

Mexican Jesuits slander LaRouche; Theology of Liberation under attack

by Carlos Méndez

Following a widely publicized meeting with President Carlos Salinas de Gortari at the presidential residence of Los Piños on Aug. 17, the leaders of the Society of Jesus in Mexico, led by their provincial, José Morales Orozco, claimed that Lyndon H. LaRouche and the Ibero-American Solidarity Movement (MSIA) in Mexico, were behind death threats which the Jesuits say they had recently received. Their accusations were promptly relayed on Channel 11 national television, at prime time. According to the Jesuits, they went to protest to President Salinas because: 1) a poster had appeared threatening members of the order with death; 2) offices used by Jesuits had been raided by police searching for weapons; 3) a Jesuit, Gerónimo Hernández, is said by some to be "Commander Marcos" of the insurgent Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN); and 4) "certain governmental circles" are involved in the attacks against the Jesuits.

The Jesuits went so far as to demand that President Salinas proclaim that "Marcos" is no Jesuit, and that the Mexican Defense Ministry "rectify the statements which had given rise to the harassment against Jesuits working in Tarahumara, Huayacotla, and Chinameca."

Apparently, the reference to the Defense Ministry is due to the fact that the ministry's magazine recently published an article by Brig. Gen. Mario Palmerín Cordero, denouncing the Theology of Liberation for skillfully using "certain ambiguous statements made by the Vatican II Council, along with a completely wrong interpretation of statements issued by Vatican II concerning the fundamental tenets of Catholicism." General Palmerín also wrote that "the Society of Jesus has availed itself of the Council to justify its 180-degree turn away from being a group founded to defend the pope and propagate Catholic doctrine, to become an organization devoted to changing the traditional image of Roman Catholicism and, inevitably, the political complexion of Mexico."

In defense of Samuel Ruiz

What is really behind this aggressive public relations move by the Mexican Jesuits, backed by their colleagues in the United States (who penned a note to the Mexican ambassador in Washington, Jorge Montana) and by the aux-

iliary bishop of Detroit, Thomas Gumbleton, is a frenzied mobilization to defend the bishop of San Cristóbal de las Casas, Msgr. Samuel Ruiz, a commander of the Zapatista uprising in the state of Chiapas, who is, as it happens, *not* a Jesuit. As he himself stated publicly, Monsignor Gumbleton travelled to Mexico to back up the Jesuits and Ruiz. In statements to *Proceso* magazine of Aug. 15, liberation theologian Carlos Bravo, who acted as spokesman for the order with President Salinas, defended Bishop Ruiz, just as he has earlier defended church catechists who have joined the EZLN.

The pressure upon Bishop Ruiz is great and growing. On Aug. 2, the Mexico City daily *Summa* wrote that the Vatican is about to send a "visitor" to Mexico, to investigate deviations in the pastoral work of the Mexican clergy, since it has been claimed that clerics have been involved with the EZLN. According to *Summa*, the bishop of Zacatecas and the president of the Doctrinal Commission on the Faith for the Mexican Conference of Bishops, Javier Lozano Barragán, have confirmed that such a visitor is expected.

In the newspaper *Reforma* of Aug. 16, Miguel Alvarez, spokesman for Bishop Ruiz, said that "more pressure is coming down upon Don Samuel; we do not know from which quarters, but there may shortly be named an auxiliary bishop or a co-adjutant."

On Aug. 9, Congressman Cuauhtémoc López Sánchez, secretary of the Standing Commission of the Congress, said that a formal investigation has been opened, to uncover what Bishop Ruiz has been doing with the funds he has received from Europe and the United States. And an MSIA poster is also circulating, thousands of which have been put up in the state of Chiapas itself, with a photograph of a viper and the headline: "Get Samuel Ruiz out of the Lacandona Jungle."

On Aug. 15, there appeared in the magazine *Proceso* a libelous attack against Lyndon LaRouche and the MSIA, by Carlos Bravo, director of the magazine *Christus*. Bravo said that posters had been put up, reading "Enough is enough! Down with traitors to the country! In El Salvador, thousands of Indians died before the Jesuits, who were responsible for the massacre. In Mexico, the Jesuits will die

first.” Bravo said that the posters were signed by the “Squads for the defense of the Catholic faith and the peace of Mexico,” but, he said, no one knows who they are. However, according to *Proceso*, “Bravo believes that behind these recent threats, there is one single group,” which published

a poster denouncing Bishop Ruiz as “the man who incited the Chiapas guerrillas.” “Those fliers,” said Bravo, “were attributed to the MSIA, linked to the Mexican Labor Party, which in turn is related to the U.S. Labor Party of Lyndon H. LaRouche.”

