

from us much daring and much strength. It is not for those with a tendency toward servility. . . .

The forum known as the Inter-American Dialogue, with headquarters in the United States and made up of known leftist figures from Ibero-America, has proposed since 1982, these kinds of policies . . . of indiscriminate reduction of the Armed Forces of Ibero-America, and drastic reductions of defense budgets. . . .

To conclude, I believe it is necessary to emphasize that this integration of Ibero-America should not be interpreted as a confrontation with the United States, but as an instrument for defending our legitimate interests under the best conditions, just as the European Community does, for example.

Seineldín: Repudiate the New World Order

We excerpt here the open letter which imprisoned former colonel Mohamed Ali Seineldín addressed to Lt. Gen. Martín Antonio Balza, Chief of Staff of the Argentine Army. The letter is dated Sept. 17, 1997.

Sir:

In compliance with my unrenounceable duty as an Argentine, a former colonel in the Army, and former combatant of the Malvinas War—the latter title one which no court can take away from me—I write to express my concerns regarding the current status of our, and Ibero-America’s, Armed Forces, as it relates to our national situation, and their future role in building sovereign nations.



Take note of the following:

1. Recently an Argentine Army publication reported on a military restructuring plan, whose purported goal is to increase efficiency. As its priority, the plan indicated “rewarding quality, excellence and new technology, *support for national policy*, ethical values and the Constitution.”

In the absence of any clarification as to the meaning of “support for national policy,” I can only interpret this as total support for the socio-economic policy implemented by President Menem, dictated from abroad, in the context of which a [specific] role was assigned to the Armed Forces. . . .

2. To facilitate an accurate understanding of what I intend to develop, I find it useful to refer to, as something which has enriched my convictions, the statement made by General Juan E. Gugliamelli on December 11, 1964: “. . . socio-economic development is not only an essential element of solidarity in creating jobs and well-being. It is an unpostponable requirement of National Security.” And let me add General Charles de Gaulle’s warning: “. . . a State which, sooner or later, fails to base its legitimacy on the defense of the nation, is condemned to disappear. . . .”

3. You are aware of the fact that Henry Kissinger’s and Oliver North’s “Project Democracy” was one of the points of departure for the dismantling of the continent’s Armed Forces. Its ultimate goal was to remove [the Armed Forces] from any central role in national decision-making, and to thus subordinate them to transnational forces. [Project Democracy] knows perfectly well, and therefore fears, the Armed Forces as a pillar of the self-determination of nations.

The trap was to skillfully use the terms “democracy” and “human rights” to undermine the [military’s] prestige, and compromise the institution as such, because of the mistakes or illegal actions of some of its members. In this operation, all objectivity was tossed aside, in measuring the degrees of disintegration and chaos which threatened society. Even today, we continue to witness the permanent and calculated attempts to provoke confrontation between civilians and the military carried out by various media, to the grave detriment of our national integration. . . .

Without further delay, the Armed Forces should proceed to undo the damage done to the nation by neo-liberalism, imposed by the de facto military government of 1976, after its resounding victory over subversion. This is why we are now in the “first world” of misery, unemployment, dependence, defenselessness, and with the growth of a foreign debt which is today close to \$150 billion. Recall that when I was on active duty, I opposed the [1976] military coup. . . .

4. The campaign to destroy Ibero-America’s Armed Forces was denounced with the greatest clarity by Brazilian General Jones Correa Neto, when he resigned from his post as Chief of Staff. He blamed then-President Fernando Collor de Mello, whose ignominious fate is well known, for launching the plot against his country’s Army. We should also take note of the exemplary action of Colombian General Harold Bedoya Pizarro, commander of the Armed Forces recently fired by President Samper, [the latter] suspect because of his close ties to the drug trade. General Bedoya refused to obey orders from the United Nations, the British Empire, and the U.S. State Department, intended to de facto eliminate the military’s legal jurisdiction over its own members.

5. The Inter-American Dialogue (IAD), a non-governmental organization to which [former President] Raúl Alfonsín and [former governor of Mendoza, José] Octavio Bordón, still belong, also demands elimination of military

jurisdiction. Former defense minister Oscar Camilión, a former UN official and presumed participant in arms trafficking, is also found among the IAD's members.

