

Venezuela's Chávez Launches Defense Campaign For International Terrorists

by Gretchen Small

Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez appears to have made a decision to move now, to place himself and his government openly at the head of the Ibero-American division of a new "Terrorist International." While many world leaders urgently seek means to keep the world from careening into global war and anarchy, Chávez and his government launched a defense campaign for one of the greatest terrorists-for-hire of the 1970s and early 1980s, Illich Ramírez Sánchez, better known by his *nom de guerre*, "Carlos the Jackal."

Ramírez is most famous for leading the 1976 takeover and kidnapping of 70 participants in an Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) oil ministers meeting in Vienna (killing three in the process), and, that same year, hijacking the plane that ended with the famous raid in Entebbe, Uganda by Israeli commandos. He certainly makes no pretense of innocence about his terrorist acts, nor has he repented. The French newspaper *France Soir* reported that he told them he felt "relief" over the Sept. 11 attacks in New York and Washington. In a 1998 interview with the same media, he wished good luck to Osama bin Laden.

Chávez took up the defense of "The Jackal" when he took office in 1999, going so far as to write him a warm personal letter, albeit so existentialist it was largely unintelligible. To revive a campaign for his defense in the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks in the United States, and during a state visit to France, is, however, the classical act of an agent provocateur. This was clearly a decision taken with full knowledge aforethought of the potential international consequences.

Chávez's actions are those of a head of state who is preparing to brush aside all pretense of being a responsible, if fiery, defender of his nation's independence, and putting his state on the side of a continental-scale Jacobin insurgency, with the United States, and civilization itself, as its target of hatred.

The cannon fodder available in Ibero-America for such an irregular war is growing. The prior political map of Ibero-America is being ripped apart, as rage explodes against the genocide brought about by the free trade policies pushed from Washington, compounded by the imperious orders coming out of circles in the Bush Administration, of the type, "You do what I say, or else."

That upheavals are coming up fast in the region, was seen

most dramatically in the smashing victory won by "spoiled ballot" in the Oct. 14 Congressional and provincial elections in Argentina. Voting is required by law in Argentina, but this year, 42% of the electorate either didn't vote, or cast blank or spoiled ballots. The greatest number spoiled their ballots, and that most rudely, as people stuffed everything from ham sandwiches to pornographic pictures into their ballot envelopes. The Peronist opposition won a majority of the posts, but the message delivered was that the entire political class is going to pay the price for the destruction of the country.

Only A Terrorist If He Attacks Me?

Ramírez, a Venezuelan citizen, is serving out a life sentence in a French jail for killing three people; five other cases are pending against him. For two years, Chávez's government has been trying to get him extradited to Venezuela, on the bogus grounds that he had been illegally kidnapped by French agents when he was deported from Sudan and sent to France in 1994, and therefore his French trial was illegal.

Coming out of his meeting with French President Jacques Chirac on Oct. 9 in Paris, Chávez said that the repatriation of "The Jackal" was not raised in their meeting, because it was not a matter to be dealt with at the level of Presidents, but that Venezuela "has a commitment" to him, and will "guarantee that his human rights are respected."

From Caracas, Acting Foreign Minister Gen. Arévalo Méndez (ret.) stated flatly that Ramírez is not a terrorist, because "Venezuela could not consider someone to be a terrorist who has not committed these types of criminal acts within its territory." Ramírez's murder conviction is under appeal, and "I, Arévalo Méndez, am not going to be judging anyone called 'Carlos' as a terrorist, a non-terrorist, or even as a pick-pocket." Defense Minister José Vicente Rangel concurred. Although, he said, Venezuela was not seeking Ramírez' extradition, should "Carlos" be sent to Venezuela, he would walk free, because "he committed no crime in Venezuela," he stated.

Seven days later, from Vienna, Chávez came to the defense of other terrorists, this time those of Colombia, the drug-running Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN). I'm not going to

be “classifying, qualifying, or naming names” as to whether these are “freedom-fighting movements, or terrorists,” Chávez told a press conference. He demurred that his government only serves as an “intermediary” between the Colombian government and “guerrillas,” and isn’t that what Europe is doing, too?

