

---

## The Case of Rigoberta Menchú

---

# Political correctness leads to genocide

by Gretchen Small

One of the mandatory textbooks on the reading list for “politically correct” U.S. colleges today is the autobiography of the Guatemalan “Indian activist” Rigoberta Menchú, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1992. First published in Spanish in 1983 and since translated into 12 languages, *I, Rigoberta Menchú: An Indian Woman in Guatemala* is presented to students as the life story of a woman “whose life vividly reflects the experiences common to many Indian communities in Latin America.” Menchú “speaks for all the Indians of the American continent” who have suffered 500 years of “cultural oppression,” the Venezuelan anthropologist who edited *I, Rigoberta*, Elisabeth Burgos-Debray, asserts in her introduction.

By reading this book, students are told, they will come to understand “Indian” life, what Indians want out of life, and how “Indian culture” is to be saved. Not only that, but here they will find a *better* culture than “oppressive” western civilization, which has brought only “genocide” to the Americas since 1492. Editor Burgos-Debray instructs the reader as to this alleged superiority from the outset: “Within that culture [described by Menchú] everything is determined in advance; everything that occurs in the present can be explained in terms of the past and has to be ritualized so as to be integrated into everyday life, which is itself a ritual. As we listen to her voice, we have to look deep into our own souls for it awakens sensations and feelings which we, caught up as we are in an inhuman and artificial world, thought were lost for ever.”

The book is a fraud almost as great as the fact that Menchú was granted a Nobel Prize as a *peace* activist! *I, Rigoberta* is not an honest story told to defend Indian culture, but a tract scripted by slave-masters, to perpetuate slavery. The politically correct “indigenism” which it promotes is not an academic matter, but a piece of propaganda for a decades-long project, run by foreign anthropologists such as Burgos-Debray, to induce ethnic warfare in Guatemala *where there is none now*, and, that accomplished, to spread it throughout the Americas. The terrorist forces with which Menchú has worked since her teens—by her own admission—carry out

acts of war as bestial as those associated with their ideological allies in Peru, the satanic Shining Path.

Forget the media tales of an “Indian guerrilla resistance movement” seeking justice in Guatemala. This is a terrorist movement which, except for its international support, *has failed inside Guatemala*, precisely because the vast majority of the Guatemalan population, Indian and *mestizo* alike, rejected the terrorist project. Yet that has not deterred the foreign sponsors of Menchú, who, through economic and political warfare against Guatemala, insist on bringing her and her terrorist friends to power. Should they be allowed to succeed, the Menchú project will bring to the Americas the same kind of unimaginable barbarism which the Serbian students of deconstructionism have unleashed in the Balkans, their rape and death camps included.

Who will be the first to die in the holocaust that will result? The very human beings of Indian heritage in whose name Menchú’s politically correct indigenism purports to speak. For the advocates of this view of man, Indians are merely destined to serve as cannon-fodder in the war to wipe out western civilization, an assigned role Menchú, for all the international stardom she now enjoys, is merely playing out.

### How is slavery to be overturned?

The majority of Guatemalans, whether *mestizo* or Indian, live in conditions of abject misery. Guatemala is a country rich in natural resources, both agricultural and mineral, but the failure to develop basic infrastructure has left the country by and large in backwardness. The lack of transport, sanitation, and water systems is one of the worst on the continent, rivaling conditions in Peru or Honduras.

The stories told by Menchú of her childhood describe conditions intolerable for any human being to have to suffer. Unable to scratch even a minimum subsistence out of their miserable small plots of land in the highlands, each year Menchú’s family, along with millions of others, was forced to go down from the mountains to work part of each year on the coastal plantations, harvesting cotton and coffee. Here they lived under conditions of quasi-slavery as bad or worse than those prevailing on Southern plantations in the United States after the Civil War. Seasonal laborers are herded together like beasts of burden, but are given less to eat than the animals. Uneducated, illiterate, denied medical facilities or even housing, without recourse to legal protections, the men, women and children who worked the plantations, Indians and *mestizo* alike, were, and to a large part still are, treated as mindless animals to be exploited for their labor, often to the point of death.

