

---

## Inter-American Dialogue

---

# London's policy outlet in Washington

by Valerie Rush

Since its 1982 founding, the Washington-based think-tank, Inter-American Dialogue (IAD), has played a leading role in promoting the very British policies which have now reached a fever pitch in the campaign against Mexico. In this regard, the Dialogue has centered its policy and lobbying efforts, both in Washington and by its members in Mexico, around: a) dismantling the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI); b) targeting the military; and c) advocating drug legalization.

The Dialogue is not an “also ran” group. Founded as a “policy forum” on the Americas by establishment luminaries such as Cyrus Vance, Elliot Richardson, and David Rockefeller, the Dialogue is a critical channel of British intelligence influence into U.S. policymaking circles. The Dialogue was the architect of every major feature of George Bush’s policy towards Ibero-America. And although it has lost significant ground under Clinton, it remains a powerful policy force in Washington, and across Ibero-America. Until early 1996, for example, Clinton’s Latin American director at the National Security Council was Richard Feinberg, a former president of the Inter-American Dialogue.

The Dialogue also retains significant influence in the U.S. Congress: Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.), for example, who has argued strongly for Mexico’s decertification, is a member of the Dialogue.

Much of Britain’s influence is exercised through their assets in the Canadian establishment who are part of the Dialogue. Sitting on the Dialogue’s executive board, for example, is Ivan Head, who was the top foreign and intelligence adviser to Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau in the 1970s. Another influential Canadian member of the Dialogue is top globalization ideologue and environmentalist fanatic, Maurice Strong, who takes his orders directly from England’s Prince Philip.

### Get Mexico, ‘democratically’

Under the watchword of “democratic reform,” the Dialogue and its members inside Mexico have systematically targeted the ruling PRI party for dismantling. Mexican Inter-American Dialogue member Lorenzo Meyer, along with Jorge Castañeda and Manuel Camacho, is part of a group of pro-terrorist “intellectuals” known as the San Angel Group, which has repeatedly attacked the PRI as “authoritarian.”

Meyer, who authored a book on *Authoritarian Liberalism*, and is regularly cited by both Mexican and U.S. media as an expert on the Mexican political system, has proposed that the Presidential system in Mexico be demolished in favor of British-style parliamentarianism. In early 1997, Meyer signed a full-page advertisement, together with a number of his San Angel Group cohorts and others, calling for the creation of an electoral alliance of opposition forces to put an end to the PRI’s “authoritarian monopoly” on power.

Another signer of the ad was Mari Claire Acosta, also an active member of the Inter-American Dialogue in Mexico. Acosta is a featured player in the operations against Mexico’s military as well. The head of the Mexican Commission for the Defense and Promotion of Human Rights and a former director of London’s Amnesty International in Mexico, Acosta has led an assault on the Mexican military for alleged “corruption” and “human rights abuses.” The recent exposé showing that anti-drug chief General Gutiérrez Rebollo was on the payroll of the drug cartels, has added grist to the Dialogue’s mill.

The Dialogue and the rest of the human rights lobby have taken up the case of Army Gen. José Francisco Gallardo, as their *cause célèbre*. General Gallardo, who is in jail on charges of embezzlement and corruption, suddenly found himself converted into a “political prisoner” when, on Jan. 23, the Inter-American Human Rights Commission (CIDH) of the Organization of American States (OAS) issued a finding claiming that Gallardo had been jailed because of his attempt to expose human rights violations within the Mexican Armed Forces. The CIDH demanded Gallardo’s immediate release from jail—basing its findings on information and arguments provided by Acosta and the Dialogue network.

On Jan. 13, an article in the London *Guardian* on the Gallardo story, suggested that Mexico’s military is just as “willing to engage in torture and extra-judicial killings” as the rest of Ibero-America’s militaries, except that it has been kept on a tight leash—at least until now. But, says the *Guardian*, “Now human rights groups fear President Ernesto Zedillo may be untying the military’s hands again,” in the name of fighting drugs. The CIDH ruling, says the *Guardian*, demands “an end to the military’s untouchable status.”

The Gallardo story was also picked up by the *New York Times* on Jan. 25, under the headline, “Mexican Army Participation in Civilian Activities Causes Concern,” and by the London *Economist* of Feb. 22, which argued that not only is President Zedillo’s government corrupt, but “Worse, they have silenced whistle-blowers: Brig. Gen. Francisco Gallardo, who dared to point out Army corruption.”

