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The Zapatista Rebellion-spearheaded by the Zapatista National Liberation Army or EZLN--erupted in the Southern Mexican state of Chiapas on 1 January 1994, surprising the whole Mexican nation. The EZLN emerged for public view as a well-organized movement that claimed broad membership and support from indigenous peoples in their rights to land, food, and justice. The government of Mexico reacted in an unexpectedly conciliatory manner. As a consequence, the actual armed confrontation ended after only a few days. A Conciliation Commission was appointed to deal with the demands of the Azapatista leadership. National and international public opinion was immediately focused on the southeastern Mexican conflict, one of the first "post-Cold war" conflicts. A central purpose of this thesis is to highlight the inner and often partially hidden reasons behind the LZLN insurgency. This thesis examines also how knowledge about the origins and ideological foundations of the Zapatista movement emerged. It addresses how this information indicates that the Zapatista leadership is comprised of remnants of earlier Communist-supported groups--individuals who not only seek the overthrow of the established Mexican government, but who also seek the establishment of themselves in power.

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THE REBELLION OF THE ZAPATISTAS

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

Edgar Acata Paniagua, LTC, Mexican Army

B.A., Superior War School, Mexico City, 1983

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
1996

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ABSTRACT

THE REBELLION OF THE ZAPATISTAS by Lieutenant Colonel Edgar Acata Paniagua, Mexican Army, 139 pages.

The Zapatista Rebellion--spearheaded by the Zapatista National Liberation Army or EZLN--erupted in the Southern Mexican state of Chiapas on 1 January 1994, surprising the whole Mexican nation. The EZLN emerged for public view as a well-organized movement that claimed broad membership and support from indigenous peoples in their rights to land, food, and justice. The government of Mexico reacted in an unexpectedly conciliatory manner. As a consequence, the actual armed confrontation ended after only a few days. A Conciliation Comission was appointed to deal with the demands of the Zapatista leadership.

National and international public opinion was immediately focused on the southeastern Mexican conflict, one of the first "post-Cold War" conflicts. A central purpose of this thesis is to highlight the inner and often partially hidden reasons behind the EZLN insurgency.

This thesis examines also how knowledge about the origins and ideological foundations of the Zapatista movement emerged. It addresses how this information indicates that the Zapatista leadership is comprised of remnants of earlier Communist-supported groups--individuals who not only seek the overthow of the established Mexican government, but who also seek the establishment of themselves in power. In additon, in tracking the activities of these dissidents from their original affiliations to the present, this thesis examines the validity of their demands and the reasons they chose to use the indigenous cause as a springboard in their search for political power.

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CHAPTER 1

POST-COMMUNIST REVOLUTION IN MEXICO

Introduction

On 1 January 1994, elements of the self-proclaimed *Ejercito Zapatista de Liberacion Nacional*--the Zapatista National Liberation Army or EZLN--entered the county seats of Ocosingo, Altamirano, Las Margaritas, and finally San Cristobal de las Casas. All of these towns are located in Mexico's southern state of Chiapas. After killing a number of police officers and taking control of public buildings--including the police stations--they formed smaller groups which dispersed to ransack local stores.[1]

During the morning of the same day, at the main town of San Cristobal de las Casas, one of the EZLN leaders announced through the international media reporters who had quickly gathered there, that the EZLN would no longer recognize the dominion of the federal government. At the same time, the EZLN declared war against the Mexican Army.[2]

National and Military Reaction

The Chiapas State governor soon realized the struggle had gotten beyond his control and that it represented a grave risk to public safety. As a consequence, the State government requested the Mexican Army's VII Military Zone Commander to intervene and restore order and peace. This request was based on Article 42, Section III, of the Chiapas State Constitution.[3]

Military reaction of the type anticipated by the outlaws did not occur, and so--in an effort to spur Mexican Army response--military facilities as the 31st Zone Headquarters (HQ), 83th Infantry Battalion, came under direct attack during the early hours of 2 January. This attack also included the family housing area located in the vicinity of "Rancho Nuevo." The EZLN transgressors apparently intended to provoke a violent reaction from the Army, but they also presumably had the goal of obtaining more weapons from the Battalion Armory located there.

As a consequence of the level of violence experienced--and in response to the Governors's petition--the President of Mexico ordered the Army and Air Force later that same day to initiate operations to reestablish public order within the conflict area. In undertaking this action, the Mexican President acted in his role as Supreme Commander of the Mexican Armed Forces.

By 5 January, Mexican military units had repelled EZLN attacks and ambushes, moving to occupy several towns. Infantry units, after gaining control of Ocosingo, moved on to the town of Altamirano. These Mexican Army elements had been ordered to expel a group of EZLN combatants who had threatened and besieged the town. However, by the time troops arrived the EZLN had already fled.

On 6 January, Mexican Army forces began conducting operations in pursuit of several dispersed groups of EZLN rebels who were heading into the jungle over various routes. One of the infantry units liberated Oxchuc, a town whose inhabitants had been especially hard pressed by the outlaws. The reason this town was so-targeted, evidently stemmed from an initial fight that townspeople had had with the EZLN. At this time, area residents had reportedly captured some twelve transgressors by

themselves, who were subsequently turned over to the authorities. After taking custody of captured rebels, army units remained at Oxchuc to protect threatened citizens.

Operations conducted by the Mexican Army and Air Force in the State of Chiapas against this new, and highly "propagandistic," form of revolution evoking the name of Mexican Revolutionary hero Emiliano Zapata, had rapid, unanticipated consequences. That is, Mexican Army activity in the state provoked strong attacks from a broad spectrum of organizations, both inside as well as outside of Mexico. But the attacks were especially vehement from long-standing "radical leftist" parties within the country. Some of these attacks were based on distorted versions of events and were clearly aimed at discrediting institutions like the Army specifically, and the entire Mexican Government in general.[4]

Assessing the Insurgency

These are the events which publicly began the struggle between the Mexican government and the Zapatista National Liberation Army. While the basic facts related above are well-known, the purpose of this thesis is to relate these events--as well as earlier and subsequent ones--from a different perspective. That is, the author wants to assess what seems to be the real story about the Zapatista revolt in a country that has long relied on a relatively peaceful evolution.

It should be emphasized that Mexicans were extremely proud and satisfied that problems of subversion had seemed to have been left behind, unlike the experience of Central American states to the south. Furthermore, despite perceived development problems, the country as a

whole was achieving notable success in a number of areas and was entering apace into the world economy.

The roots of the problem are difficult for an outsider to understand, especially when not actively living in the country, or not having lived there long enough to fully understand the underlying character of a deeply nationalistic people. It is, therefore, one of the goals of this thesis--drawing on the author's knowledge of Mexico, its institutions, and environment--to portray for the military community the appearance of a substantially new and as yet not well-comprehended form of insurgency. This is an insurgency that goes beyond the conventional media while taking full advantage of it, and in a masterly way using the availability of world-wide, computer-based networks.

A central question of the thesis is this: Is the rebellion of the Zapatistas an authentic demonstration of indigenous retaliation for over 500 years of abuse and humiliation? So far, their leaders have firmly asserted that their strength is constituted from a purely indigenous movement, without any sort of relationship to foreign countries, international organizations, or founded on theological inspiration. However, since the struggle began, more and more evidence has been gathered which demonstrates that not only in-country support but also international patronage is present, and that this is linked to old-fashioned Marxist-Leninist extremists. The Zapatistas have furthered their objectives by masking their true aims behind nationalistic propaganda.[5]

A second, related question may be posed as well: Is the rebellion of the Zapatistas a new and more sophisticated form of communist revolution promoted by the remnants of resentful and still-

defiant Marxist-Leninist radicals? It seemed to many specialists that after the Soviet threat disappeared, every communist based revolt lost not only its main source of support, but also its very reason for existence. The Sandinistas, for example, had proven themselves incapable of managing Nicaragua economy. Cuba had long ago stopped exporting ideas, men, and weapons into Latin America, and now is trying only to survive within its own borders.

Many of those emotionally committed "socialist" students of Le Sorbonne University in Paris, as well as those attending other important centers of studies spread around the world, took part in the stormy student "revolts" of the 1960s. Years later, some of these same students are now prominent entrepreneurs, or even much more influentially, public or government officials within developed and undeveloped countries alike. A number of them may well have felt deeply disillusioned when their long-standing youthful beliefs and hopes suddenly disappeared with the Soviet collapse.

A unique remaining alternative was still available, however. It was to provide not only their sympathy, but also subtle, almost undetectable support to any continuing "communist" struggle. But this time, support could be provided from their far more respectable and secure positions as corporate executives or public officials. They may have asked themselves: Who could find out about it? This was at the precise moment in which a series of extraordinary events and circumstances converged--events which promised difficult times for the August 1994 presidential elections in Mexico.[6]

From a number of military-analytical perspectives, the rebellion in Mexico could fit perfectly into the doctrine of Low Intensity

Conflict (LIC), or Operations Other Than War (OOTW) to use the current US terminology. But was it that good a fit? Throughout history we can find numerous examples of how human beings have exercised a natural tendency to adapt new or external events into their pre-conceived frameworks of thought, in order to be able to internally process data. Perhaps the older models fit and perhaps they do not. Perhaps, the Zapatistas were truly the remnant of an undetected and ardent communist movement, or perhaps they were something different. In any case, perceptions of who the Zapatistas were, and what motivated them, was mostly based on the fact that under the new world order--the order of open economies--there supposedly was much less to be concerned about from traditionally insurgencies.

