

Massacre in Chiapas furthers British plot to destroy Mexico

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On Dec. 22, 1997, in Acteal, a hamlet in the municipality of San Pedro Chenalhó in the northern part of Mexico's south-eastern state of Chiapas, unknown assailants brutally murdered 45 defenseless people, including 15 children. The intellectual and material authors of the crime, which bore the marks of a satanic ritual, are still unidentified. Yet, well before the Attorney General's office began its investigation, the narco-terrorist Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) accused the government of President Ernesto Zedillo, the Army, and the ruling PRI party of having ordered the massacre. In a Dec. 23 communiqué, Sebastián Guillén, the EZLN's so-called "Subcommander Marcos," charged that "Zedillo has already gone down in history as the murderer of Indians, and his hands are stained with Acteal's blood." Citing no evidence, "Marcos" affirmed that "60 PRI paramilitaries, sponsored by the Federal and state governments, murdered 45 Indians with high-caliber weapons."

Almost immediately thereafter, Raúl Vera, the Co-Adjutor Bishop of San Cristóbal de las Casas (Chiapas), left for Europe to seek support for the EZLN's cause. He declared there that "ex-military and ex-police officers are the ones who train paramilitary groups in Chiapas. . . . Some PRI deputies sponsor weapons trafficking." Using EZLN rhetoric, Vera said that "this war is an attempt to halt the profound change already taking place in the region; this will undoubtedly affect the interests of the *caciques* [large landowners] who up until now have wielded economic and political power" in the region.

When the Attorney General's office asked Bishop Vera to substantiate his charges, he could not do so. Nonetheless, the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and media controlled by the British oligarchy organized an international campaign focussed on the following points:

1. Disarming all paramilitary groups, except the EZLN.
2. Withdrawal of the national Armed Forces from Chiapas.
3. The resignation of President Ernesto Zedillo.
4. The resignations of Government Secretary Emilio Chuayfett, and of Chiapas Gov. Julio César Ruiz Ferro (they have already resigned).

5. Reform the Constitution, to concede territorial "autonomy" to 56 supposed ethnic groups, the "Zapatista" interpretation of the so-called San Andrés Larráinzar agreements between the government and the EZLN.

The Acteal massacre was timely for the EZLN, giving it the opportunity to wash its hands of the massacres and crimes it had committed prior to this time, and to retake the political initiative for a final offensive to break the Zedillo government's resistance to the British plan to balkanize the country through the creation of autonomous indian regions. This would make the country ungovernable, and would quickly destroy the nation-state. The British vultures in the NGOs and the media immediately jumped on the Acteal massacre, to orchestrate the international side of the operation.

The British offensive against Mexico took off on Jan. 1, 1994 with the EZLN's violent eruption in Chiapas, and the unleashing of an increasingly open civil war against Mexico's national institutions: the Presidency, the Army, and the Catholic Church. The country's destabilization gained momentum with the still-unresolved political assassinations of the PRI's Presidential candidate, Luis Donaldo Colosio, in March 1994, and of the PRI's Secretary General, José Francisco Ruiz Massieu, the following September. Coming on top of the May 1993 assassination of Cardinal Juan Jesús Posadas Ocampo, these murders provoked profound unrest among the population, preparing it psychologically for the ensuing steps of Britain's irregular warfare.

Despite the fact that it never disavowed its original declaration of war against the Mexican government and Army, in the course of 1994 the EZLN was formally recognized by the government of Carlos Salinas de Gortari as the interlocutor for Chiapas's indians, and implicitly, as a national interlocutor, as a result of pressure exerted by the international apparatus which spawned it.

In March 1995, with Ernesto Zedillo now President, the government decreed a Law for Dialogue, Reconciliation and Dignified Peace in Chiapas, which conferred de facto belligerent status on the EZLN, and created a Legislative Commission for Concord and Pacification (Cocopa). Absurdly, since EZLN sympathizers were a majority in Cocopa, it became simply a chorus for the narco-terrorists. This is confirmed by the bill presented by Cocopa, interpreting the agreements signed by the government and the EZLN in San Andrés Larráinzar, Chiapas. The bill proposes a constitutional reform to grant legal status to autonomous indian zones, and was immediately backed by the EZLN, which demanded it be approved in Congress with no changes.

