liaison between the Central American insurrectionary forces and the Socialist International apparatus that was backing them. González, in fact, flitted between Washington, Panama, and Havana in the first week of December 1980, and personally activated the left's "final offensive" in El Salvador—the violent uprising of that country's opposition forces that kicked off the meat-grinder civil war.

At that time, we issued an extensive dossier on the Central America crisis, a dossier which stunned the major capitals of the world for the "novelty" of its analysis. *EIR* argued that the principal actors responsible for triggering civil strife across Central America were: 1) the **Socialist International**, who openly bragged that they were financing "wars of liberation" in the Third World; 2) the **Society of Jesus**, or Jesuits, whose Theology of Liberation movement provides the vital infrastructure for the guerrillas; and 3) **Alexander Haig** and others within the Reagan administration and around think tanks like the **Heritage Foundation** who provided the "right" foil to the Jesuit/Socialist "left."

EIR also revealed one year ago that the central policy objectives of this axis were: 1) to trigger warfare that would deliberately depopulate Central America, as per the dicta of the Carter administration's genocidal *Global 2000 Report*. As one of its authors, State Department official Thomas Ferguson, stated in a February interview

printed in *EIR*: "The government of El Salvador failed to lower their population. Now they get a civil war because of it"; 2) to split up the emerging U.S.-Mexico alliance for development, by duping Reagan into backing the "rightist" forces in the area while pushing Mexican President López Portillo into supporting the "left"; and 3) to use a polarized environment in the region, and around Cuba in particular, to set another strategic minefield between East and West.

The year's events in Central America have abundantly and tragically confirmed our original evaluation.

There were three distinct offensives launched by Haig and the Socialists in the course of 1981; in January-February, in July-August, and again in November—all designed to provoke a total explosion. In each case, that explosion was narrowly averted thanks to diplomatic and political "fire-brigade" initiatives by the López Portillo administration in Mexico, which was at the center of eliciting support for a negotiated solution from the Vatican, Western Europe, and most directly, some of President Reagan's more realistic friends and advisers.

The result of this series of stand-offs is that Central America at the end of 1981 has still not suffered the massive convulsion Haig et al. are seeking; but the policy of deliberate depopulation gained important ground. As an upcoming *EIR* economic survey will document in depth, the fragile economies of Central America were devastated in the course of 1981. What the Salvadoran insurrectionists of the FDP/FMNLF (Revolutionary Democratic Front/Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front) failed to accomplish through targeting vital economic infrastructure for demolition, the International Monetary Fund completed through application of conditionalities in countries like Costa Rica. The result has been negative economic growth rates in every country in the area, and the creation of masses of refugees: *EIR* estimates that in El Salvador and Nicaragua alone over 10 percent of the total population are today refugees.

Three rounds

This cold-blooded process of devastation was thrown into motion on Dec. 26, 1980, with the declara-

tion by the FDR/FMNLFF opposition forces in El Salvador that they were launching their "final offensive" to seize power or at least ensure that "the situation in El Salvador will be red-hot by the time Mr. Reagan arrives" in the White House on Jan. 20, 1981.

That it was. Although the military side of the operation was woefully inadequate to defeat the Salvadoran army, it created the political climate desired by Secretary of State Alexander Haig. The loquacious General issued his famous, now-discredited "White Paper" in February 1981, in which he totally covered up the role of both the Jesuits and the Socialist International, and blamed the entire destabilization of Central America on the Cuban and Soviet governments. Haig used this "big lie" to help freeze U.S.-Soviet relations, at precisely the point that President Brezhnev had expressed his willingness to meet with President Reagan to discuss world problems.

The State Department deployed special emissaries to Europe and Latin America in February to try to organize support for Haig's confrontationist approach. Simultaneously, the Foreign Minister of Mexico, Jorge Castañeda—a Socialist International agent who frequently breaks out of López Portillo's control—began to call for Mexico to break diplomatic relations with the Salvadoran Junta. This move would have aligned Mexico with the area's left, against the United States, and led quickly into full-scale regional war. Mexico itself would have been ravaged by the consequences.

But López Portillo, despite growing leftist pressure at home, refused to break diplomatic relations with the Salvadoran Junta. He organized various Latin American nations in favor of a negotiated political solution to the Salvadoran crisis, and issued a benchmark communiqué to that effect after an April 1981 meeting with Panamanian President Arístides Royo. Their call also urged *all* foreign powers—meaning both the Cubans and the United States—to halt arms shipments into El Salvador so that the crisis there could be cooled out. Brazil told Haig's envoy General Vernon Walters that they found the State Department "White Paper" a misleading, incompetent document, and that the objective situation did not justify any Brazilian intervention into Central America.