This problem arising in Mexico at the midpoint of the 1990s is not easy to address, especially now that many reporters and commentators have written so much about it. Almost every intelligence analyst, military and civilian, has briefed or been briefed about developments. Many analysts have already expressed their particular perspectives from various tactical, strategic, and political viewpoints. Nevertheless, while various analysts and specialists may hold portions of the "truth," the overall problem is proving to be much more complex than many of the assessments thus far presented.

This is a particularly important issue, especially since the rebellion in Chiapas represents a problem of enormous concern and consequence. This is so not only for Mexico, but for the United States as well, where escalating violence could force hundreds of thousands of Mexicans to flee from their country to safe havens in the United States. At the precise time when the U.S. and Mexico were on the verge of

concluding the NAFTA Agreement--or the "Tratado de Libre Comercio" as it is known in Mexico--foreign concerns also became focused on the security of the billions of dollars that were being invested into an economically emerging country now troubled by an insurgency of uncertain origins, composition, and strength.

The Guatemalan Factor

As noted, over the last two years an enormous number of reports have been prepared about the Zapatista revolution. The very public appearance of the EZLN took place after a series of long-standing rumors had circulated throughout the state of Chiapas. At this same time, there was a common understanding at the national level that there was an immense problem present just south of the Mexican border--namely, the Guatemalan guerrilla movement which was striving to achieve its own goals of overthrowing the Guatemalan government after 30 years of fighting.

From a totally different perspective than that held by the Guatemalan guerrillas, and for the most part one held by the Mexican authorities, this was only one more of a long series of conflicts to which the Government of Mexico (GOM) had to respond either directly or indirectly. During the previous 15 years, for example, the GOM, in close coordination with representatives of the United Nations, had established and supported approximately 17 refugee camps within Mexican territory for Guatemalans who supposedly had been victimized and pursued by the Guatemalan army.

Guatemalan peasants, running away from their own

authorities and military forces, sought protection inside the Mexican state. These peasants scarcely recognized that genuine political borders existed in remote jungle areas. As time went by, those camps became undercover recovery zones for the Guatemalan guerrillas, who now could look for health care, food, and access to weapons and ammunition smuggled from the USA. When the military in Guatemala became aware that these recovery zones had the potential of indefinitely extending the existence of the Guatemalan guerrillas, it began launching attacks deep into the Mayan jungle. Some of these attacks penetrated into Mexican territory.[7]

However, responsibility for these attacks was sometimes ascribed to the Mexican Army. In fact, it was easy to blame the Mexican army for these illegal raids, since there was little to distinguish Guatemalan and Mexican uniforms, and the physical appearance of the soldiers was almost identical.

Continuing confusion over the identity of the attackers led the Mexican military to stop its use of camouflage uniforms in order to avoid confusion and end recriminations from the international agencies. The problem worsened, however, when military forces from both countries began to confront each other in the middle of the jungle. As a consequence, the GOM ordered the Mexican military to withdraw units from the southern border. This decision would become very harmful to Mexico in the near future.

Domestic Revolutionary Groups and Chiapas

Meanwhile, in Mexico itself during the period 1973 to 1978, the federal government had completely eradicated a radical leftist movement

group named the 23 September Communist League--*Liga Comunista 23 de Septiembre*--which operated in conjunction with the Poor Peoples Party (*Partido de los Pobres*), as well as the Revolutionary Clandestine People's Union Party (called PROCUP). These groups, which operated for the most part elsewhere in the country beyond Chiapas, included members who were graduates of the USSR's Patrice Lumumba University. They represented a matter of major concern to the GOM.[8]

After the destruction of major elements of the groups, a few members managed to escape and fled looking for a safe refuge into the most impenetrable region of the country--the "Biosphere Reserve Region of High Chiapas." This was a place where they found a fertile culture suitable for rebuilding and practicing their beliefs. Ultimately, they hoped to reorganize their movements. They soon realized, however, that the Church had long been established there, and that it represented an extremely strong influence among most of the Indigenous communities.

In the beginning, the former guerillas and the church became acquainted. They soon discovered mutual interests and objectives, each one relying on the other. Time proved how successful this symbiosis would be.

Evolving EZLN-Government Interaction

The Zapatista struggle throughout 1994 and 1995 successively adopted several approaches in order to deal with developing events. In the beginning, the EZLN's open and highly visible objective was to declare war against the GOM and the Mexican military. Eventually, this declared goal lost its value, and the Zapatistas began orienting their

message toward political audiences by finely adjusting their press releases to the most current events.

Under that concept, the Zapatistas reoriented their objective of provoking a change in the Government.[9] Under this different approach, they declared that much more in-depth measures should be taken to permit basic and desperately needed changes in Mexican economics, society and political structure. As it developed up to this point, the approach has been an extraordinary and dynamic process that has attracted huge numbers of supporters, mainly from leftist sectors who were tired and disappointed by unkept promises. These sectors included pseudo-intellectuals and opposition or yellow-journalist media who saw an opportunity to freely attack the Mexican governing elite as never before. The sectors also included resentful union workers, unemployed people, and in general, everybody else who was suffering from the severe economic measures that the GOM was forced to impose due to economic circumstances. In addition frightened foreign investors and capital were fleeing the country, and avoiding those business opportunities that NAFTA earlier had offered.

The process of shifting tactics and approaches by the EZLN has not stopped. The Zapatistas--having learned negotiations from the Nicaraguan, Guatemalan and Salvadoran experiences--have improved and reinforced their ability to sustain themselves. It is likely that they will keep imposing difficult negotiating conditions with the aim of extending their presence into the national political spectrum. In some respects, the EZLN serves as a laboratory for an experiment in revolutionary change, while Cuba--as a once-premier, but now lonely example of revolutionary success in the hemisphere--continues its fall.

On the other hand, the federal government was represented by individuals who wanted to obtain political results and thereby fame. But they were not looking for authentic social change within a short period of time. A country where drastic changes are demanded, may not be aware that the forces they are confronting constitute an immense iceberg. Such an iceberg may prove much too difficult to melt down, and quite likely capable of existing well after the tenure of those government officials confronting it is terminated. Limitations on the government are also imposed by the very dynamic nature of this process, which requires extremely close attention to developments in order to detect and predict changing directions and approaches.

As this thesis is written, negotiations between the EZLN and government representatives are continuing. So far, armed conflict in southern Mexico seems to have a low probability of gaining full success. However, the Zapatistas have not surrendered their weapons, and these same weapons are waved every time the government has failed to provide what the EZLN demanded.

Overall, this thesis is aimed at highlighting the inner--and at least partially hidden--reasons behind the EZLN insurgency. As noted, the Zapatista insurgency could be classified by some specialists as a lingering form of "low intensity conflict" in a largely post-communist world. However, it may also be judged to be a new, very intelligent approach by Marxist-Leninist believers who still think that the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat" is a feasible concept. But in the view of the author--despite all of the above considerations--analysts must keep in mind that much in the world revolves around a single motivation--power.[10]

Endnotes

1. Secretaria de Defensa Nacional (hereafter cited as SDN), Chiapas (Mexico City: SDN Taller Autografico, February 1994), 3.

2. See "Declaration of War, Communiques of the EZLN," appearing in the 2 January 1994 issues of El Tiempo, La Jornada, El Financiero, El Norte, Reforma, Excelsior, and El Heraldo among other publications.

3. Chiapas State Constitution, Chiapas State Government, (Tuxtla Gutierrez, Chiapas, 1976).

4. El Heraldo de Mexico, 7 January 1994. See also Luis Pazos, Por Oue Chiapas ?, (Mexico City: Ingramex, 14 February 1994), 42.

5. SDN, Mentiras e Infamias en contra del Ejercito Mexicano, (Mexico City: SDN Taller Autografico, March 1994).

6. Stephen Wager and Donald Schutz, The Awakening of the Zapatists (Carlisle, PA: Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 30 December 1994), 17.

7. Excelsior, 22 January 1972. See also Juan Miguel de Mora, Las Guerrillas in Mexico (Mexico City: Editora Latina Americana, 1972) 580.

8. President Gustavo Diaz Ordaz, delivered his yearly report to the Union Congress on 1 September 1968, which was published in National Federation Official Newspaper on that same date. See also "Declaration of then-President Luis Echeverria Alvarez," which dealt with the kidnapping of Doctor Ph, Jesus Castrejon, Dean of the University of Guerrero, by Lucio Cabanas' followers in Acapulco, January 1972, and Excelsior, 12 July 1971, which dealt with the 22 individulas detained by Mexican police agents after the former received training in North Korea and China.

9. See "Declaration of the Lacandon Jungle," issued by the EZLN, in Chiapas, Mexico, 2 January 1994. There would, be up to four different Lacandon Jungle Declarations eventually issued, each of them aimed at accomplishing different objectives. See also "The Mass Strategy Organization Model," in U.S. Army Field Manual, 100-20 Low Intensity Conflict, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, January 1986), 35-38.

10. Sigmund Newman and Mark Von Hagen, "Marx and Engels,' in Makers of Modern Strategy, (Princeton, NJ: University of Princenton Press, 1945), 265.

CHAPTER 2

COMMUNISM, MEXICAN SOCIETY, AND THE RISE OF INSURGENT GROUPS

Introduction

There are a number of important factors that need to be kept in mind when considering the Zapatista struggle and the context in which it took place. These include the following issues:

1. The struggle that is occurring in Chiapas is not only military uprising, nor only a unilateral social demand. Rather, it is the convergence of a long standing, complex series of conditions that involve economic, social, and political problems in rural Mexico, most of them affecting the southern portion of the country.

2. The Zapatistas, under command of the *Comite Indigena de Liberacion Nacional*, initially wanted to destroy the Mexican Government and take power themselves. Later, however, it started a movement in apparent search of a democratic opening that would allow it to influence Mexican society in its entirety.