Compared to these slave camps, life in the Altiplano, as miserable as it was, appeared as freedom.

But what does *I, Rigoberta* identify as the causes of Guatemala’s backwardness, despite its potential? What are the solutions proposed by Menchú and her promoters as the path



A Mayan family in Guatemala's highlands. Menchú and the anthropologists want to keep the Mayans living in a miserable, backward state, a "culture" which is nothing but the shards of a collapsed civilization.

to freedom? Here is where the vicious fraud of *I, Rigoberta* begins to emerge.

Most striking is what is *not* mentioned. No history is offered, nor any basic facts of economics. Where is a discussion of the foreign debt, collapsing terms of trade, or the International Monetary Fund? Why have Guatemala's largely undeveloped resources not been invested in national development, but instead looted to pay foreign usurers? Where is a mention of the historic battle between Guatemalan nation-builders, who viewed the population, no matter of what ethnic heritage, as the country's richest resource, and the local representatives of the international Scottish Rite Freemasons seeking to spread slavery throughout the Caribbean and Central America?

Nor is any reference made to the soaring drug trade which began in Guatemala in the late 1970s, as the country became transformed into a major cocaine transshipment center, and a producer of heroin and marijuana. By 1982, not only an increasing number of plantation owners were now profiting from the drug trade, but Menchú's terrorist allies, too, were

up to their eyeballs in it, using drugs to finance arms purchases.

Instead, Menchú's book offers only the imbecilic slogans concocted to justify "people's revolutionary war" as the causes of all Guatemala's problems: The "rich," the Army, and Spanish colonizers of 500 years ago are the Enemy, simply because they are rich, in the Army, and not-Indian. As for solutions, *I, Rigoberta* is a call to arms against any and all attempts to *alter* the backwardness in which the majority of Guatemalans live, because it is "their" culture, and her proposed method to defend that backwardness is a terrorist war *a là* Shining Path.

### Hailing Menchú's 'Shining Path North'

It is not incidental to this program of action that *I, Rigoberta* was put together by Burgos-Debray, the wife of that French theoretician of Ibero-American guerrilla warfare, Régis Debray, who in the 1960s left his base in Havana to accompany Cuba's Che Guevara in the mountains of Bolivia. While Debray soon retired to expound his theories from the

greater safety of the cafés of Paris and the offices of French President François Mitterrand, thousands of misled Ibero-American youth died uselessly in insane guerrilla movements following Debray's "revolutionary" theories.

Menchú arrived in Paris in 1982, brought there by various European groups which were providing the Guatemalan terrorist movement financial and propagandistic support. A Canadian woman involved in these operations suggested to Burgos-Debray that she turn Menchú's life story into a book. For one week, the two ladies holed up in Burgos-Debray's Paris apartment, developing an "intense" relationship, as Burgos-Debray taped Menchú's reminiscences, which the Venezuelan anthropologist then edited into a novelistic form for consumption by university students.

The result is a propaganda tract for the Guatemalan narco-terrorist forces for which Menchú has worked since her teens, and in which her entire family was involved.

Funny how this glaring fact has been suppressed. When Menchú was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in October 1992, the Guatemalan government and military were attacked by the international media for "lying" that Menchú, her family, and the "popular organizations" she was involved with had anything to do with the avowedly Marxist terrorists in Guatemala. It was argued that such *statements of fact* by Guatemalan officials, as that Menchú and her popular organizations are connected to the terrorists, constitute *proof* that the military is genocidal, and just wants to repress Indians, since no connection exists between these "popular organizations" and the guerrillas.

Could it really be that among all those journalists and the Nobel Prize Committee, none had read Menchú's book, available in 12 languages and by now a virtual bible for the "politically correct" movement?

Back in 1982, Menchú spoke freely about how she and her entire family worked with the guerrillas; her father, her mother, and all her sisters and brothers joined their ranks, her youngest sister doing so at the age of eight. This was not some mythical "Indian" guerrilla resistance movement either, but a Cuban-allied and financed narco-terrorist organization.

