

Terrorists, through rose-colored glasses

by Christine Bierre

Ces Hommes Sont Avant Tout Nos Frères

by Danielle Mitterrand

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Mme. Mitterrand's book, in English *These Men Are Above All Our Brothers*, is the story of a tour that she, the widow of French President François Mitterrand, had just completed throughout Ibero-America. She started in the Mexican state of Chiapas, where she met with "Subcomandante Marcos," accompanied by several Indian leaders; she then went on to Brazil, Uruguay, and Chile. The work offers a serious helping hand to the terrorist "revolution" in Chiapas, for which she had made herself the lively, even lyrical, spokesman, throughout her trip, and later at home in France.

Aside from revealing the fairly extensive and widespread networks of friends throughout the spheres of power in Ibero-America, the work especially shows off her puerility and romanticism. One would be hard put to understand the uproar that her support for every fringe group so often excited among the right wing and the advanced sector secret services, when she was "Madame la Présidente." Only their own stupidity could lead them to fear this childish woman, this blue flower in search of exotic adventure, thrilled by the most banal things: the sounds of the Lancadón jungle, drinking coffee with Indians in a miserable hut, a candle-light encounter with the subcomandante. And what could be more seductive for a cosmopolitan woman on a spree in such a fantasy-land, than Subcomandante Marcos? At night, in the depths of the jungle, Danielle awaits "the hero, whose name blossoms on everyone's lips. . . . Nightfall came very quickly. Will he come?" Her "heart beat fast" right up to the moment he arrived, and "we held our breath. The Indian commanders dismounted from their horses. One of them, whose great stature distinguished him from the others, left the group and came toward me. It is Marcos," the one who, like Zapata, would "remain untainted by all ambition and all cupidity," the "power of whose speech comes not solely from his words, but also his voice, powerful and soft."

In Brazil, Uruguay, and Chile she projects all these fantasies to everyone she speaks to: "The wind from that quarter

[i.e., Chiapas], will traverse the globe." At the end of her book, the pro-Zapatista crescendo turns into an operetta's grand finale. "We men, so fragile and mortal, we who walk with our heads in the clouds, hear the wind that comes to us from Chiapas," she tells us. However, we require "a certain dose of tenderness." Danielle reassures Marcos: "We do have it. It is simply sleeping within us. You have awakened it. And you have also awakened humor, simplicity, the urge to smile at someone one comes across in the street, to contemplate his cheerful gait, the bounce in his step, the gaiety of a man for whom a ray of sunshine suffices to make him sing. . . . You have awakened hope within us."

The breakup of nations

Why bother with this critique, then? Isn't it enough to believe that ridicule will kill it off, and have done with it? What credibility could Danielle Mitterrand have, who recently unhesitatingly told a television interviewer that her husband never lied? In another time, in another France, where "mediocrity" has become synonymous with "politician," the kind of support Danielle Mitterrand offers would be more an annoyance than a serious issue.

The problem is that the puerility of Mme. Mitterrand is used by empires to break nations up, imposing a supranational order top-down with help from institutions such as the United Nations, and ruling over impoverished and weakened populations which they have divided into regional, religious, ethnic, and tribal groupings. The "Indian" uprising in Chiapas and its secessionist demands immediately found a favorable echo among other Indian communities which also seek to be freed from the authority of the state, certainly frequently unjust, but which has never sought to institutionalize the racism of creating Indian "nations" incapable of achieving the development of the advanced nations. The awarding of the Nobel Prize a few years ago, to Rigoberta Menchú, the Guatemalan Indian guerrilla, as well as the avowed determination of Danielle Mitterrand to spread Zapatismo throughout Ibero-America, clearly show how the oligarchical forces based in the wealthy North are attempting to dismantle the nation-states of Ibero-America, under the pretext of defending the Indians.

This is why the "Zapatista revolution" has only vague demands for peace and brotherhood, as Danielle Mitterrand underscores: "The revolution which is in progress in Chiapas is like none other. It is neither communist, nor Marxist. It does not aim to replace a liberal economy with a statist economy. . . . It is a revolution to build a world in which the central value is man within his culture, his origins, his differences; and the goal of this society will be neither the accumulation of wealth, or the accumulation of power. It will allow each to achieve what he hopes for best, in brotherhood, justice, respect without discrimination, neither among the sexes, nor among races."

In other words, a cherry to bait the trap.