We Told You So

Chávez’s international belligerence accompanies threats to unleash terror at home. In various public interventions in the days before he left on his 20-day world tour on Oct. 7, Chávez threatened to expropriate local media which attack his government, and to jail their owners. He lashed out at the “enemies of the revolution,” threatening one of his opponents, Caracas Mayor Alfredo Peña: “You’re going to be beaten, and beaten, and beaten.” Indicative of his whipped-up state of mind, Chávez declared that he will not end up like Salvador Allende in Chile, or leaders of other revolutions which failed because they were not armed. “This revolution does have arms, guns, tanks, and soldiers.”

The hardening of the Chávez regime comes as no surprise. As *EIR* documented from the time of his original election campaign, Chávez was a “known entity,” placed in power by circles in London and Wall Street who intend to hold onto global power precisely by fomenting wars, anarchy, and bestiality. Chávez, who believes himself to be a reincarnation of a cross between Independence leader Simón Bolívar and Cuba’s Fidel Castro, with the mission of liberating Latin America from U.S. oppression, was built up, by foreign financial forces, as the new leader of the enraged oppressed, not to lead them to freedom, but to take revenge.

Chávez has the same function, and functions as part of the same operation, as Colombia’s drug-running FARC, a matter which neither he nor the FARC hide. FARC leader, the former banker, “Simón Trinidad,” said as much to *Tiempos del Mundo*, in an interview in its Oct. 4-10 issue: “Anyone who fights U.S. imperialism as the first enemy of the peoples of the world, which is the premise of Bolivarian thought, has our support, our sympathy, and we wish to work with him. . . . We have no points of difference with Chávez.”

As *EIR* has documented since 1992, Chávez and the FARC are among the core leadership of a centralized, continental narco-terrorist apparatus known as the São Paulo Forum, founded 11 years ago by Cuban intelligence and the Brazilian Workers Party (PT). Yet, reports of São Paulo Forum operations have been systematically suppressed in the Western media, while its “political” leaders have been promoted in Washington and Ibero-American capitals by the Inter-American Dialogue, the premier Anglo-American think-tank for the Western Hemisphere, deploying them as the “New Democracy” shocktroops who can crack national institutions reluctant to accept free trade and limited sovereignty.

Thus built up and fostered, Chávez, the FARC, et al. have

no intention of playing negotiations and political horse-trading games. They see the current economic breakdown crisis as their opportunity, and they are out to seize leadership of the millions thrown suddenly upon the scrapheap by government policies.

To understand the mind-set of these forces, consider the witch-like revelling in the deaths of those killed in the United States on Sept. 11, by fellow São Paulo Forum leader Hebe de Bonafini, the much-promoted Argentine “human rights leader,” head of the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo, supporter of the Spanish Basque terrorist group, ETA, and held up regularly by the *New York Times* as an exemplar of new “democratic” forces. In one of several interviews given on the Sept. 11 attacks, Bonafini told Buenos Aires’ Radio 10 on Oct. 9: “What should I say: that I am not going to be happy because, for once, blood is going to be avenged? Yes, it made me happy, and I will repeat it again. For the first time, the United States was made to pay for what it has done for all its existence.” Those who died at the World Trade Center were heads of companies and financial bodies responsible for poverty, she said, and “it made me happy that, for once, the barrier of the world, this filthy barrier, full of food, this barrier of gold, of wealth, fell down upon them.”

Will Washington Fight A Winning Battle?

Some in Washington have woken up to the reality that Lyndon LaRouche and *EIR* have been warning about, that a continental terrorist force threatens the Western Hemisphere, and action is required to crush it.

Ambassador Francis Taylor, U.S. State Department Coordinator of Counter-Terrorism, has been most outspoken of late. “Today, the most dangerous international terrorist group based in this hemisphere is the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC,” he told hearings of the House Committee on International Relations’ Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere on Oct. 10. Breaking years of State Department insistence that the FARC be treated as a popular-based political movement seeking peace, Taylor elaborated:

“Included on the State Department’s list of Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTO), the FARC have murdered 13 Americans since 1980 and kidnapped over a hundred more, including three New Tribes missionaries, kidnapped in 1993 and now believed dead. FARC leaders not only welcomed the Sept. 11 attacks. Afterwards they reiterated their periodic call for the targetting of Americans for murder and abduction. In addition, we have seen in recent months evidence of an apparent relationship between the FARC and the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) and possibly the Basque separatist group ETA as well.”