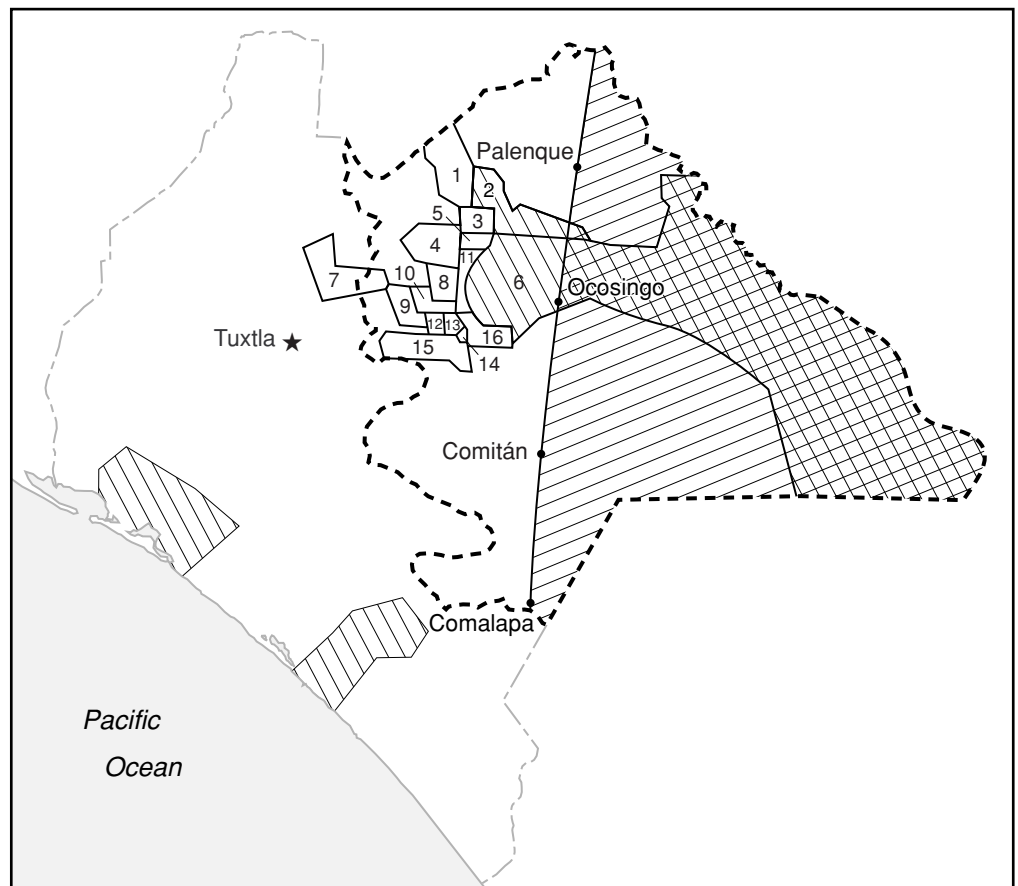
In December 1996, the Zedillo government rejected the bill because of its obvious unconstitutionality, and offered a counter-proposal which was immediately rejected by the EZLN and its mouthpieces. The EZLN obstructed negotiations and accused the government of betraying the San Andrés Larráinzar agreements. It then made any new negotiations contingent on passage of Cocopa's bill in the Congress, black-

FIGURE 1
The EZLN is on the move in Chiapas

- Bishop Ruiz's diocese
- ▨ 'Liberated territory'
- ▨ Municipalities of heavy drug eradication activity in 1992-94*
- ▨ Municipalities with EZLN 'autonomous zones' (population, in thousands)

1. Tila (49)
2. Tumbalá (22)
3. Yajalón (22)
4. Simojovel (28)
5. Chilón (67)
6. Ocosingo (121)
7. Bochil (15)
8. Pantelhó (13)
9. Larráinzar (16)
10. Chenalhó (30)
11. Sitalá (7)
12. Mitontic (6)
13. Tenejapa (27)
14. Huixtán (18)
15. Oxchuc (35)
16. San Cristóbal (89)

* official information



mail which is fully backed by the British-controlled international apparatus behind the EZLN.