In a speech to his comrades, General Bedoya emphatically stated that "the Armed Forces are not the military branch of whoever is in office, but the guarantor of sovereignty, national territorial integrity, and the Constitution, and that when orders oppose these principles, they should not be obeyed." And these words of the Colombian general, "one must not coexist either with crime, immorality, or the drug trade," give us cause for reflection.

6. What I have developed thus far, is reinforced by recent statements from Brazilian Gen. Tasso Villar de Aquino (ret.), and Adm. Sérgio Tasso Vasquez de Aquino (ret.), to the effect that "Brazil's Armed Forces accept no restrictions of any kind on national sovereignty or the technological development required for self-sufficiency in the area of defense. . . ." Without doubt, these words point to the existence of a *profound debate* in the heart of Ibero-America's Armed Forces, to define a nationally authentic role to play. It is proven that the continent's Armed Forces are victims of the decisions of the Pentagon and the U.S. State Department, entities whose security doctrine is geared toward establishing that power's global leadership. . . .

8. To the end of my days, I shall repeat that peoples who live on this earth in misery, in the midst of immense wealth, are prevented from attaining the national identity and self-determination they demand, by the fact that the majority of their political leadership has submitted to foreign directives. These have thereby inserted the Ibero-American nations into the genocidal "new world order," which an Egyptian newspaper has described as "qualified international piracy."

As a colonel in the Argentine Army, my loyalty to the legacy of [founding father Gen. José de] San Martín, has, in the solitude of my jail cell, allowed me to measure with total objectivity and precision, the magnitude of the cruelty of an international regime which abandons man to his fate, destroys the family, denies justice, tramples on solidarity, and forgets "God and the demands of His law." The Armed Forces of Ibero-America shall surely resist being accomplices of something so harmful to human dignity. Hence the increasingly intense internal deliberation among the ranks.

As my country knows, because I and other comrades opposed these plans, the Anglo-American establishment demanded, first my execution; and then, unable to attain that due to the intervention of former President Dr. Arturo Frondizi, with the complicity of local cohorts, it demanded a sentence of life imprisonment. . . .

9. The same origin which all Ibero-American nations share, imposes on their leaders an unrenounceable duty, to reject any continental policy which isolates them, or compromises the solidarity and peaceful balance of their fraternal relations, whether in the cultural, economic or military do-

main. Today, more than ever, we must defend and affirm our inalienable rights to sovereignty, for which, we need an Armed Forces dedicated, as a priority, to the national mission of freedom and greatness, the *raison d'être* of its creation and permanent existence.

The people of Argentina, and those of Ibero-America, must unite around a tough and indestructible conception of nationhood, rejecting globalization and international compromises which destroy that conception. This doesn't mean encouraging irrational isolation. To meet this objective, we need an Armed Forces linked, spiritually and materially, to the "national interest. . . ."

10. The Armed Forces shouldn't allow themselves to be defeated by savage capitalism, whose tentacles move in the world of usury and financial speculation. Diabolical planning presented us with the false options of "dictatorship or democracy," thus signalling the end of the professional autonomy of the continent's Armed Forces, and denying them the ability to participate in the setting of national priorities.

As for the future of the national Armed Forces, the only thing the New World Order seeks, is to insert their "remains" in the globalization of defense, for which, all national hypotheses of conflict are ruled out, and replaced by the hypotheses of international conflicts.

This was the route chosen to eliminate the possibility of launching the great debate, by which we would decide to be a nation or a colony; to choose to bow down to free-trade agreements, savage [economic] adjustments, and the "magic of the marketplace," or guarantee a process of development which would create opportunities for the future of our youth; between defending the honor and dignity of the nation, and, in the strictest definition of the word, [understanding that] there is no democracy in any nation which has accepted the conditionalities of the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank. . . .

11. Without question, the Armed Forces and all Argentines have much to complain about to the President. Not so, the Pentagon, the State Department, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the [British] Empire which seized the Malvinas — they have satisfied all their ambitions and desire to dominate.

Lt. General Balza: reiterating what I said on August 7, 1991 before the Federal Court which tried me for the military events of December 3, 1990, "I only owe obedience and subordination to the permanent values of the Nation." Driven by this principle, I write to say that, with all the means at my disposal, I shall continue to fight so that our Armed Forces may again become the military branch of the Fatherland, instead of the military branch of the New World Order.

We owe this to our founding fathers, to the martyrs of the Malvinas, and to all nations which demand justice.

I remain yours sincerely, For God and Fatherland,
M. Alí Seineldín.