3. The Zapatistas met a nation-wide sentiment for social, economic and political reforms. After a prompt cease fire agreement, the government and rebels began a series of negotiations aimed at finding a non-violent resolution.

4. Negotiations were largely slowed because of the Zapatista's uncompromising stance regarding their proposed democratic reforms. EZLN

military options remained as an alternative, but a distant and not likely one despite frequent and flagrant Zapatista threats.

5. The Mexican government understood that the Zapatista movement was not isolated, but was, in fact, supported by many other resentful sectors of Mexican society who suffered under the same conditions. Under the new President, Ernesto Zedillo, the government tried to alleviate current conditions by reforming vicious political structures and providing new structures for economic help.

6. Time is proving that the Zapatista leadership is a remnant of outdated Marxist-Leninist guerrilla groups, attempting to seize power by representing the demands of the poor for economic and social justice.

In any event, it has been said that the Zapatista movement has helped to expedite social, political and economic change in Mexico. Initially, the Zapatistas fascinated the people and caused them to react to their message and demands. That fascination was based on Zapatista messages which touched resonant historical and cultural chords. To fully understand why EZLN messages were so effective initially, a detailed examination of evolving societal factors and institutions in Mexico would be necessary, particularly as regards agriculture and the land distribution system, the Federal and state governments, the Catholic Church, communism, the Army, the judicial and police system, and other major forces in Mexican society. A number of these factors will be addressed in this and the following chapters. As regards the central topic of this thesis, however, the author has chosen to concentrate on an especially illustrative and pertinent dimension of Mexican society--the evolution of communism in Mexico and the associated rise and development of communist "insurgent groups."

Communism in Mexico

The first appearance of Socialism in Mexico, can be traced back to the immediate epoch of the Independence. Many Spaniards and *creoles* were afraid of the unacceptable social reforms proposed by the insurgents soon after they celebrated their victory.

Vicente Guerrero, third President of Mexico (1826-1829) invited British socialist Robert Owen to establish a socialist colony in Mexico (probably at the suggestion of historian Francisco de Zavala). However, nothing resulted after the proposal.

In 1830, a book appeared in the capital of Mexico. It had been written by a canonical lawyer (*licenciado en teologia*) named Francisco Severo Maldonado, who would die only two years later. The book was named *The Triumph of the Human Species*. It argued that the first step toward the objective of transforming society was through the organization of industry, agriculture, and commerce. It also stated that society was supported by what he termed to be the "adversity of the proletariat."[1] This was the first time that a phrase like that one had been heard in Latin America. Simultaneously many new and incipient ideologies were spinning and evolving in Mexico: liberals versus conservatives; later federalists versus republicans; and still later, centralists versus statists.

Many believed that progress would be achieved through education or through industry, while others believed that industry combined specifically with ethical and technical education would better support progress in the country. French liberalism would constitute a beacon light for many of these developments. While Mexicans had a concept of

liberalism, however, the middle and lower classes had not developed a healthy concept of property.

By 1830, President Gomez Farias, at the suggestion of many advanced liberals, embraced a program that included freedom of expression, suppression of special privileges for the military and clergymen, and destruction of church monopoly in education. But it never worked. In a strict sense, those would be the same basic motives of Benito Juarez's Reform Laws and the civil war that was provoked by these reform programs from 1860 to 1867. Nowadays, that might be considered a "socialist" program.

In 1880, under Porfirio Diaz, a certain degree of industrialization was being achieved, and a nascent proletariat and liberal middle class were emerging in Mexican society. But before they were fully established, groups of immigrants from France and Spain moved to Mexico. They brought with them the ideas of Charles Fourier, the utopian socialist; anarchists-socialists; and even the newly appearing Marxists.[2]

Imported concepts from Europe affected the attitude of Mexican workers and artisans. Numerous short-lived newspapers appeared to keep worker unions informed of advancements. Between 1874-1875 the first communist paper appeared precisely under the name of *La Comuna* (The Commune), exhibiting such exotic ideas as the right to strike and advocacy of women's right to vote. Guillermo Prieto, who had even reached the Vice-presidency of Mexico with Benito Juarez, published another socialist newspaper irregularly between 1871 and 1888, called *El Socialista* (The Socialist).

El Hijo del Trabajo (The Son of Work), perhaps is the most representative of all newspapers of this period. It was published between 1876 and 1886 by a tailor under the name of Jose Maria Gonzalez. He advocated the concept of Mutualist unions as an instrument for workers to realize their full strength. He also reproduced French authors such as: Victor Hugo, Babeuf, Lammenais, Voltaire, and Eugenie Sue.[3]

In 1886, Polonius C. Rhodakanaty, a Greek, founded a school called *Escuela Moderna y Libre* (Modern and Free School), to provide trained labor leaders. He graduated several of them from his school, who in turn went on to organize socialist clubs.[4] In 1870, a group of disciples of Rhodakanaty founded the *Gran Circulo de Obreros de Mexico* (Great Council of Mexican Workers) which pledged loyalty to the First International. The group lasted 10 years, achieving a membership of 8,000 workers. Their quotas permitted the Group to publish books by Marx, Bakunin and others. Their demands were equality, free elections, an ombudsman for workers rights, and fair wages.[5] Another contributor to the appearance of a Communist party, in Mexico was Alberto Santa Fe--who while in prison in 1878 for the incendiary reason of being a communist--wrote a book called *Law for the People*.[6] In 1888, a North American, Nicasio Idar, came to Mexico to lend his professional skills to establish the first Communist party in Mexico under the Americanized name of the Supreme Order of Railroad Workers.

With all of this socialist movement activity going on, farmers began to get organized too. In 1887 the First Labor Congress met to create a central Communal Committee and to promote agrarian laws. They signed a document that called for municipal or socialist government and

for insurrection. Three years later an Army General, Tiburcio Montiel organized and funded the Mexican Agrarian League, an organization that actively worked under socialist concepts. The government reacted by accusing him of being a "Communist" and exiled him to Baja California.[7]

By 1900, the workers and peasants's situation in Mexico was at its peak in terms of activism. A movement with more precise ideology appeared, which was headed by the Flores Magon brothers (Ricardo, Enrique, and Jesus). They started with a political party designated the *Partido Liberal Mexicano* (Mexican Liberal Party) a name that remained even as the Party's orientation changed according to the events. They established alliance with the radical Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) during their exile in the U.S. But they remained pragmatic despite efforts to make them more defined and proactive.

The Magon brothers also started their own socialist newspaper "Regeneracion," but were forced to relocate and to publish it in San Antonio Texas after a short time. They went far by establishing, while in Mexico, liberal clubs, conventions and even uprisings. The Magon brothers distrusted politicians. Not surprisingly, they rejected Madero's movement and tried to link themselves with Zapata. Finally they decided to establish a Socialist Republic in Baja California, in close coordination with the IWW, in order to exert pressure against Porfirio Diaz's government and to provoke the masses to accept their movement.

Socialist and Communist terms would only be known, as such, after the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia in 1917. Perhaps nobody in Mexico by 1910 had read Lenin. If so, nobody could have said whether or not the three required conditions for a revolution to succeed were present in the country at that time: notably, whether the ruling class

believed that the situation could be maintained; whether the oppressed classes considered a change possible; and whether any organization had developed strength enough to conduct the revolution. And yet Revolution came.

The Mexican Revolution of 1910 represented the major struggle that Mexico faced to determine its nationalistic identity. It took 17 years for Mexico to stabilize and end the bloodshed. By 1917, a new Constitution had been approved and the country prepared to initiate a new stage of development. Little by little after the Revolution, people started to lay down their arms, but the Revolution continued above them, this time into the government. Popular participation ceased and actions began to be directed by the government and government groups. The well known term "Revolutionary Family"--a term still in use--began to function as the government assumed the role of self-appointed guardian, protecting the nation against foreigners and the Mexican against exploitation.

Attempts were made to create Socialist Parties and even a League of Producer Classes was created to foster cooperative movements. Rafael Perez Taylor, editor of a newspaper related to the Communist Party, considered the middle class to be "parasitic and womanish" and asserted that "revolution was not the father of Liberalism, but sprang from a higher credo." He went on to note that "Revolution has ceased to be political and has turned into the economical, backed by a proletarian Army and the support of the Trade Unions". But people turned deaf ears to his calls for action.

Some of the spokesmen descended from Spaniard anarchists asserted that Revolution was nothing but a struggle between different

capitalist groups. This feeling was reinforced by Venustiano Carranza's declarations to workers in 1914 when he said: "Trade Unionism is atheistic and an enemy of the fatherland".

Previously, under Victoriano Huerta's illegal regime, the leftist Worker's House had expressed in regard to revolution that: "It has nothing to do and will have nothing to do with politics". When the first Zapatistas came to Mexico City and established themselves momentarily on the outskirts of the urban ring, the Worker's House again proclaimed that "we will always condemn the participation of workers in armed movements, and we have always maintained that the collective effort of the workers, as promised by the official trade unions, will take us surely to progress".[8]

This myopia was to weaken the Mexican labor movement for many years. The anarchists tried to reinforce their own organization by the means of a well-know Congress in Tampico, Tamaulipas in 1917. The Mexican Regional Labor Federation (CROM) was born there. This organ had a strong Bakuninist character, and represented support for class efforts. But it would also reveal that the Mexican Workers' movement had acquired a also strong nationalistic orientation. Not a word relating to anarchism had been expressed, but organizations fought for the name: Should it be MEXICAN as nationalists wanted, or OF MEXICO as anarchists wanted. MEXICAN prevailed![9]

CROM became a powerful organization from the workers' point of view. It allied itself with General Alvaro Obregon's candidacy for the presidency of Mexico in 1919. The leaders of CROM were part of the projected Socialist Party, but they had to change their nomenclature to be able to openly support the Obregon candidacy. A strong alliance was

established between the two of them. This later would lead to CROM distancing itself from its basic posture of advocating workers' welfare, and a move toward working closer with the government. President Obregon, in response, gave CROM and the workers all kinds of privileges. Soon leaders had stopped fulfilling their roles. This represented a major fracture among workers and Unions, since CROM had stopped representing worker needs. Labor demands started being represented by other groups, such as the *Grupo Marxista Rojo* (Red Marxist Group); *Partido Socialista Majoritario Rojo*(Red Socialist Majority); *Partido Socialista del Sureste* (Southeastern Socialist Party); *Ligas de Resistencia* (Resistance Leagues); *Partido Socialista Radical* (Radical Socialist Party); and the *Partido Comunista Mexicano* (Communist Mexican Party).

