

Mexico City's antiterror crackdown

The cleanout of a nest of insurgents in a squatters' settlement has major political implications, reports Dolia Pettingell.

Six thousand Mexican police and security personnel swept into the most renowned terrorist stronghold in Mexico City March 2, a squatters' settlement known as the October 2 camp. Before the police left 24 hours later, over 100 terrorists and gunmen were in jail, many of the 700 families relocated, and the rest of the homes were razed to the ground.

The crushing action was the government's answer to a surge of violence and terror in recent weeks, coordinated at the top by the Mexican Communist Party (PCM), the Society of Jesus, and the mayor of Mexico City. According to high-level sources, the raid was personally ordered by President José López Portillo as a warning that the government will not tolerate terrorist attempts to disrupt the government.

The terrorists arrested included top gangster Francisco de la Cruz, the peasant leader of the camp who has pending against him over 100 criminal charges ranging from robbery to homicide. The police confiscated over 60 firearms, bullets, Molotov cocktails, blank death certificates, a printing machine, and copies of the outlaw 23rd of September League's terrorist publication *Madera*. The police also found a stolen police car and uniforms for impersonations. The 700 families are being relocated in government-built housing in another district.

As one Mexico City newspaper put it, de la Cruz had managed to get away previously with such an overt terrorist logistical display because he had an "influential political godfather" backing him.

The influential figure whom the paper failed to name is the mayor of Mexico City, Carlos Hank González. López Portillo's antiterrorist operation has thrown Hank on the defensive. An "Aquarian" who for the past four years has ruled the second largest city of the world as an experiment in "community control" brainwashing tactics, Hank saw the October 2 camp as the most advanced test tube under his control.

Hank's behind-the-scenes connection to the October 2 terrorist training center came glaringly to light immediately after the raid. The head of the Mexican Socialist Workers Party (PST), Rafael Aguilar Talamantes, went to the mayor March 9 to intercede for de la Cruz, who had been working with this increasingly left-provocateur

party and had run for governor in the state of Oaxaca on the PST ticket a year ago. Hank told Aguilar that he had had nothing to do with the raid and that he had "no complaints to make" about de la Cruz. Aguilar told the press that Hank had agreed to his request not to raze de la Cruz's house—a bunker disguised as a hut built over an underground shelter—and instead to turn it over to the PST to serve as a headquarters to receive and process complaints about how the relocation was carried out!

Many in Mexico celebrated the bust-up of a terrorist center that had become a nightmare for Mexico City inhabitants. The camp was organized along paramilitary lines starting in the mid-1970s, some 15 years after de la Cruz had arrived from a small peasant town in Oaxaca. At the time of the raid the daily *El Heraldo* described the camp as an attempt to set up a "liberated zone" and create a virtual "state within a state." Government security forces report that guerrillas from at least four Latin American countries—Venezuela, Nicaragua, Uruguay, and Argentina—were in training in de la Cruz's camp for different periods over the past three years. Simultaneous raids shut down satellite operations established by de la Cruz in the states of Oaxaca, Tamaulipas, and Morelos.

When French "schismatic" Archbishop Marcel Lefèbvre visited Mexico in late January, de la Cruz not only invited him to visit the October 2 camp but offered him the protection of his goon squads. Though nominally on opposite sides of the political spectrum, de la Cruz and Lefèbvre share ultimate controllers at the highest level of international terrorism. Lefèbvre is sponsored by the Rome-based "black nobility" who have been exposed in the Italian courts as protectors and deployers of the Red Brigades.

Hank González's partners in the current destabilization drive, however, were not at all happy. Humberto Musacchio, managing editor of the openly pornographic cultural monthly of the Mexican Communist Party *El Machete*, charged that de la Cruz's only crime was to fight for "decent housing." The Jesuit-controlled leftist daily *Uno mas Uno* poured out a stream of as many as six articles a day for several days after the sweep. "The October 2 affair was an operation against the poor, not against corrupt leaders or common criminals," claimed the paper amid a barrage of charges that the cleanup was

a "violation of human rights" and an instance of "state repression."