During the past four years of conflict, a multitude of international meetings have been held in support of the EZLN, while national "civilian" networks coalesced into the so-called Zapatista National Liberation Front (FZLN).

At the beginning of 1996, an EZLN clone, the Popular Revolutionary Army (EPR), emerged in the poppy-growing regions of Guerrero and Oaxaca states. Irregular warfare intensified against the nation-state, while the EZLN kept up the farce of negotiating with the government. In the July 1997 mid-term elections, the EZLN's electoral wing, the PRD (Party of the Democratic Revolution), protected by the George Bush-Salinas mafia within the PRI (including the powerful former Government Secretary Fernando Gutiérrez Barrios), won key positions nationwide: It took almost one-third of the Chamber of Deputies, and the post of Mexico City Mayor, which was handed to Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas.

'Autonomy' and oil

The EZLN and its real commander, San Cristóbal de las Casas Bishop Samuel Ruiz, cynically confirmed that their expanding "autonomous" regions were the direct cause of the Acteal violence in December 1997. In an interview with the

Argentine daily *Clarín*, published Dec. 29, Ruiz said that "violence erupted in Chenalhó after the creation of autonomous settlements of the Zapatistas' civilian base, an autonomy centered on indian customs. Dual power developed, and traditional political leaders resorted to violence to halt that process."

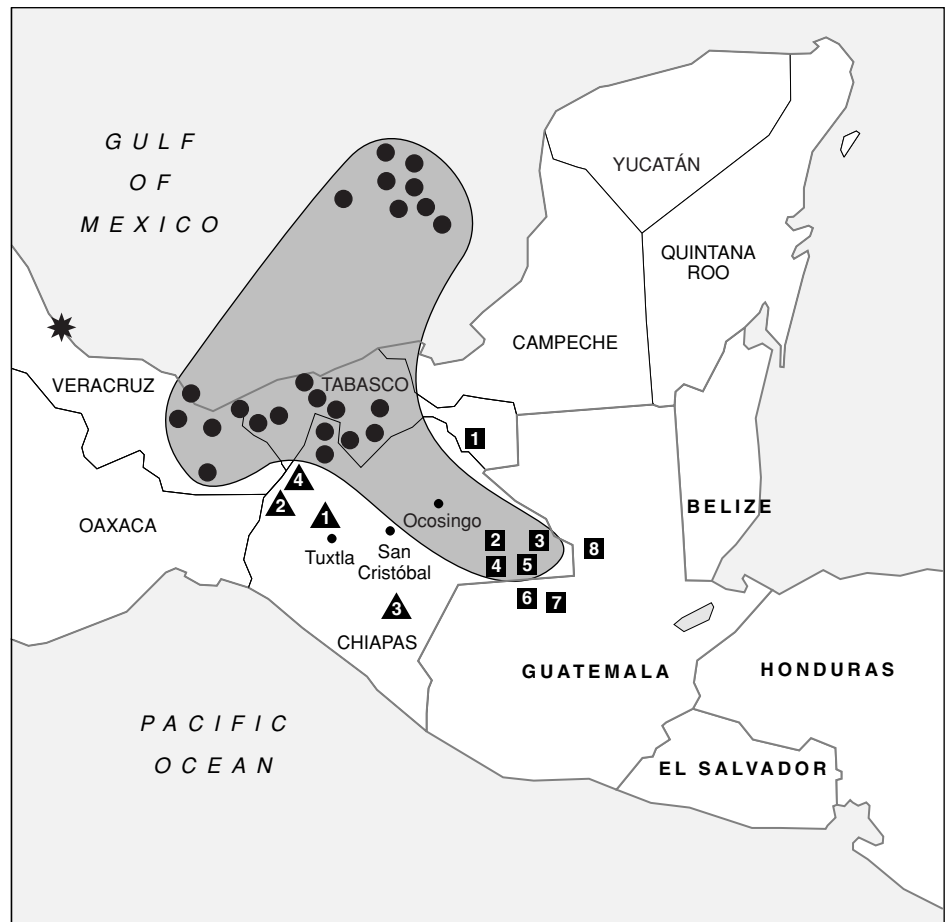
Such "autonomous" zones are part of the EZLN's strategy of territorial expansion, a deployment outside of the area that the government had already foolishly ceded to them, for the duration of the negotiations. The EZLN considers these areas to be "liberated territory," and they are located in the eastern region of Chiapas, including the major ecological reserve of Montes Azules. The new Zapatista expansion zones are in the center-west of the state, in the direction of the state capital, Tuxtla Gutiérrez, passing through the important city of San Cristóbal de las Casas, the seat of the Catholic diocese headed by Bishop Ruiz, in whose jurisdiction the vast majority of the Zapatista operations are concentrated (see **Figure 1**).

