

A 'second Chiapas' brews in Guerrero

by Carlos Méndez

The opening of a second terrorist front on the part of the "Zapatista" apparatus appears to be in the cards, this time in the state of Guerrero, where drug trafficking, armed gangs, and indigenist-separatist organizations have been endemic since the end of the insurgency of Lucio Cabañas at the end of the 1960s and beginning of the 1970s. The reactivation of a terrorist front in Guerrero, where the Acapulco resort town is located, would also have the strategic impact of causing a huge drop in revenues from the tourist trade, the second largest source of hard currency for Mexico, after oil.

Ever since the showdown on June 28 in this state between police and members of the "Peasant Organization of the Southern Sierra" (OCSS), when 17 people died, Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, the leader of the opposition PRD party, has personally taken charge of the campaign of demonstrations and protests to force the resignation of the governor of Guerrero, Rubén Figueroa. Cárdenas is a formal ally of the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) which staged the January 1994 armed insurrection in Chiapas, and Figueroa is a member of the PRI, the ruling Revolutionary Institutional Party of Mexico, which the insurgents have failed to unseat at the polls and are determined to overthrow by violence. Two federal congressmen from the PRD are staging a hunger strike in Mexico City to force Figueroa to step down. On July 11, the leader and co-founder of OCSS, Benigno Guzmán Martínez, who had been in hiding, suddenly turned up at the PRD offices in Mexico City, where he gave a press conference attacking the governor of Guerrero.

International backup

Just as occurred with the EZLN, the joint PRD-OCSS actions have drawn immediate international attention and support. On July 14, the press reported that the political affairs secretary of the U.S. Embassy in Mexico, Joseph Manso, had gone to Guerrero to "independently" investigate events. After interviewing the two chairmen of the PRD in Guerrero, the diplomat said that the information gathered by the embassy will be sent to the State Department and could be used "for a report on Human Rights which my government publishes."

Manso told journalists that he was not interested in meet-

ing with the elected governor of Guerrero.

Two days later, on July 16, the *Washington Post* published an article quoting one of the OCSS leaders, José Ascencio, who told the reporter that "we are happy that the [Chiapas] folks are defending themselves. . . . If they keep on massacring our activists, it could force the peasants to defend themselves in other ways." The daily reported that another member of the OCSS stated that "a man is formed by the events of his environment. Lucio [Cabañas] did not choose the path of violence. He did it because of what [the government] did to its population."

It should not be forgotten that on June 17, in the London *Sunday Telegraph*, British intelligence spokesman Ambrose Evans-Pritchard published an article attacking Mexican President Ernesto Zedillo and "predicting" a new wave of destabilization.

One of the main bases which the narco-terrorist Shining Path of Peru has in Mexico is Chilpancingo, capital of Guerrero state. The Peruvian Camilo Valqui, identified as the chief of operations for Shining Path in Mexico, has been based at the University of Guerrero in Chilpancingo for some years. The university has long been a haven for the "former" Communist Party of Mexico, in which OCSS boss Benigno Guzmán used to be an activist; later it renamed itself Unified Socialist Party of Mexico, and now it is integrated into Cárdenas's PRD. Many of the current EZLN defenders used to publicly support Shining Path—for example, the Route 100 trade union and its controller group, the Independent Proletarian Movement.

The OCSS and PRD

The pro-Zapatista magazine *Proceso* recounted the history of the OCSS in its July 10 issue. On Feb. 14, 1994, a group of peasant leaders met to set up the OCSS, which was officially founded on March 19-20, 1994—less than three months after the Chiapas uprising. They invoked the late guerrilla chieftain Lucio Cabañas as one of their ideologies.

Proceso described the OCSS's maximum leader: "Formerly an activist in the left, from the Mexican Communist Party, Benigno Guzmán Martínez and other leaders left the PRD, due to the lack of support for their demands. . . . Since its inception, the organization has used methods of struggle described as radical by the PRDers themselves. . . . Some of their militants are relatives of the people who disappeared during the Lucio Cabañas guerrilla years."

Time bomb in Guerrero

On July 20, the president of the National Defense Committee in the lower house of Mexico's Congress, Gen. Luis Garfias Magaña (ret.), warned that in Guerrero "it is necessary to investigate the possession of weapons, to prevent guerrilla surprises from breaking out like the one in Chiapas, because there is the risk that a new armed group may erupt

which could be more dangerous than the one in Chiapas.” He pointed out that the state borders other states where the violence could spread, such as Oaxaca and Michoacán.