Of these, the *Ligas de Resistencia* headed by Felipe Carrillo Puerto, was an especially strong organization in Yucatan State. The American Robert Haberman played a founder's role in this organization. The *Partido Socialista Radical*, established in Tabasco and led by Tomas Garrido Canabal (1890-1943), had a virulent anticlerical posture.

At the same time, the Mexican Communist Party was established through the influence of M. Noland Roy, an Indian nationalist living in Mexico who had become a Marxist convert. The groups that Roy had managed to bring together were oriented and indoctrinated by the Japanese Communist Sen Katayama, while he lived in Mexico in 1922, and this influence was continued by Michel Borodin, a former Russian citizen.

Several Party members in the United States, assigned to perform duties in Mexico, controlled the Mexican Communist Party for several

years until it was intrusted to a Swiss named Stirner. Nevertheless, the Mexican Communist Party never succeeded in gaining much influence over the masses, although it made mural painters as Diego Rivera (1886-1959) and David Alfaro Siqueiros (1895-1978) nationally and internationally famous. They and others always stove to popularize Communist ideals and kept the political thought in constant fermentation--but they never succeeded in gaining broad popular support.

Some new organizations with a Communist tint were founded, but none became important. For example, the *Confederacion Sindicalista Unitaria* (United Trade Union Federation) was a communist organization only existing on paper, while others such as the *Confederacion Nacional Proletaria* (National Proletarian Association) and the *Confederacion Nacional Obrera y Campesina* (National Peasant-Labor Federation) existed but werenot very effective.

When Plutarco Elias Calles became President of Mexico, he saw the necessity of having a different approach to solving Mexican development. He understood that the old figure of the "caudillo" had to be forgotten. He consequently initiated a program under which the government and its functionaries should be "Institutional." When he finished his tenure, he traveled to Europe where he became very interested in German Socialism, and also in the peculiar organization of the British Labour party. On his return to home, he founded a new party in 1929 based in his observations overseas. The new party would be called *Partido Nacional Revoluvionario* (National Revolutionary Party--PNR). Thereafter, Socialist organizations were able to fuse with the PNR without losing their local identity or particular individuality in the process.

President Pascual Ortiz Rubio, successor to Elias Calles, experienced problems with communist-oriented opposition. Former President Elias Calles, then serving as Minister of Defense, put resulting riots down in a short time. Calles executed several communists, among them one called Jose Guadalupe Rodriguez, who tried to take advantage of the turmoil by organizing riots not only among peasants, but also among soldiers. He surely was trying to impose Moscow's Bolshevik process in Mexico.

Some participating soldiers ended up in front of firing squads, while others were exiled to the Marias Islands. On the other hand, the Resistance Leagues, led by Ursulo Galvan, a convert to Communism for a time, supported Calles and broke with the Communist party. Meanwhile a Labour and Peasant Bloc organized by the Communist International, was simultaneously dissolved by the government. Its President had been the aforementioned painter Diego Rivera, who had expected favoritism from the government in view of his international fame.

By the 1930's, a new generation began to play an increasing role in the Mexican politics. These young men had been only children at the time of Revolution, so they did not feel as engaged to or compromised by it, since they had not participated actively. This generation had been dazzled by the Russian Revolution, or at least by what it seemed to be. They blindly believed in their propaganda, perhaps as a reaction to the Fascism coming from Europe. The local Mexican fascists tried to quell the government. They adopted the strange custom--at least by Mexican standards--of wearing golden shirts (*camisas doradas*) for recognition. But they never succeeded in their efforts and had no profound ideology.

The new generation, dissatisfied with low salaries, were intellectuals dreaming of converting the masses. The Agricultural School of Chapingo, where Diego Rivera had painted one of his famous murals, played an important role as a center for communist activists. Meanwhile, the Catholic clergy and their ardent followers were very well aware that "Socialism" was beginning to mean anti-clerical and modern, free-spirited education. Violence--evidently inspired by fanatical followers of Catholicism--claimed the life of 18 schoolteachers in rural towns.[10]

At this time, Lazaro Cardenas came to power. With Elias Calles's support, he established a new government program called Plan Sexenal. It was argued that since the President could not accomplish all of his plan in 4 years, the mandate should be extended in order to provide him with enough time.

Events of enormous importance were yet to come in this immediate period. Civil war in Spain brought many immigrants to Mexico, President Roosevelt was re-elected and the New Deal became an important part of U.S. government policy. World War II burst over the globe. At that time, Cardenas was neither popular nor widely known. He had never shown any evidence of great initiative. But the importance of his office and the power related to the Presidency transformed him into a reflective man capable not only of controlling events, but also of turning circumstances to his own advantage.

Cardenas won influence in the Congress. The Church, afraid of past Calles influence, moved to Cardenas side. Cardenas learned to say very little; disregard abstract concepts; move to concrete results; travel around the country (especially to small villages); and respect

freedom of the press, speech and assembly. Golden Shirts were left in peace, Communists groups were not persecuted, and Cardenas suffered press attacks without any retaliation in return. Cardenas used Lombardo Toledano to create a Union Federation loyal to the government. Lombardo, who started as a Catholic, had maintained an impassioned relationship with the Communists for about 20 years. In 1929, in regard to Communism, he said:

> As long as the Communist organization fails to demonstrate to the proletariat of Mexico that it is capable of transforming the present bourgeois regime and seizing power, the workers of Mexico can point with reason to the Communist party as a group of delinquents, for their premeditated, criminal contribution to the failure of the labor organization.
>
> As long as the party fails to demonstrate that conditions in Mexico are such as to permit the working masses to carry out a radical and abrupt change in the actual order of things, the Communists deserve nothing from Mexican workers except the name of perverse agitators, men of little honor, and false leaders.[11]

Lombardo Toledano argued that the Mexican workers were not ready to take over and that any talk about social revolution was utopian. He also urged the creation and enforcement of better social laws favorable to workers. He expressed his ideas in radical terms, as expected for the radical leader he was supposed to be. Since the younger generation was receptive to Stalinist rhetoric, Lombardo Toledano's rhetoric echoed this but in a very Mexican manner. That is, he recognized that the younger generation had a weakness for phrases and formulas, but also had a strong desire to participate in power without relinquishing their own right to criticize the former revolutionaries then in power.

Lombardo Toledano created a National Committee of Proletarian Defense to support the Cardenas presidency. In February 1936, this developed into the *Confederacion de Trabajadores de Mexico* (Mexican Federation of Labor--CTM). The CTM vice-presidency was assigned to an

anarcho-syndicalist Rafael Pina Soria, an active and popular figure. The inaugural speech demanded worker participation in government and in the administration of the economy. The immediate stated objective, given the conditions in Mexico, was to give economic and political freedom. It was also declared that any attempt at dictatorship would be fought with a general strike.[12]

Lombardo Toledano's slogan--as well as that of the Federation itself--was "For a Classless Society", and a few years later he would affirm that they had been guided by the very general principles of Socialism. Cardenas, for his part, always regarded the CTM--as he did the CROM and CGT--only as instruments for his use.

By 1940, Marxism became increasingly fashionable. Those were the days of the Spanish Civil War, seen in Mexico with sympathy, since it appeared to be a struggle against Yankee Imperialism. But for the intellectuals and even some labor leaders, it was only a resource for the abuse of Marxist vocabulary. The truth is, that in spite of some real Communist believers in government, they never determined government policies. But the furor of their speeches gave the false appearance that Communism had a great influence in Mexico.

The communists in Mexico were never able to produce a national theorist of any importance. They never succeeded in capturing the popular imagination. In spite of some temporary gains, Communism never reached the peasants either. Nevertheless, they indeed gained some sympathy among young intellectuals as well as some lower level public officials at the PNR.

Cardenas was fully aware of the Marxist talk of many of his supporters and the presence of Communists in some minor positions of his

government. He himself had been accused of being a Communist, or playing the Communist game. To counter these allegations, he had offered sanctuary in Mexico to the exiled Bolshevik Leon Trotsky (at the suggestion of Diego Rivera, who was a convert to Trotskyism). The Communists protested this offer. Nevertheless, Cardenas offered Trotsky protection, escort services, and a house, together with the freedom to write and publish whatever he wished. And when Trotsky was assassinated in 1940, Cardenas ordered the publication of a Presidential bulletin strongly stating that the "Government of Mexico is not Communist" and decrying allegations that its social and economic policies were influenced by communism.[13]

In any event, the Party had already been split when the exiled Trotsky arrived to Mexico. Later, more Trotsky followers were expelled from the main Party after his assassination. But it is certain that some schoolteachers and bureaucrats acquired the associated ideology of his Party faction.