"The people have four politico-military armed organizations," she explains in *I, Rigoberta*. "The Guerrilla Army of the Poor (EGP), the Organization of the People in Arms (ORPA), the Fuerzas Armadas Rebeldes (FAR), and the Guatemalan Labor Party (PGT). This is the nucleus of the national leadership. Our idea is to put into practice the methods initiated by the masses when they evolved their 'people's weapons': to be able to make Molotov cocktails to fight their army. . . . We wanted to weaken the government economically, politically and militarily."

Those four terrorist groups were founded in the 1960s and 1970s by Cuban-allied theoreticians and built up by the combined forces of so-called action anthropology and libera-

tion theology, reaching their peak size in 1982-83. In 1979, Fidel Castro, whose government had kept the four groups supplied in the early years, began pressuring them to unite, and by January 1982, they announced the formation of the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Union (URNG).

What, then, does Menchú report on the role of "popular organizations," such as the Committee of Peasant Unity (CUC) and 31st of January Popular Front in which she plays a leading role, in the overall strategy of those terrorist groups? "Our actions weaken the regime militarily too. We try to split up the armed forces so that not only do they have to attack our politico-military organizations, but they have to spread themselves to attack us as well. . . . The important thing was that we were using all our resources."

"I love the CUC," she continues. "I love it because that's where I realized the importance of the people's revolutionary war."

Early on in her participation with the guerrillas, Menchú assumed the task of training villages in "self-defense" against the Army. Methods included using stones, traps, lime, and Molotov cocktails. "We've often used lime. Lime is very fine and you have to aim it in a certain way for it to go into someone's eyes. . . . You can blind a policeman by throwing lime in his face. . . . We'd invented a sort of Molotov cocktail . . . this cocktail could burn two or three soldiers," the future Nobel Peace Prize activist expounded.

At another point, she calmly recounts how the terrorists had a policy of executing anyone—Indian or not—suspected of collaborating with the Army, because "we were very clear about what we had to do." Although her book does not elaborate this policy further, the URNG groups were notorious for the Shining Path-like scorched-earth strategies employed against villages which refused to join the terrorists.

The story of her father's death in January 1981, highlighted by the international media as yet more proof that Guatemala's military wantonly murders non-violent Indian activists without provocation, is another example of how international promoters of the terrorists have implemented a Big Lie campaign against the military. Menchú reports in her book that by 1979, her father, Vicente, had taken up arms with the guerrilla forces. Then, in late January 1981, he led an occupation, by *compañeros* [guerrillas] and leaders of "popular organizations," of the Spanish Embassy in Guatemala City. The seizure of the embassy, she explained, was one of several actions taken because "the people wanted arms to defend themselves. . . . We thought that they [the government] would give all the ones who occupied the embassy permission to leave the country as political refugees, and they would be able to spread the news of our struggle abroad."

Foreign financing was critical to the Guatemalan terrorist movement's efforts to arm itself, before self-financing through the drug trade was achieved later.

When the Guatemalan government attempted to retake

the embassy, a fight broke out, and the embassy burned to the ground in the resulting firestorm in which all those in the embassy, guerrillas and officials alike, died. The Guatemalan government reported that the fire was caused by explosions from weapons held by the terrorists who had seized the embassy. Discreetly forgetting her own dissertations on the power of Molotov cocktails and her father's role among the guerrillas, Menchú protests that the government's version could not be correct, because

---

---

*"We've often used lime. Lime is very fine and you have to aim it in a certain way for it to go into someone's eyes. . . . You can blind a policeman by throwing lime in his face. . . . We'd invented a sort of Molotov cocktail . . . this cocktail could burn two or three soldiers"—Rigoberta Menchú*

---

---

everyone knows that "peasants" don't have firearms. But unlike the international press accounts of the incident, even Menchú must admit that the government's version could be true, since neither she "nor any of our *compañeros* can say what the real truth is."