Oaxaca: a terrorist time bomb

The warning delivered by López Portillo in Mexico City had as its special target the rising destabilization moves in the southern states of Mexico, Oaxaca, and Chiapas, among others.

The operation against de la Cruz's camp took place the day after a Mexican Communist Party front called the Cocei had wrested control of the municipal government in Juchitan, Oaxaca.

Besides massive vote fraud, the PCM-Cocei electoral alliance used terrorist intimidation to force the 70,000 inhabitants to accept the imposition of their candidate for mayor. Faced with open threats of a bloodbath, the electoral authorities were forced to concede that the PCM-Cocei candidate had "won" by a margin of 208 votes over the candidate of the ruling PRI party.

The town has particular importance because it is at one of the strategic crossroads of the country. Directly to the north, across 100 miles of the easily traversed Tehuantepec Peninsula, lie the major Mexican oil fields and refining complexes of Veracruz, Tabasco, and northern Chiapas. From its same Pan-American Highway location, it lies along the main route to Guatemala and is seen as a doorway into the Central American violence. The state of Chiapas, just a few miles down the road, directly borders Guatemala, and has been the

target of a "violence spillover" that is intended to move north through Juchitan into the rest of the oil region. This area of instability includes the largely Indian highlands in Chiapas, one of the centers of Jesuit organizing in the country and the scene of a bloody peasant conflict in June 1980.

Concern for the PCM-Cocei takeover of Juchitan has been reflected by influential Mexico City newspaper columnists, aware of the violent antecedents of the group. Cocei ran candidates for Juchitan mayor in two previous elections. In 1974, after losing the elections, Cocei carried out a "hit" against the house of the winning PRI candidate. One person was killed. In 1977, when it lost for the second time, Cocei launched a series of violent incidents to destabilize the state government which it considered the "enemy of the people." The same year Cocei set buses and stores on fire to demand the release of their jailed comrades. And in 1975 the Cocei, which had cooperated with the 23rd of September League, "broke" with it in a spectacular shootout that left almost a dozen people dead.

In a significant escalation of its capabilities, the Cocei sent a squad of 40 people to Mexico City in mid-February, where the group took over the embassies of India and Guatemala to protest what they termed "brutal and repressive tactics" on the part of the government. The action was closely coordinated by a Mexico City Jesuit clearinghouse and operatives of international "human rights" organizations.

New York Times defends Mexican terrorist operative

The terrorist October 2 camp, run by Francisco de la Cruz, and dismantled by Mexico security units last week, was an internationally promoted experiment in "radical" local-control brainwashing operations of the sort associated with the Pol Pot nightmare in Cambodia.

Marcel Lefèbvre, a Dark Ages ideologue of the Sorbonne, toured the camp last year in what the pro-terrorist Mexico City daily Uno mas Uno called "on-the-scene observation" of an "experiment to help the poor." This is "the only authentic socialist experiment in Latin America that I know of," Lefèbvre stated. But it was the New York Times, in a 1977 eulogy to de la Cruz by Mexico correspondent Alan Riding, which did most to build up his "social fighter" credentials.

Here is what the Times said:

Mr. Francisco de la Cruz is clearly the undisputed popular leader of his community, though its real strength comes from the full participation in the assemblies and communities that govern the settlement. Through communal work the squatters have built a health clinic, a kindergarten, a kitchen for volunteer laborers, a cement-block cooperative, a mechanic's shed and an editing room for a monthly bulletin.

Mr. de la Cruz . . . says he is "guided from the left" but his ideology appears to be closer to the "natural socialism" of his poorly educated followers, whose views have been shaped by hardship. "It means helping each other," a mother of six said when asked the meaning of socialism. . . .

In a country where both government and opposition political parties are dominated from above, Mr. de la Cruz dreams of a grass-roots political movement springing from the unorganized rural and urban poor. "When we have finished here, I would like to go back to the countryside and organize a peasant movement there."