Already a year ago, on June 1, 1994, the daily *El Financiero* reported that Memorandum 6454 from the defense secretary to the interior secretary, Jorge Carpizo, dated Feb. 8, 1994, communicated that information had been received that a “near-term shipment of 2,000 AK-47 rifles” would be dispatched from the United States “with the state of Guerrero as its destination,” where “some facts have been manifested which allow us to presume the possibility that drug trafficking and general criminal activities may get mixed up with a subversion in the making.”

On July 20, Marcelino Díaz de Jesús, one of the leaders of the Guerrero 500 Years of Indigenous Resistance Council, said, according to *La Jornada* on July 21, that “if institutionalized violence in Guerrero is not restrained and the state of law reestablished, many peasants and indigenous may go underground, the guerrilla groups may come back to life and a new armed uprising begin. The government of Rubén Figueroa is bringing us to the brink of this. He has to straighten himself out. . . . We are one step away from widespread violence breaking out and groups going underground.”

Governor Figueroa says, according to *Proceso*, that there are “many indications” that OCSS is tied to the Underground Revolutionary Party Union of the People-Party of the Poor, which goes by the unwieldy acronym Procup-PDLP. On July 20, this clandestine front averred that if “the aggression against the people of Guerrero” continues, they will respond militarily. Interviewed by *El Financiero* on July 21, Procup-PDLP leader David Cabañas Barrientos declared that the political and police climate in Guerrero is “more acute than when Lucio Cabañas”—his brother—“rose up in arms.” He bragged that there are in Guerrero “thousands of activists in our parties ready to respond to Figueroa’s aggression, to the assassination of peasants.” Another Procup spokesman, Felipe Canseco Ruiz, reiterated that the social and political conditions in the state “are more favorable today for an armed outbreak than when Lucio Cabañas went up into the mountains.”

Both denied that Procup-PLDP had kidnapped the businessman Jorge Sekiguchi and the prominent banker Alfredo Harp Helz in 1994. But an *El Financiero* journalist, Miguel Badillo, had written on July 17 that “reports from National Security itself, obtained exclusively by *El Financiero*,” indicate that the authorities had located the kidnappers, which they identified as Procup-PDLP, in June 1994, but that then-President Carlos Salinas de Gortari “did not allow the capture of the kidnappers, nor the recovery of the ransom of \$17 million paid for freeing Harp Helz . . . because it was politically inconvenient to make noise about the existence of guerrilla warfare two months before the presidential election.”

Germany

Euthanasia comes one step closer

by Jutta Dinkermann

The author is a member of the federal executive committee of the Club of Life of the Federal Republic of Germany. Her commentary on a recent far-reaching legal victory for the death lobby was published in May in the newspaper Neue Solidarität, and was translated from German by Nora Hamerman.

The recent acquittal in the so-called Kempten “death help” trial corresponds totally to a ruling of the German Supreme Court, which laid out the basis for a complete legalization of euthanasia in Germany in a groundbreaking decision handed down in September 1994.

The following is the background to the verdict. In March 1994, the son of a Mrs. Schwarza, who was in a hospital in Kempten, Germany, and the doctor who was treating her, were convicted of attempted homicide in a courtroom of the state court in Kempten, and were sentenced to pay a fine, because they had attempted to interrupt the artificial feeding of Mrs. Schwarza, who was in a coma. Nursing home personnel had prevented this, and reported the men; the woman died, months later, of pneumonia.

The German high court quashed the verdict, and sent the case back to the state court for a new hearing. Until now, in Germany, it was usually at least considered, that the immediate onset of death must have begun before a sick person’s life-support measures could be turned off. This assumption no longer has to be taken into account in the wake of the Supreme Court decision. What is decisive now, is the “presumed intention” of the patient.

But in the aforementioned case, no adequate evidence of the “presumed intention” of the patient was submitted, and so the Supreme Court went so far as to admonish the state court that it would have to examine whether “there had been present, over and above the presently known, insufficient conditions—at least from the standpoint of the accused—further decisive facts for a presumed consent by Mrs. Schwarza.”

Whereas the son, in the first trial, had only indicated a single alleged expression in this respect by his mother in the middle of the 1980s (she had commented on a film about a difficult medical case, that she did not want to end “that way”), in the second trial he suddenly came up with numer-