### Creating a 'Culture of Rage'

In September 1992, "Indian activists" based in San Francisco, California distributed flyers announcing a forum to be given by a representative of the terrorist URNG with which Menchú works. Accompanying the forum, the flyer reported, would be a musical group performing an act entitled "Culture of Rage." The title encapsulates the ideology and thought processes promoted in *I, Rigoberta*. Her cause "wasn't born out of something good, it was born out of wretchedness and bitterness," Rigoberta Menchú twice tells Burgos-Debray. Repeatedly, throughout the book, Menchú speaks of the "hatred" which drives her sought-for "revolution."

The central role played by rage and hatred in the "indigenous movement" of political correctness provides a key to how this induced "indigenous struggle" has been organized, and what it seeks to create.

Guatemala's so-called indigenous people's movement is no native upsurge, but was systematically built up over more than two decades by foreign forces. Guatemala was used as a kind of experimental petri dish for the creation of an "Indian" liberation movement by foreign forces, in a similar fashion to that used to create Shining Path in Peru. While we cannot

here review the documentation of this shocking story, in 1985 *EIR* published a Special Report, *Soviet Unconventional Warfare: the Case of Guatemala*, which showed that the following forces worked together—and, at the highest levels, wittingly so—to train, finance, and build up the terrorist movement in which a relatively small number of Indians, such as Menchú and her family became caught up:

- the Soviet and Cuban governments (the Cuban communists today continue the policy today);
- the U.S. government, particularly the Agency for International Development (AID knowingly financed "peasant leadership" courses which were recruiting to the terrorist movements);
- the supranational "indigenous" apparatus operating out of the United Nations;
- the Marxist liberation theology networks operating under cover of the Catholic Church.

What was the purpose of this operation? To ensure that rebellion against miserable conditions and inhuman treatment was turned *against* the nation-state and national institutions, and not into a movement for the development of all Guatemalans. Enraged students and Indians were channelled instead into a terrorist movement fighting for the maintenance of that backwardness!

Herein enters the fraud of what is passed off as "Indian" culture by the advocates of political correctness. The message delivered in *I, Rigoberta* is that Indian "culture" rejects schools, modern agricultural methods, medicines, "all things modern." "My children, don't aspire to go to school, because schools take our customs away from us," Vicente Menchú told his children. Rejecting schooling is presented as even a "revolutionary" act, because "when teachers come into the villages, they bring with them the ideas of capitalism and getting on in life." The guerrillas *compañeros* who came to the mountains were trusted, because they "adapted to the conditions we live in. We can only love a person who eats what we eat," Rigoberta proclaims; the *mestizos* "want to destroy us with medicines and other things," such as food "made from machines."

### Who really killed the Mayans?

Burgos-Debray is fascinated with Menchú's repeated statements that Indians believe that they are one with animals, and that Mother Earth is sacred. These, after all, are the basic premises adopted by the fascist New Age movement in the formerly industrialized nations.

But was it even always so, that the Mayans were locked in a culture in which, in the words of Menchú's ghostwriter, "everything is determined in advance," as one spends one's life growing maize on small plots of land? The answer is "no." Between approximately 200 B.C. and 800 A.D., the Mayan civilization flourished in southern Mexico and Guatemala, changing steadily over that time as large urban centers

were built, a system of writing elaborated, and sophisticated astronomical calculations carried out. Like all human beings who act like human beings anywhere on the earth, the Mayans studied their universe, in order to master it and improve their lives. In the process, the Mayans willfully changed the traditional “ways” of their ancestors.

Archaeological work has shown, however, that that civilization collapsed in upon itself by sometime around 900 A.D.—long before the Spanish arrived in the early 1500s. No one knows exactly what happened, but from the limited evidence available to archaeologists, it appears that around the 800s, the limited ritualized warfare among competing urban centers which had prevailed until then shifted into full-scale wars for conquest, with the winners sacrificing large numbers of their captives “to the gods.” Construction in the cities stopped, as did the recording of activities which had prevailed until then, as people fled the dying cities into the countryside. *The Mayan culture, as it had developed up until then, had failed, and the Mayan people paid the consequences*, long before the Spanish arrived.