The Dialogue campaign against the military of Mexico, as well as against all the national militaries in Ibero-America, goes back a decade, to a 1986-88 task force IAD established to look into “redefining military missions” and “reducing military budgets.” In 1991, IAD founding member Robert McNamara, former U.S. secretary of defense and former World

Bank president, made a big splash with this anti-military focus, in a well-publicized speech calling for “conditioning financial aid to developing countries on their reduction of military expenditures.” Today, under the rubric of “collective defense of democracy,” the Dialogue and its networks have mooted the creation of a multinational military force, under OAS control, with simultaneous “reform” of military education to weed out “traditionalists” (read: nationalists) and so-called “human rights abusers.”

For example, in August 1995, the IAD sponsored a forum in Chile, which included representatives from a number of São Paulo Forum parties, and which was addressed by Uruguayan Juan Rial, co-author of the 1990 book, *The Military and Democracy: the Future of Civil-military Relations in Latin America*. That book, and the political project associated with it, became known across Ibero-America as the Bush government’s “manual” on how to dismantle the armed forces of the continent (see *EIR*, Jan. 11, 1991, “A Handbook for Dismantling the Armed Forces of Ibero-America”). The Mexico part of the project, including a chapter in the book on the Mexican military, was under the direction of Adolfo Aguilar Zinser, Jorge Castañeda’s sidekick.

### **Push for drug legalization**

Until George Soros upstaged them by pouring in millions of dollars in the mid-1990s, the Inter-American Dialogue had been the leading establishment force lobbying in favor of drug legalization in the United States. In its April 1986 annual report, the IAD argued that the war on drugs was an abject failure, and that, “because narcotics is such a formidable problem, the widest range of alternatives must be examined, including selective legalization.” In February 1993 testimony before the U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee, Dialogue President Peter Hakim declared: “Given the scarcity of foreign aid resources, funding for drug initiatives in Latin America should either be sharply curtailed or more effectively directed to helping Latin American governments to deal with their drug problems—not ours.”

The recent inclusion of Diego García-Sayán, the director of the Andean Commission of Jurists, on the Dialogue’s membership roster, is the icing on the cake. García-Sayán is an avid proponent of drug legalization who works closely both with the coca-growers of Peru, Colombia, and Bolivia, as well as with various other fronts of drug promoter George Soros, including Human Rights Watch and the Open Society Fund’s Lindesmith Center.

### **Subversion of sovereignty**

The IAD’s anti-Mexican policies flow from its central hostility to the sovereignty of the nation-state. For example, former Dialogue president Richard Feinberg told a June 1996 gathering at Mexico’s Colegio de México: “In Latin America today, sovereignty is frequently used as a shield behind which governments seek to hide retrograde policies. In the name of

sovereignty, governments repress dissent, restrict civil society, violate labor rights, protect drug traffickers, and devastate the environment.” Feinberg added, “I know my statements will be very controversial here in Mexico. The phrase ‘national sovereignty’ was once associated with progressive causes.”

In March 1994, Feinberg went on record defending the Zapatista uprising in Chiapas as a sign of “democratization” of Mexico. He told a meeting of the Latin American Studies Association in Atlanta, Georgia, that “the relationship between free trade and democracy was proven by the recent events in Chiapas. . . . The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) is too young to have affected [the insurgents] in Chiapas, but some of them are probably alive today because of its existence.” Feinberg went on to claim responsibility for having pressured the Mexican government into negotiating with, rather than militarily defeating, the terrorist uprising in Chiapas.

The IAD has in fact offered political support for Zapatista-style insurgencies all across Ibero-America. In April 1993, it helped organize a conference at Princeton University, inviting the Presidential candidates from five Ibero-American countries, every one of them members of the narco-terrorist São Paulo Forum. They included the former leader of the Colombian M-19 Antonio Navarro Wolf, former FMLN leader Rubén Zamora of El Salvador, and PRD leader Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas of Mexico, a strong backer of the Zapatistas. The candidates were introduced at the time by Mexico’s Jorge Castañeda, whose recently released book *Utopia Disarmed*, was also promoted by the Dialogue. When the conference ended, the Dialogue brought three of the candidates to Washington, for meetings with Clinton administration officials, among them Richard Feinberg.

## **Human Rights Watch: the Soros hit squad**

by Valerie Rush

In the 1997 issue of its “World Report,” Human Rights Watch devotes its chapter on Mexico to a brazen defense of the narco-terrorist gangs wreaking havoc in that country, including a litany of alleged abuses by the Mexican military of the “human rights” of the members of these gangs. The thrust of the chapter is to target the Mexican military as “human rights abusers,” and in the name of fighting “impunity,” to demand supranational monitoring, prosecution of soldiers, and a roll-back of the military’s counterinsurgency mission.

A key obstacle to accomplishing these objectives, the report suggests, is that “the United States continues to solidify government-to-government ties with Mexico, seeking an