Meanwhile, in Moscow during a Congress held there, a Mexican Communist delegation participated. Delegation leader Ignacio Laborde declared at one session:

> Being the semi-feudal country that it is, the popular front must take on an anti-imperialist character as a means of completing the national Revolution. Only then will the proletarian revolution achieve the establishment of socialism.[14]

While still in Moscow, two members of the Mexican delegation presented their prepared thesis on the Indian question, in which they referred to the period when North American Communists proselytized for the establishment of a Negro State. (And it should be understood, as well, that the American Communist Party had been assigned the mission to

overseeing and orienting the Communist party in Mexico.) The surviving Mexican tribes, in the perspective of the Mexican representatives, were national groups whom the Communists could agitate in order to achieve the creation of free Indigenous republics, especially when the admittedly weak nationalism of the Yaqui Indians, the Tarahumara Indians, the Zapotec Indians or the Tarasco Indians would, nevertheless, easily dominate such republics.

Obviously, this scheme, applied Stalinist concepts to the Mexican nationalistic situation and represented a complete departure from reality. Because, at the time these two Communists were presenting their thesis in Moscow, Cardenas was actually distributing lands to the Indigenous tribes and even going beyond expectations, when he created a Department of Indian Affairs.

By 1938, Cardenas was on the verge of expropriating the oil companies and later the electricity and railroad companies as well. A great debate started in the country regarding whether these companies should be administered by the state, or by unions. Many opinions were expressed, some advocating the first option, some for the second. The Communists unexpectedly opposed to the idea of a "Labor Administration" because, as they noted:

> The labor Administration endangers the independence and freedom of action of the Trade Unions . . . . Administration of large-scale enterprises that have been nationalized must be left in the state's charge, with only cooperation by the Trade Unions and with a system of worker control.[15]

The whole situation became so contentious that it became necessary to consult the opinion of Leon Trotsky, continuing to live in Mexico. He responded in favor of the Trade-Union Administration option, because he considered this to be a step up the ladder for seizing power.

But the Trade Unions never succeeded in reorganizing and administering the nationalized companies, nor did they satisfy the demands of the workers.[16]

Ultimately, President Cardenas brushed aside foreign interests and nationalized the oil companies. Everyone, including the Communists, joined in support of the Presidential resolution. After expropriation, U.S. and England tried to block the sale of Mexican petroleum, and only the Axis powers dared to buy Mexican fuel. When the war began, Mexico was actively selling fuel to Germany and Italy.

Early in World War II, Communists urged the country to join the Hitler-Stalin Pact, since it represented a power capable of confronting the Americans and, in addition, was compatible with a strong sympathy for the Third Reich. Germany had promised for the second time that land stolen from Mexico would be returned to its original owner. Communists carried out an energetic campaign against the U.S., hoping to turn popular feelings against the northern neighbor. But when Germany attacked Russia, Mexican Communists were stupefied. Lombardo Toledano became suddenly an ardent friend of the North Americans and a fervent admirer of Roosevelt's "Good Neighbor" policy.

After World War II and the beginning of the Cold War, Mexican petroleum Unions were in Communist hands. To consolidate their position, and to confront the new Mexican President, they called for a political strike. This resulted in a disaster for the Communists, however, since they lost control of PEMEX for the next years and set a pattern of self-defeating behavior.

In 1945, President Manuel Avila Camacho, among other initiatives, eliminated from the Constitution the expression "socialist

education." In a single stroke he had pleased the Church and taken away from the Communists the possibility of influencing childrens' schooling in fundamental ways.

Miguel Aleman continued on the same anticommunist path. He refused to give control of the Unions to Communists. Finally, the leadership of the powerful CTM was won by a noncommunist group headed then (and up to 1996) by Fidel Velazquez. Velazquez expelled Lombardo Toledano, an "eternal Communist," from the CTM. Velazquez split the CTM from the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. Aleman took advantage of this by sending to prison the Communists that had led the aforementioned strike, replacing them with nonideological leaders. Under Miguel Aleman, the first civilian President since the Revolution, the country was definitively on the road to capitalism.

This, of course, provoked the Left since they expected the Revolution would turn toward Socialism. Lombardo Toledano, after being expelled from the CTM, organized the *Partido Popular* (Popular Party) which in the future would be converted into the *Partido Comunista* (Communist Party) under the cover name of *Partido Popular Socialista* (PPS). Little by little, Aleman's government began to prefer Union leaders who were not compromised by Communism. Therefore, individuals with communist associations, soon lost control and power.

Miguel Aleman's tenure was characterized by openness, still visible in government behavior toward opposition. For many years, the federal government had provided financial help to the Communist newspaper *El Popular* as it had done for similar right wing publications. The Government allowed a certain level of insult to the Presidency, as

long as such insults were not too blatantly made. This was democracy in Mexican terms.[17]

Adolfo Lopez Mateos, Secretary of Labor under Presidency of Adolfo Ruiz Cortines, dealt with more strikes from dissatisfied workers. This situation was once more used by Communists to set themselves up as adversaries to the "Immoral leaders."[18] Schoolteachers, railroad workers and oil workers rose in violent strikes. In 1958, Lopez Mateos acting then as President, ordered the jailing of many Communists with sentences of up to eight years. Some others, such as Ruben Jaramillo simply disappeared.

Lopez Mateos's Presidency was one devoted to expanding governmental activities for the people's benefit. This was the first time there was a campaign to move peasants from the High plateau to the tropical and fertile soil of Chiapas. The problems resulting were difficult ones, since the *ejido* bureaucracy opposed any reform threatening the status quo.

Lazaro Cardenas, still a very popular figure in Mexico, began speaking in favor of Cuban Castroism, Castro having recently succeeding in seizing power in that country. He offered to go Cuba and fight with Fidel Castro against the unfortunate Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961.[19] Cardenas had collaborated previously in a "Pacifist" movement in Stockholm, and subsequently accepted the Stalin Peace Prize. Now he was being used by a group of intellectuals calling themselves Castroists who formed a National Liberation Movement. Cardenas's son Cuauhtemoc Cradenas was one of their leaders.

Pro-Castro feelings were very strong in 1959 and 1960, but they dropped enormously after the Missile Crisis in 1962. People in Mexico

argued the pros and cons of Castro's success. Another major factor was an active campaign promoted by the Church under the slogan of:

"Cristianismo Si, Comunismo No!"

The Mexican government was dealing still with the same problems originated by communistic Trade Unions. The frequency of the railroad strikes was becoming too painful. Many Communist were sent to prison. David Alfaro Siquieros, who had been sent to prison when he participated in an attempt to assassinate Leon Trotsky, was returned to prison again in 1960. International Communism launched a campaign to liberate Siqueiros, arguing that as a famous artist he should be granted special privileges; many noncommunist organizations joined the venture.[20]

But Mexico was only beginning to feel the manifestation of a new form of Communism--trained guerrillas. Fidel Castro organized his journey to revolution beginning with a departure from Mexico. Two years later, Mexico refused to officially acknowledge the blockade of Cuba promoted by the U.S., and maintained more or less amiable relationships with the Caribbean island. On 15 July 1964, some sixteen Latin American countries under pressure by the U.S., ceased diplomatic relations with Cuba. Mexico, however, kept them. Jose Gorostiza, Foreign Minister declared at that time:

> In the event that the Foreign Ministers in Washington approve the conditions against Cuba, our country will reject them, especially those sanctions demanding action only from certain nations registered in the OAS, or even worse, through the unilateral action of the government of Mexico.[21]

Castro paid Mexico back for this support, in a certain way, by not exporting *guerrilleros* back to Mexico. But other outside countries did. When Fidel Castro had first seized power in Cuba, he began to look for political and economic support. But no country provided assistance

to Cuba except the USSR, and to some lesser degree China and North Korea. The Soviets, of course, had their own agenda in Cuba.

Mexicans used to spend hours discussing Castro's doctrines, behavior, and probabilities for successfully staying in power. Coffee houses, restaurants, and family reunions were a proper place for such open debate. Of course, there was enormous sympathy for Castro. But the radical left wing of Mexico saw with desperation how Cuba had begun "exporting guerrillas" to Latin America, and how nothing was happening in Mexico. Mexican Communists believed that something should be done.

By 1963, the economic situation of Mexico had improved noticeably, compared to the national economy at the beginning of the century. Historian Howard Cline, in a study conducted at Harvard in Cambridge, Massachusetts, expressed these changes in terms of social class composition:[22]

Class	1895	1940	1950	1960
Upper	1.5	2.9	2.0	6.5
Middle	7.8	12.6	25.0	33.5
Transition	6.5	20.0	20.0	20.0
Lower	90.7	78.0	53.0	40.0

At this point, the Mexican Revolution had advanced through several phases. Those phases were interpreted in various ways. To some people, the Revolution was a nationalistic one. To others it had been remarkably social in character, while still others regarded it as political in essence. For most Mexicans, however, it was agrarian. Whatever the case, it had certainly broken all molds. Mexican accomplishments through the Revolution had not resulted from the three indispensable conditions imposed by Lenin in accordance to Engels:

1. The ruling class was not withering away;

2. The exploited classes were not conscious of the need for change;

3. There was not a theory upon which to orient a Revolution, and no organization capable of leading a people's rebellion.