What is today promoted as “Mayan culture,” is nothing but the shards of a collapsed civilization, based on primitive methods of corn cultivation insufficient even to sustain the population following those methods at their current miserable state of existence. Yet that miserable existence is what politically correct anthropologists insist Indians “are,” and what they must remain! They would deny to human beings of Indian heritage their inalienable right to be *human*: to willfully change and better “their ways,” in accord with an ever-increasing ability to understand the universe.

The truth that the politically correct movement hysterically seeks to bury from human history, is that the arrival of the Spanish in the Americas beginning in 1492, by introducing western civilization, *saved the Indians*. The Indian population *increased*, new urban centers were built at an increasingly rapid rate, and the Spanish and Indian populations intermixed and built a new civilization in the Americas, one of whose most important contributions to human history being its demonstration of the power of a *non-racist* concept of man. The misery suffered by Menchú’s family and others in the Americas is a result not of Spanish colonization—life was much more miserable in the Americas before the Spanish arrived, to which the 20,000 victims a year of Aztec mass sacrifices could attest—but of the failure to ensure that the benefits of that project were extended to all inhabitants of the Americas, of whatever ethnic heritage.

### **A contrasting view**

New Age worshippers of indigenism aside, it would be a mistake to believe that all that Menchú dictated to her would-be revolutionary anthropologist interviewer reflects “authentic” Indian beliefs. Such remarks as “everything in our life is like a film. Constant suffering,” for

example, would appear to be a rather “modern” thought produced by the effects of too much Hollywood. But then it should be remembered that even if Menchú states umpteen times that Indians must always do only what their ancestors did, or else they lose their identity, she did dictate her life-story in a Paris apartment at which she had arrived through a means of transportation never known to her ancestors: the airplane.

At other times, the voice of the Marxist liberation theology revolutionary is unmistakable. In the midst of a discussion of Indian sexual habits and family life (a subject into which no anthropologist could fail to delve), Menchú suddenly criticizes Indian parents for not providing sex education to their children, the first time the concept of a necessity for change is mentioned! Technology may be forbidden to Indians, but when it comes to sex, “it can be a problem being ignorant of so many things about life.”

Perhaps the most telling line in the entire book, occurs during one of Menchú’s descriptions of how she trained villagers to fight guerrilla warfare. “We broke with many of our cultural procedures by doing this but we know it was the way to save ourselves,” she explained.

Ah! So change *is* admitted when necessary for survival. We then come back to the central question which must be asked: What is the most effective path to changes which will ensure survival? Political correctness would have that answered only the way Menchú presents it, by spreading hate-ridden indigenist warfare on behalf of backwardness.

Students forced to read *I, Rigoberta* would do well to contrast it with the autobiography of another woman, U.S. civil rights leader Amelia Boynton Robinson. *Bridge Across Jordan* (revised edition, Schiller Institute, 1991) records Robinson’s life-long battle, still continuing today, to bring freedom to all men, beginning with her and her husband’s efforts to eradicate the bestial conditions in which many African-Americans were forced to live in the plantation system still reigning in much of the South. The parallels with what Menchú suffered on the plantations of Guatemala are unmistakable; the contrast in conception of man, outlook, and method of fighting oppression could not be greater.

Robinson dedicated her energies to trying to better those abandoned in poverty, to enable them to have access to the most advanced means possible, so that they, too, could make contributions to the development of the human race as a whole. Her efforts, like those of Dr. Martin Luther King, with whom she worked, were founded on the simple doctrine of “Love thy neighbor.” The critical turning point in her life came, she explains in her book, when she rejected hatred as the emotion with which to combat the evil indignities she was committed to eradicating. Her constant theme is that the hater, by hating, destroys himself. Robinson is often heard to say that the race which she is proud to represent, is the human race.