The "autonomous" municipalities are political artifacts which have led to conflicts with the communities and the legitimate authorities which are being displaced by them. In these areas, the EZLN is also recruiting among the population through sheer intimidation and terror. Notwithstanding the international uproar in support of these zones, there is nothing

FIGURE 2

Mexico's Southeast: energy resources

- = oil fields
- = potential oil deposits
- ★ = Laguna Verde nuclear plant
- ▲ = hydroelectric plants
 1. Chicoasén (1,500,000 MW)
 2. Malpaso (1,080,000 MW)
 3. La Angostura (900,000 MW)
 4. Peñitas (420,000 MW)
- = planned hydroelectric plants
 1. Usumacinta
 2. Jataté
 3. Lacantún
 4. Tzaconejá
 5. Santo Domingo
 6. Chixoy
 7. Ixcán
 8. De la Pasión



democratic about how they are being set up, nor do they represent any kind of majority among the population. What they boil down to, is a bunch of “civilian” Zapatistas, organized into paramilitary groups, who do not respect the prohibition of the use of firearms established by the “Law for Dialogue.” This law states that the hooded Zapatistas can keep, but not use, their weapons, and can do so only within their existing “zones of influence.”

As might be expected, this situation has encouraged the formation of opposed paramilitary groups, since the presence of government forces of law and order in these regions is almost non-existent.

But the Zapatista strategy of territorial expansion has another purpose as well. The “autonomous” municipalities are being established on top of extraordinary potential reserves of oil and other natural resources. **Figure 2** indicates the energy resources of the southeast of Mexico, including this potential oil zone. Within this zone, the Reforma-Pichucalco structure, in the northernmost part of the state of Chiapas, is today the third largest producing field in the country; specialists believe that its potential reserves are surpassed only by the gigantic Persian Gulf deposits of Bergen in Kuwait, and Ghawar in Saudi Arabia. In the center of Chiapas, in the area around

Ocosingo—hard-core Zapatista territory—there is another major oil structure, although it is not yet in production. And in the southeast of the state, along the border with Guatemala, there is another large, unexploited structure in the Landantún region. These reserves make Chiapas one of Mexico’s leading states, in terms of oil potential.

Chiapas is also home to four major hydroelectric plants, which generate 55% of the country’s hydroelectric output, which amounts to about 20% of the country’s total energy generation. These four hydro plants supply energy to 17 different states, as well as 50% of the electricity needs of the 20 million inhabitants of Mexico City, the country’s capital. In short, the British strategists behind the EZLN are out to seize control over nothing less than the energy reserve of Mexico.