The Vatican also aligned itself with the Mexican call for a negotiated solution, through the Archbishop of El Salvador, Arturo Rivera Damas. And the Schmidt government in West Germany sent Schmidt confidant Hans-Jürgen Wischnewski on a tour of Central America which directly countered Haig's provocative approach.

The second round of provocations began promptly in July. The most radical faction in Nicaragua strengthened its control within the ruling Junta in the early summer, by signing a \$100 million accord with Libya, and by purging from the government the relatively

centrist Vice-Minister of the Interior, Eden Pastora. Simultaneously, the Socialist Foreign Minister of France, Claude Cheysson, made a week-long tour of Central America to communicate the Socialist International's full backing for a renewed uprising in the area. Similar visits were made by Father Theodore Hesburgh of Notre Dame University, who runs extensive radical church networks in Latin America; from a Khomeini patron, U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark; and from the various regional Superiors of the Society of Jesus, who gathered in Panama in July.

The effects of this mobilization violently emerged on July 31, when Panamanian strongman Omar Torrijos was murdered in a plane crash. Reliable intelligence sources informed *EIR* at the time that Torrijos had been working quietly with López Portillo to try to cool tensions in the region, and the Jesuits and Socialist International therefore viewed him as an obstacle to their plans.

Haig meanwhile moved to put the "right" side of the scenario in place, quietly increasing the military presence of U.S. and various surrogate American forces across Central America. On Aug. 25, *EIR* exposed the fact that a "September Scenario" to blow up Central America had been put in place by Haig et al., and communicated more detailed information on these findings to various governments and intelligence agencies.

The Mexican government, for its part, foresaw what officials described in private at the time as the imminent "Vietnamization" of Central America by Haig and allied forces. On Aug. 28, they issued a communiqué with the French government, in which the opposition in El Salvador was described as a "representative political force" that had to be brought into negotiations.

Despite strenuous efforts by Haig, and attempts within Latin America to counter-organize against Mexico, López Portillo met with President Reagan in Grand Rapids, Michigan on Sept. 17-18, and convinced Reagan that the Mexican option for El Salvador was sounder than Haig's. Four days later, Reagan met with Salvadoran President José Napoleón Duarte. In a 180-degree shift in American policy, he urged Duarte to reach a negotiated settlement to the war, and even publicly suggested that Mexico could help to mediate such a solution.

This rebuff from Reagan silenced Haig and his Jesuit partners only until early November, when they launched their third attempt of the year to blow Central America sky-high. Haig, Thomas Enders, U.N. Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, and other U.S. officials all issued highly provocative attacks at the time on the government of Cuba and Nicaragua, charging them with fomenting revolutions throughout Central America, and threatened them with the possibility of direct military action to stop these activities. A naval block-

ade, for example, was openly discussed in the press as a live American option.

And Henry Kissinger was deployed to South America to line up support for Haig's provocation. He scored his greatest success in Argentina, where the faction favoring Argentine involvement in Central America came to power in a coup in mid-December.

Haig's "mad dog" routine received indispensable support from a cast of characters including Fidel Castro and various Nicaraguan leaders. Their mutual insults, threats, and provocations quickly became known among Washington insiders as the "Al and Fidel Show." Tensions in the region thus continued to mount steadily.

Once again López Portillo intervened, issuing a pointed declaration on Nov. 20 in which he demanded an end to the "verbal terrorism" on both sides. Mexico received enough backup in this effort from the pro-détente faction in the Soviet Union, from military realists in the U.S. Pentagon, and from among other Latin American nations, to succeed in putting a political gag over Fidel Castro's mouth as of this writing. Although the Nicaraguans have not yet responded to the same pressure, Haig was unable to muster enough votes at the Dec. 2 meeting of the Organization of American States to pass a resolution condemning Cu-

ban and Nicaraguan "expansionism." He had to settle for a communiqué endorsing elections in El Salvador before political negotiations occur between the warring bands, a position Mexico strongly and justifiably opposes.

The economic factor

What awaits Central America in 1982 is renewed efforts to unleash total population warfare in the region. The Socialist International has reiterated its commitment to plunge the area into chaos, as reflected in the latest tour by Felipe González. The Jesuits, although besieged by the Vatican, remain very powerful in Central America. The new Galtieri government in Argentina gives Haig an additional factor of support in the Southern Cone for his interventionist strategy.

Both left and right intend to use the prelude to the elections in El Salvador and Guatemala scheduled for early 1982 to accelerate regional mayhem. The initiatives and political combinations which Mexico found adequate to hold Haig and the Socialists at bay throughout 1981 will be inadequate for the task in 1982. The economic devastation of Central America, its growing depopulation, must itself be reversed if there is to be hope of maintaining any kind of political stability in that war-torn area.

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