Questioned at an Oct. 15 Organization of American States press conference as to whether the United States had just dumped its long-standing policy that U.S. aid could only go to its allies’ counter-drug operations and not to those fighting “insurgencies,” Taylor replied, and sharply, that those groups

that are listed as terrorists, are terrorists—and that includes the Colombian groups—and shall be treated as such.

There are also signs, however, that the Bush Administration may be setting itself up to make blunders similar to those that got the United States into the Afghanistan quagmire. The principle of sovereignty is the issue which underlies the two policy errors which must be corrected to actually win the battle with the terrorists.

First is the discussion mooted of a direct U.S. military deployment into South America, starting with Colombia. Whether any such action were taken alone, or under the cover of establishing some regional “coalition” military force, the result would be the same: to throw mass forces in Ibero-America *behind* the FARC, Chávez, et al. They would wave the banners of “narco-nationalism,” and get a significant following. This would not only include peasants and unemployed, but also significant chunks of national military forces, fed up with the hypocrisy of Washington and London’s two-decades-long assault on their national militaries.

Taylor opened the door to discussion of this possibility in his Oct. 15 appearance at the Organization of American States, when he said that all elements at the United States’ disposal shall be used in the anti-terror campaign in the Western Hemisphere, including, “where appropriate, as we are doing in Afghanistan, the use of military force.” Colombian Army Commanders Gen. Fernando Tapias and Gen. Jorge Mora were quick to reject any foreign military deployment. Colombians can do the job, provided Colombia’s military receives the intelligence, training, and equipment aid it requires, they emphasized.

Similarly, if the Bush Administration continues to dictate that a coordinated anti-terrorist offensive requires that the nations of the hemisphere bow to Wall Street’s free-trade agenda, and accelerate dollarization and the establishment of the Free Trade Accord of the Americas, they will create a backlash that would destroy any possibility of collaboration.

U.S. patriots must face up to the fact that it was Wall Street forces which fostered and built up the terrorist capability in the first place. LaRouche and *EIR* have been right, when they admonish that terrorism will not be defeated, until the “Grasso factor” is removed, i.e., Wall Street’s support for terrorism so nakedly displayed by New York Stock Exchange President Richard Grasso’s 1999 public invitation for the FARC to sign up at the New York Stock Exchange.

Check Out This Website:

www.larouchespeaks.com

French Attack London’s ‘City’ Money Laundry

by Christine Bierre

As Britain’s Tony Blair parades as the leader of the fight against “Islamic terror,” French authorities have launched a flanking operation against Britain in the form of a Parliamentary report denouncing the City of London—as well as other Crown dependencies—as a “fiscal, banking, and financial paradise for criminals.”

Attached to that report is a full study on the “economic environment of bin Laden.” The French are still waiting for the extradition of Rashid Ramda, the “Islamic” terrorist arrested in Britain in 1996 for having orchestrated the 1995 wave of terror in France.

Entitled “The City Of London, Gibraltar And The Crown Dependencies: Offshore Centers And Havens For Dirty Money,” the report denounces the City’s great vulnerability to money laundering, but also the British authorities’ total lack of political will to engage in the fight against financial crime. “The government of Her Gracious Majesty claims to be leading the fight against terrorism, but it should first clean its own house,” stated Arnaud Montebourg, special rapporteur of the Parliamentary commission which issued the report. To the question of why the British government is not willing to impose transparency in its financial transactions, Montebourg replied unambiguously that the City of London is the very heart of world finances and that Britain’s own power derives from that financial power. In the year 2000, the gross domestic product of the City was close to \$37.7 billion—13% of Greater London’s, and 3% of that of the United Kingdom.

The French report was issued by the Parliamentary commission against money laundering, created in 1999. The commission has already published three reports focussing on Liechtenstein, Monaco, and Switzerland.

City of London Attracts Money Launderers

The City of London study focusses first on the susceptibilities of the City due to its role as “premier financial market in the world.”

Beyond its long historical experience, what makes the City of London so attractive to money launderers is the process of financial deregulation which has occurred over the last 30 years. The City “recovered its financial importance after World War II, in particular in 1958, with the relaxing of exchange controls and the development of a Euro-bond market [dollar-denominated bonds issued in Europe] in the 1960s.