One Mexican specialist put it this way:

> The absence of these criteria explains why Mexican Marxists were never able to interpret the Revolution in a coherent manner, and why they never gained any real influence in the minds of Mexicans. In Mexico there are three types of Marxists. First, those who might be called mixed, because in spite or considering themselves Marxists, they are still loyal to the "Thought of the Mexican Revolution" (Like Lombardo Toledano). Second, there are those who consider the Revolution democratic-bourgeois, hence in need of improvement through a strict application of Marxism. And third, there are those who might be appropriately called "elastic" Marxists, who would like to synthesize the concept of Revolution with the analytical methods of dialectical materialism.[23]

Mexicans, so far, had claimed that their Revolution was sui generis. They enjoyed the idea that it appeared before the Russian or the Chinese revolutions, could be considered the first agrarian revolution of the modern times. Antonio Bahamonde noted that "this sense of nationality, of fatherland, of a rebirth, is what makes the Mexicans give back to the Mexicans what was once theirs."[24] In a similar vein, Nobel Prize winner Octavio Paz expressed in his book The Labyrinth of Solitude, the following thought about the Revolution:

> Revolution was an explosive and authentic revelation of our real nature; thanks to it, the Mexican wants to reconcile himself with his history, his origins and his traditions . . . . The Revolution began as a discovery of ourselves and a return to our origins; later it became a search and an abortive attempt at a synthesis; finally since it was unable to assimilate our traditions and to offer us a new and workable plan, it became a compromise.[25]

By 1964, the Communists had attained a measure of influence among some students and within certain schools such as the agricultural

school at Chapingo. It was not the Communist Party itself that was influential--it was a mere skeleton, extremely bureaucratic and further split into three or four fractions. Some were Marxists, some were Maoist, and some were a mixture of communist ideologies. All of the forms were definitively anti-American. The influence in cultural and intellectual life once enjoyed by Mexican communists was fragmenting, however, mainly because they no longer had the means of seduction--entertaining, publishing, painting, and flattery. But the loss of influence was in part because the Missile Crisis had diminished Castro's prestige.

The *Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores* (PRT) (Workers Revolutionary Party) founded years later as a result of Communist evolution, was established on 17 September 1976 with a fusion of The International Communist League and the Socialist League. In this way, the process unified several political forces acting independently since 1968 and even earlier. Their common objective was to adhere to the Cuarta Internacional (Fourth International).

Founders were Manuel Aguilar Mora, Pedro Penaloza and Ricardo Pascoe. It obtained registration at the Electorial College on 22 October 1982, but its activity remained in suspension since they could not reach the percentage of required voters needed to constitute a recognized political force in the Presidential elections in 1988.

The Armed "Guerrillas"

When Fidel Castro seized power in Cuba in 1960, the Cold War was at its peak. The USSR attempted to use Cuba as a springboard to import Communism into Latin America and thereby diminish U.S. presence there.

While Cuba shared the blame for this activity, it should be stressed that the USSR, the Warsaw Pact nations, China, and North Korea all contributed to the export of *guerrilleros* into Latin America. It is the hypothesis of this thesis that the EZLN has direct links to the armed communist guerrilla groups of the 1960s and 1970s. The appearance and evolution of these groups is a complex, often confusing process. Nevertheless, it is important to enter this murky, shadowy world and to examine the organization, activities, leadership, and "tradecraft" of some of these groups, if one is to understand Mexican guerrilla activity in the 1990s.

The first "guerrilla" outburst against the Mexican government occurred in 1965. In a dawn action, 12 *guerrilleros* led by schoolteacher Arturo Gamiz--an outstanding student who graduated from the "Insurgent Morelos" school in Mexico City--launched an attack against a military garrison in Madera, Chihuahua. Gamiz had written earlier that "our fight is within a long-standing struggle that announces the arrival of guerrilla movements in the 1970s, and is not aimed against the Army, but against the *caciques* [local political bosses]."[26] The attack, however, was a major failure and also fatal to many of the attackers. The remains of Gamiz, Pedro Gomez, Antonio Scobell, Miguel Quinonez, Oscar Sandoval, Rafael Martinez, Emilio Gamiz, and Salomon Gaytan were taken to the County Plaza where they were buried in a common grave.

In 1964, after a tense election and subsequent wait to see if Mexico's expectations were fulfilled, the President of the International Olympic Committee, Joao Avelange--together with representatives of member-nations--released the news: Mexico had been granted the privilege

of hosting the upcoming XIX Olympic Games. By 1968, Mexico was fully immersed in preparations for the Inaugural Ceremony and the games themselves. Mexico wanted to demonstrate abroad how successful the state had become. Just three months before, however, something unusual occurred. Students of "Preparatoria 4" and "Vocacional 4" schools had engaged in a street fight.

For many years there had been a healthy student rivalry among young people attending both The National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) and the National Politechnique Institute (POLI). The former was devoted to professional careers in the humanities, and the latter was oriented mainly to the development of technical careers. The cause of the fight apparently had no deeper motives or hidden goals than this traditional rivalry. The schools were located along the same street (Avenida Observatorio) and were some two kilometers distant from each other on the same bus routes. Thus, when students daily used to encounter each other on the buses as they went to and from school, they would exchange jokes and insults--but these exchanges began to grow increasingly violent.

On 26 July 1968, when a student fight began on the streets, somebody called for the Metropolitan Police. When the latter appeared, the fight between students shifted against the policemen. Rocks and projectiles were thrown at the public guardians who, after taking various steps, dispersed both groups of students. However, students turned out in protest the next day claiming police brutality and demanding the resignation of the Chief of the Mexico City Police Department as well as the city's mayor.

Apparently, there was no relationship between the student clashes and subsequent demands to expel public officials from their positions. Nevertheless, student protests spread quickly to other schools and soon a "National Strike Committee" (*Comite Nacional de Huelga*) was organized by leaders of several UNAM faculties and POLI schools.

The situation eroded unexplainably as days went by. Students rioted along the main avenues of Mexico, still demanding the removal or demotion of police authorities. Time would provide proof that foreign and national agitators had instigated the protests, however.[27]

As unrest continued, a massive march was organized by students. It was planned to culminate at the Plaza of the Three Cultures, in a newly constructed apartment complex built by the government in the Nonoalco Tlatelolco city neighborhood. In an area of some 200 by 200 yards, the Tlatelolcan Ruins, Spanish Church, and the modern Foreign Affairs Ministry shared the plaza.

Hundreds of students, schoolteachers, and even housewives from the adjacent dwellings were present at the site on 2 October 1968. This event was something unusual, a cause of considerable attraction in Mexico. This may explain why even curious children were there among the other people who had come to listen to what the students had to say.

Police Grenadiers, as well as military units belonging to the Parachutist Brigade, observed developments discreetly from a distance. When the meeting was about to end, these units moved forward in order to disperse the demonstration. As soon as the troops arrived to the plaza, and students began to disperse, weapons began to be discharged from the heights of the surrounding buildings of the "Chihuahua" complex. The

weapons were targeted against both soldiers and students. The gathered masses of people panicked and rushed away in the opposite direction from where the shots were coming.

The troop commander, General J. Hernandez Toledo, suffered injuries to his leg and chest. Total commotion prevailed, and many students, as well as soldiers, suffered death and injury. That was a difficult situation for the government, but also for the people of Mexico who were approaching the center of world attention as a result of the impending Olympic games. This was also a traumatic day for the soldiers as Sergeant 2/o Parachutist Noe Reyes Garcia related:

> We were waiting out of the plaza . . . . we stood there in a semi-formation, chatting, smoking, just letting the time go by. We never expected that it would become a real problem . . . . When we received the order to advance, we were anxious and excited to see finally what was really going on in the plaza. So we advanced in files toward the pyramid's platform, where people were still listening to the last speaker, who was standing on the roof of the one-story commercial shops. . . .
>
> When we finally reached the platform, after advancing 10 to 15 steps, we began to hear shots being fired. Everybody fell down face down on the ground in an instinctive movement. Civilians began running away, and I saw people shocked, standing in place. I saw a soldier grab a child and protect him beneath himself. The shots were coming from our high right, from about the level of the 10th floor windows . . . . I saw the General fall to his knees, next to the radio-operator.
>
> Then I saw the Corporal, whom we used to call "Tiger", standing on his feet, no fear, not scared, with his Browning FN Automatic Rifle shooting to the windows from which the shots were coming at us . . . . He was not scared. If it had not been for him, all of us would have been shot to death.[28]

Mexican society was shocked--something outrageous and unacceptable had happened in Mexico. Authorities, in an effort to diminish the impact of what had occurred in the plaza that day, had all of the plaza cleaned by the next morning. Rumors circulated about bodies taken away and walls hurriedly repaired. People grew concerned about missing family members. In the meantime, police and military

units remained stationed in the plaza with orders to restrict access to everyone.

The most unlikely rumors and versions about what had happened that day circulated actively throughout the city. Some of these stories were partially true, while some were just sheer speculation. In the absence of facts, rumors moved in to occupy the vacuum. President Diaz Ordaz confronted difficult problems. The National Strike Committee, (*Comite Nacional de Huelga*) formed by the most brilliant students and the most representative POLI and UNAM teachers and also including a number of still-unidentified agitators, marched along the streets of Mexico demanding an investigation and clarification of those actions.

President Diaz Ordaz addressed the Nation. He said that alien elements were present in the country, which sought nationwide destabilization. He assumed responsibility for government actions and finished his speech saying: "The hand of the Government is extended for peace, and it is up to the people on the other end to shake it or not."[29]

It seemed to the eyes of the world, that Mexico was shamefully embarrassed by the event. But student riots of that kind were occurring simultaneously in a number of places around the world. For instance, in France, Le Sorbone University students were rioting at the very same time that riots erupted in Mexico.