Under Zapatista control, the mentioned areas are also becoming “liberated zones” for the drug trade. The insistent demand for the Mexican Army to be expelled from these areas is clearing the way for the drug trade, which has taken over large parts of the state in recent years. The EZLN has managed to significantly neutralize the aggressive government drug eradication programs that had existed in the municipalities of Ocosingo and Tumbalá, in particular, before the Zapatista uprising (see Figure 1).

Zedillo: 'We must break the perverse cycle'

The international media have gone out of their way to cover up this strategic reality of the Chiapas conflict, while at the same time publishing, along with many national media outlets, endless accounts on the sub-human conditions in which "Zapatista" refugees are forced to live. They constantly accuse the Mexican government of not addressing the needs of that part of the population, but they fail to report that the Zapatistas themselves fanatically refuse to allow any official aid to enter their "autonomous" zones. President Zedillo referred to precisely this on Jan. 10: "This is a perverse cycle which we will break with the fundamental instruments of the state, the instruments of legal justice, and the instruments of social justice."

In order to execute this Presidential commitment, it will be necessary to put an end to the impunity with which the EZLN has imposed its evil control in parts of the state, and to reverse the arbitrary establishment of "autonomous" municipalities. The new Government Secretary, Francisco Labastida, identified precisely this point, along with the existence of armed groups, as the fundamental causes of the violent confrontations in the state:

"Social and political tension in the state has been worsened by the creation of autonomous municipalities, and by turning one part of society against another. . . . Today this region is worse off than it was before the appearance of the EZLN," Labastida stated recently. On another occasion, he announced that "the Mexican state is obligated to stop this fratricidal struggle which is going on, [because] nobody has the moral authority to call for the law and justice to be applied only to the other side. . . . [Violence] will only be solved with the strict application of the law, without any distinction regarding ethnic groups, or political persuasion or groups. . . . It is indispensable to stop the possession, transportation, and illegal use of weapons by any group or person. . . . Insofar as there are armed groups, there will be aggressions among them," he concluded.

Labastida announced the government's firm decision to not approve any constitutional reform which would legitimize the existence of autonomous territories, and he explained that the problems of the country's different ethnic groups can be dealt with "without falling into autonomy, as the armed group demands, because that would imply the beginning of the balkanization of the country. . . . That would imply disputes or conflicts over control of the riches that those municipalities have—water, minerals, oil, land—which would lead to confrontations not only with government agencies, but also with other Mexicans."

The EZLN, Samuel Ruiz's diocese, and the PRD answered the government with a vitriolic defense of the "autonomous" municipalities, and the EZLN's supposed right to bear arms. These groups also called for the removal of the Mexican army from the entire area, and the disarming of civilian groups which are opposed to the EZLN.

On Jan. 9, Gen. José Gómez Salazar, the commander of

the Seventh Military Region, with headquarters in Chiapas, asserted, speaking in a personal capacity only, that there were documents which proved beyond a doubt that there are links between Bishop Samuel Ruiz and the EZLN. Readers of *EIR* will recall that the friends of Lyndon LaRouche in Mexico, the Ibero-American Solidarity Movement (MSIA), distributed a poster in 1994 which identified Samuel Ruiz as the actual "comandante" of the EZLN. At the time, Ruiz's minions answered this MSIA exposé by slanderously accusing the MSIA of issuing alleged death threats against some members of the Society of Jesus, who were supporters of Ruiz. At the end of 1996, this same slander was retailed by Father David Fernández, S.J., the director the Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez Human Rights Center, who gets money from George Soros. Simultaneously, the Fray Bartolomé de las Casas Human Rights Center, run by Bishop Ruiz, began to spread other slanders against the MSIA and LaRouche.

Now, in the context of the ongoing international offensive surrounding the Acteal massacre, these same Anglophile agents have once again slandered LaRouche and the MSIA, this time accusing them of "ideologically inspiring" the paramilitary groups in Chiapas. Such slanders are an attempt to neutralize the influence of LaRouche's ideas and analysis, which have played a major role in ripping the mask off the Zapatistas and their British masters, exposing them for what they are: paid agents of British imperialism, out to destroy the nation-state.

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