‘They slander LaRouche, knowing he is innocent’

This statement was released by the Ibero-American Solidarity Movement (MSIA) on Aug. 18:

The “hypothesis” of Jesuit father Carlos Bravo, spokesman for the 21-member delegation from the Society of Jesus which met privately with President Carlos Salinas de Gortari, to the effect that Lyndon LaRouche and the Ibero-American Solidarity Movement (MSIA) “could be involved” in anonymous death threats received by members of the order, is not only patently absurd, but Bravo lied, knowing full well that LaRouche has nothing to do with these threats.

It is noteworthy that Bravo’s statements were suggested to him, as the article in the Aug. 18 issue of *Excelsior* reveals, by Mrs. Susana Anibarro, who traveled to Mexico in the company of Thomas Gumbleton, the auxiliary bishop of Detroit and a member of the Pax Christi group of the U.S. Bishops Conference. Gumbleton and Anibarro came to Mexico to offer solidarity to the Society of Jesus and to “Comandante” Samuel Ruiz. Bravo reached his “conclusions” after being informed that Mrs. Anibarro had allegedly received death threats in Seattle, Washington, as a result of her coming to Mexico to support the Jesuits. And from here, Bravo affirmed that therefore the entire matter has to do with the United States and thus with Lyndon LaRouche! What brilliant investigators!

It is hardly coincidence that this campaign of slanders against LaRouche occurs at precisely the moment that thousands of political, religious, scientific, and military leaders from around the world have called on U.S. President William Clinton, Attorney General Janet Reno, and the corresponding committees of the U.S. Congress, through an open letter published in the Aug. 11 issue of the *Washington Post*, to exonerate LaRouche from the fraudulent charges for which George Bush and Henry Kissinger threw him in jail in 1989. Of a 15-year sentence, LaRouche served five years as a political prisoner, after

which he was paroled thanks to an enormous international mobilization.

The exoneration petition is signed by two former Presidents, over 50 current and former legislators and cabinet members; five Catholic archbishops; several bishops of the Roman Catholic Church and the Ukrainian Catholic Church; dozens of Protestant and Islamic leaders; over 50 state legislators, of which 24 are current state representatives in the United States, in addition to important human rights and civil rights leaders, prominent military and scientific leaders, as well as important lawyers, among them a former president of the United Nations Human Rights Commission and the president of the African Academy of Sciences.

The office of Detroit’s auxiliary bishop Thomas Gumbleton is perfectly aware of all of this.

The Jesuits therefore know that it is a total lie to attribute the referenced death threats to LaRouche. Thus, they and Anibarro, aren’t just making a mistaken “hypothesis.” They are simply lying.

How do they know ‘Marcos’ isn’t a Jesuit?

As for the Ibero-American Solidarity Movement’s alleged involvement, it is a well-known fact that the MSIA doesn’t hide behind ski-masks or other cowardly covers. The MSIA signs everything it publishes, as it did with the two posters issued on Samuel Ruiz. The first of these was headlined, “Wanted, For Treason,” and the second, “Samuel Ruiz: Out of the Lancandona Jungle!” The latter even has the MSIA’s phone numbers for those who want further information on the “Comandante.”

The MSIA therefore has absolutely nothing to do with the posters which threaten the Jesuits.

In fact, we challenge the Jesuits to reveal the identity of Sub-commander “Marcos.” They assured President Carlos Salinas de Gortari that they know that “Marcos” is not a Jesuit. If they know that, and can guarantee it, they must therefore know who “Marcos” is and are morally and legally obligated to reveal this to the Mexican people and their respective authorities.

Mexico, D.F.

Signed: Marivilia Carrasco de López, Carlos Cota Meza, Rubén Cota Meza, Hugo López Ochoa, Ignacio Mondaca, Angel Palacios, Alberto Vizcarra