The United States, meanwhile, experienced problems at its own universities when students protested the military draft and the war in Viet Nam. The whole pattern suggested that an enormous wave of destabilization was sweeping across the Western world. Luis Pazos, at that time President of the Student Council of the most rigorous law

school in Mexico, *Escuela Libre de Derecho* (Free Law School), related in his book:

> I was President of Student Council and I realized that some pseudo-students were handling enormous sums of money. I knew them, and they were very identified with the Marxist ideology. I had a girl friend, and she was given a poster of Che Guevara. I asked if she knew who he was, but she did not know. She said some friends invited her to participate, thinking that it was fun. Just like her, many young people joined the protest movement without realizing who they were also serving.
>
> By September 1968, the National Strike Committee--formed almost exclusively by cells of Communist Party--had attracted almost no members. Workers did not respond to their call to carry out a national strike including against Mexican industries. The whole movement was about to die by that September . . . . On 1 October, a childhood friend of mine came to visit in my house. I knew he was involved with Marxism. But we had been friends for a long time, we had studied together since we both arrived to Mexico City. He told me directly: For no reason should you go to tomorrow's demonstration in Tlatelolco.
>
> I said: Why? He answered: There will be problems, but I can not tell you more. Just don't get there. Next day, the infamous Tlatelolco massacre happened. Just a few months later, the Mexican government, without further announcement, would declare to several Russian diplomats, members of the delegation credited to Mexico, "Persona non grata". They would be escorted to the Mexico City International Airport, where they departed for Cuba.[30]

From 1965 to 1972, several activist groups with presumed "guerrilla" ideologies appeared in Mexico. They became publicly visible after a series of kidnapings, bank robberies, and armed assaults carried out around the entire nation. Many of the groups claimed through the press to have a "Marxist" ideology, and their goals were declared to be solely the liberation of the masses from oppression. Some armed activist groups were distinguished from others by the spectacular assaults they carried out, while others were notable for the symbolism they evoked, as well as for the pure publicity they received. A few examples illustrate various groups and approaches.

Genaro Vazouez Rojas

Vazquez Rojas--one of the most famous of the 1960s and 1970s Mexican guerrilla leaders--was born on 10 June 1931 in San Luis Cueslan, Guerrero. He was the son of peasants Alfonso Vazquez Rojas and Felicitas Rojas Rius, and attended elementary school in Guerrero. He later entered the National Teachers School where he graduated in 1956. He worked in Mexico City from 16 August 1957 to 1 August 1958, when he moved to Tlalnepantla to accept a higher teaching position.

On 18 May 1960, however, he was declared "absent without leave" from his job and was officially fired as a teacher. But in August of that same years he was pardoned by the Secretary of Education and soon reassumed his duties, this time returning to Mexico City. Soon he left his job again, departing for his native state of Guerrero. The *Central Campesina Independiente* (Peasants Independent Central--CCI) had chosen him as a delegate for Guerrero. Once there, in coordination with others members, he created the *Asociacion Civica Guerrerense* (Guerrero Civic Association) in opposition to the government. The CCI was led by Raul Caballero Aburto and they enjoyed some success in their opposition activities. Indeed, the Governor was deposed as result of Vazquez Rojas and the CCI groups actions.

Protest actions continued in Guerrero, sometimes turning violent. After a series of street confrontations and armed assaults in the troubled state, Rojas announced that he had deposed the county mayor of Iguala in 1964. In this undertaking, people were killed and he was tried and found guilty in their deaths. As a consequence, he was imprisoned in Iguala, Guerrero, but managed to escape with the help of CCI members. He set up operations for a time in the Sierra Mountains, and began a harsh struggle against the authorities.

Moving to Mexico City, he remained hidden at a house there (at the street address Oriente 159-199) for eight months. Then he moved to the Pentecostal Church, with agreement of the minister, Victor Acuna. He used the church as headquarters for his organization. One year later, however, he was detained (with companion Fausto Avila) when he was leaving the office of the *Movimiento de Liberacion Nacional* (National Liberation Movement--(MLN)) in Mexico City. He managed to escape again with outside support, and fled once more to the southern mountains. Once there, he established the *Frente Armado de Liberacion Popular "Vicente Guerrero"* encampment "Jose Maria Morelos" ("Jose Maria Morelos Encampment of the Vicente Guerrero Armed Front for National Liberation), located--as they used to write in their communiques--"Somewhere in the Mountains of the South."

He declared war against the government, and organized a number of groups who were provided with Army uniforms and weapons. One of the most notorious of these groups was the one later led by Lucio Cabanas under the name of *Partido de los Pobres* (Party of the Poor). Kidnapings proliferated as a consequence of the efforts of these groups, producing millions of pesos that were delivered to him. His followers, self-proclaimed "*guerrilleros*," were supposed to receive between 28 to 30 pesos per day as "salary."

Vazquez Rojas evaded police prosecution for almost four years. His groups continued kidnaping numerous wealthy people and received considerable amounts of money as ransom. Some sectors of the press exalted actions of the *guerrillero* group, while others--more serious--continued to refer to them simply as "delinquents."

On 2 February 1972, at approximately 0250, a stolen car, moving from Michoacan State into Guerrero, crashed into the abutment of a bridge spanning the Irapeo river. The car was being driven at excessive speed, and Highway Police found the following items in the trunk: two M-1 Carbines; one M-2 Carbine; two bags full of cartridges; one .45 pistol; five .45 clips; one American Express Credit Card issued to Dr. Jaime Castrejon Diez; one color picture of Genaro Vazquez; and books, military camouflage uniforms, and propaganda of the Revolutionary Action Movement (MAR).[31] At first, authorities did not know who was in the wrecked car--only that someone using the nickname of "Andres" had suffered a mortal skull fracture. Two women suffered injuries, and all of them were sent to the nearest hospital.

During the course of the next morning, authorities discovered that the dead passenger had actually been Genaro Vazquez. The Michoacan governor informed the Federal government. Subsequently, an Air Force plane was dispatched to pick up the remains in order to conduct an exhaustive autopsy and identification. Meanwhile investigations in Michoacan and Guerrero continued. It was determined that two other men were also traveling in the car, but that both left it walking and armed. During the following four days, both of them were found and turned over to the authorities.

The incident received impressive publicity. Genaro's gang had been sought for a long time. On both sides--those who admired Genaro and those who regarded him as a criminal--stories began circulating. Official versions gave thanks for the end of a nightmare, while Leftist publications began creating an aura of myth around Genaro Vazquez. He was converted into a martyr by the latter.

Extensive columns were written, describing his life and accomplishments. Many pages appeared in major newspapers exalting his acts in fighting against the establishment. Mario Menendez (liberated from prison by him at one time) wrote from his exile in Cuba a lengthy description of Genaro Vazquez's ideals and achievements. So far, everything seemed to support the idea of a revolutionary hero.

But on 10 February 1972, only ten days after his death, the newspaper *El Heraldo de Mexico*, published a series of photographs showing Genaro Vazquez in a bathing suit, accompanied by a young woman in the patio of a luxurious residence in Cuernavaca, Morelos. The pictures had a footnote saying, "The humble residence of a *guerrillero* leader--Perhaps the last pictures of Vazquez Rojas - He lived in refined and bourgeois taste." The pictures had been supposedly taken between 5 to 26 January, (the previous month) on Humboldt Street 610, in Cuernavaca, Morelos. The young lady turned out to be Maria Aguilar Martinez (who used the alias "Sabina Javier Aguilar").[32]

The newspaper released information saying that the "pseudo-revolutionary leader" rested at that location in-between robberies and kidnapings, a very profitable occupation. Meanwhile his wife and six children struggled to survive on her teacher's salary. As the paper put it: "Yesterday, the hero image, the image of a man who abandoned his own personal interests to fight for the needy, crashed down. The myth has disappeared." Genaro Vazquez Rojas--who used to be referred to respectfully by his brother-in-law as My Commander, My Boss, and The Professor, seemed to be a man who betrayed his own ideals. His brother-in-law asked: "Why! He always fought to provide goods to the poor. He was against anything that represented wealth!"[33]

The lifestyle of Genaro--his presumed rich living, his mistress, and the impact of all this on his family--received much commentary from all sides, adding to the ambiguity of his role as "a true ideologically-motivated guerrilla leader."[34] The money Genaro generated was substantial. For example, as a result of the 19 November 1971 kidnaping of Doctor Jaime Castrejon Diez, Dean of Guerrero Autonomous University, *guerrilleros* requested a 2.5 million peso ransom (and in addition that the Mexican government release initially 15 "political" prisoners and deliver them to Cuba in an Air Force aircraft). The list was reduced to nine names after it was discovered that some were not actually imprisoned.

After serious deliberations, since such a release was considered to be unconstitutional, the Federal government agreed to drop criminal charges against the nine convicts and send them to Cuba. The Bishop of Cuernavaca, Sergio Mendez Arceo, who was known as the "Red Priest," advocated the release of Dr. Castrejon and the transport of those nine convicts to Cuba. Among those released was Mario Renato Menendez, whose name will appear again below. The Mexican Government had requested Cuba's acquiescence in the transfer, arguing that humanitarian reasons related to Doctor Castrejon made it necessary.[35]

The Mexican and Cuban governments agreed, and the exchange of convicts for the life of Dr. Castrejon was accomplished. Money was also delivered to hostage-takers. Genaro Vazquez acquired, then, a residence in Cuernavaca, Morelos, and also a ranch in Puebla State. On 9 March 1972, one of the survivors of the car accident, Jose Bracho Campos, declared to Por Que?--owned by Menendez Rodriguez, one of the convicts sent to Cuba--that he had personally taken pictures of Genaro Vazquez

along with Sabina Javier Aguilar in the Cuernavaca residence, and in fact, the two of them had lived together since 1971.

As a result of such accounts, a substantial amount of the previous popularity enjoyed by Genaro Vazquez was lost, since charges by the authorities that they were not *guerrilleros* but gangs of thieves and robbers utilizing Communist slogans and names to mask their real activities, appeared to be true.

Partido de los Pobres (Party of the Poor)

When Genaro Vazquez disappeared from the political landscape in Guerrero, the attention of the authorities turned to Lucio Cabanas, who had formed his gang as part of the Genaro Vazquez organization. Hardly 20 days later after Genaro's death, four newspapers from Guerrero published a letter, apparently sent by Cabanas, in which he accused authorities of responsibility for the poor economic conditions in Mexico. The letter had 14 points constituting the demands and goals of his own guerrilla group called the *Partido de los Pobres*: These points included the following:

1. Defeat a government led by the wealthy classes;
2. Institute a newly formed government, based on better laws;
3. The form tribunals of workers and peasants;
4. Expropriate factories, buildings, installations, and facilities and turn them over to workers for their own administration;
5. Provide safety insurance to workers;
6. Provide tools, resources, and soft loans to workers and peasants;
7. Institute worker control of the means of communication;

8. Provide health education and care rights to workers;

9. Grant equal rights to men and women;

10. Provide special houses and special care to the elderly and children;

11. Provide free education rights to students;

12. Enhance the opportunities to achieve a better quality of life;

13. Ensure that "Indians" receive equal treatment and that there is unity against discrimination in the U.S.A.; and

14. Complete the economic independence of Mexico from the colonialism of the U.S.A.

The document was signed by Lucio Cabanas, "Sierra of Guerrero, March 1972" under the imprimatur of the *Partido de los Pobres,* and also by the *Brigada Campesina de Ajusticiamiento* (Peasant Brigade of Elimination).[36]

Using a standard pattern, Lucio Cabanas increased the number of kidnapings of wealthy people. For example, his group kidnaped the Director of the Preparatory College of Acapulco, Engineer Jaime Farrill Novelo, and 9 others during a ten-month period. On 13 January 1972, Lucio Cabanas demanded that all newspapers publish a letter in which he explained the reason they had to kidnap Farrill. He explained that Farrill was a representative of the oppressing classes and, therefore, it had been done to force the authorities to pay better attention to students, peasants and citizens in general.[37]

Dean Farrill was liberated by the Army and police the same day, being found in a shack located only 20 kilometers away from Acapulco. He expressed his view of the events in a 16 January interview:

Strange ideologies and hands are trying to provoke agitation

> among local students in order to create political chaos . . . . It is possible that some students and teachers are involved in this problem, but I would not be able to confirm it decisively.[38]

Using the information obtained from the kidnappers captured in the Farrill incident, police knew that a new group had been established in northern Sonora State by Lucio Cabanas's brother Pablo Cabanas. It used the name *Fuerzas Armadas de la Nueva Revolucion* (Armed Forces of the New Revolution), and was known to have robbed the Empalme's Bank of Commerce. But more importantly, the police also obtained information about a presumed *guerrillero* group--part of the Lucio Cabanas organization--that had been established in the southeastern state of Chiapas.[39]

The Army, State Judicial Police, and Federal Police acted quickly, capturing 12 presumed Chiapas *guerrilleros*. Six of them lived close to the Agua Blanca Ranch, Tecpatan, in Chiapas, near the Malpaso Dam, while others were captured in an area close to a PEMEX Camp named La Venta. The captured "guerrillas" turned out to have been born in diverse areas of Mexico: three from Sonora; three from Veracruz; one from Chiapas; two from Tabasco; and two from Malpaso, Chiapas. The names and origins of the other two were not released at the time.

They were using a company name as a cover, and had more than 30 rifles and pistols when captured. Subversive literature also was found, along with pictures of Mao Tse Tung pictures and Che Guevara. All of them were sent to Mexico City by Air Force aircraft. The Chief of the State Judicial Police related the operation to a reporter in this way:

> We departed about 2000 hrs on Sunday. We drove until we reached the Malpaso Dam, where we took some outboard-powered rafts, and rode on for over 2 and a half hours until we got to Copainala, Chiapas. There we walked for several hours. We arrived at Frog Hill by 0600 hours approximately.

> We caught them by surprise. Most of them were still sleeping and only one was awake. They surrendered themselves without major resistance. We found many weapons, over 30 M-1 and M-2 carbines. We also found credentials identifying them as members of political and *guerrillero* organizations. We took several pictures of their encampment.[40]

But, perhaps the *guerrillero* group of Lucio Cabanas made one major mistake--committed by who posed as defenders of students and peasants. The incident devalued the existence and credibility of the *guerrilleros*. Their capital mistake was that they kidnaped a student, the son of a wealthy farmer in Guerrero.

It may be recalled that Lucio Cabanas was a high school teacher, who became a fugitive from justice on 18 May 1957, when he protested the replacement of a fellow teacher in "Juan Alvarez" High school. He and fellow protestors confronted the police, resulting in eight people being killed. Cabanas fled to the High Sierra, remaining there in protest, and later committing himself to a "continuous struggle." His activities related to Genaro Vazquez's escape from prison are documented by local authorities.[41] However, Genaro and Lucio broke violently, probably due to ideological differences. After that, despite some efforts at coordination, they kept distance from each other.

Lucio Cabanas was more radical than Vazquez, and much more prone to violence. He expressed the radical view on one occasion that "churches should be closed and instead should be converted into schools."[42] When Lucio Cabanas realized that they had kidnaped a student, he and his group regretted their action. Seven *guerrilleros* who took part in the action and were later captured by police, noted that "he (Cabanas) didn't want to get involved with a student, since he

counted on their sympathy throughout the country, and realized that the mistake damaged his position".[43]

The National Defense Secretary, General Hermenegildo Cuenca Diaz, in regard of this incident, expressed his view to the media this way:

> Lucio Cabanas does not have 75 *guerrilleros* under his command, as some rumors have stated. He is alone, and he is just a common delinquent running away from police forces. We don't know where he actually is, but we are certain that a political group is trying to make him a hero. If he really had 75 men after him, he wouldn't be free. I repeat he is just running away.[44]

Finally, after 26 days of rumors and frustration, nobody knew anything more about the student. At that time it had become the longest kidnaping in a Mexico infamous for its kidnapings. The State government and the Federal government, both offered amnesty. Even the President of Mexico expressed his concern over the release of the young student. The opposition declared that while ransoms had been offered by the government in the past when officials were kidnaped, this time they did not do so.[45] In any event, the Lucio Cabanas group enjoyed successes and failures over the next months, until he and a number of his comrades-in-arms were killed in Army and police operations in Guerrero state late in 1974.

Grupo de Accion Revolucionaria
(Revolutionary Action Group--MAR)

On 17 March 1971, a Mexican Attorney General officer, Julio Sanchez Vargas, released a news bulletin which indicated that 22 Mexicans had been officially convicted for "social disorder." Those individuals confessed that they had received guerrilla training in North Korea and Russia. Their overall objectives were to provoke

destabilization in Mexico. In the short term, this was to include obtaining resources through bank robbery. All of the subversive activity was to be carried out by a group designated the *Movimiento de Accion Revolucionaria* (Revolutionary Action Movement--MAR).

Thanks to their capture, police determined that several previous robberies across the entire country had been carried out by MAR. MAR crimes were almost always characterized by violence and armed assault, and included kidnapings, bank robberies, and sabotage. The convicted subversives declared to authorities that their training began in 1968. They attended tactical-political training consisting of three different courses, each one of them lasting six months. Courses included the sabotage of facilities, terrorism, armed assault and guerrilla techniques. Their indoctrination and training was accomplished at a military base close to Pyongyang, North Korea. Financial and material support was provided by the North Korean government.

The MAR members indicated to the Mexican media that they had been trained by the North Korean military. Their purpose was to establish in Mexico a Marxist-Leninist regime--therefore, they had received theoretical training, alternating practice with every kind of weapon and explosive, urban and rural guerrilla training, tae-kwan-do, and other personal defense training. They were charged with conspiracy, sedition, delinquent association, robbery, homicide, inflicting injuries, illegal possession of weapons, falsification of documents, and other crimes.

At the time of detention, they were in possession of twelve thousand dollars, ten thousand nine hundred pesos, several automatic rifles and pistols, hand grenades, thousands of cartridges, short wave

radios, walkie-talkies, film equipment, photographic cameras, sapper equipment, typewriters, duplication machines, tape-recorders, binoculars, surgical equipment, Mexican Army uniforms (boots, helmets, hats, and clothing), welding equipment, and hundreds of Marxist and tactics manuals in both Russian and Spanish.

Members of the MAR--all of them using false names--were captured in a number of cities of Mexico in a simultaneous action conducted by Procurador General de la Republica (Attorney General of the Republic--PGR) agents. Cities included Jalapa, Veracruz; Acapulco, Guerrero; Pachuca, Hidalgo; Ciudad Victoria, Tamaulipas; and Mexico City.

As time went on, further information indicated that some MAR members had studied along with other Mexicans at Moscow's "Patrice Lumumba" University using scholarships provided by the Mexican-Russian Cultural Exchange Institute, located in Mexico City and in Monterrey. The initial group, along with other students, formed a "Studies Circle," whose name changed later to the "Movement for Revolutionary Action." An urban guerrilla component of MAR received the additional designation "2 October" while another MAR guerrilla component, in this case rural, received the name of "Popular Army of MAR."

Apparently, individuals associated with these organizations had contacted the North Korean embassy in Moscow, which agreed to provide them with both financing and training in political and tactics skills. In October 1968, Fabricio Gomez Souza traveled to Pyongyang, where he received instructions to organize successive groups of ten Mexicans to travel to North Korea. The first group traveled individually to North Korea between December 1968 and the first days of 1969. Each member received 500 dollars to travel. Mexican passports were exchanged for

North Korean passports, and the would-be insurgents posed as North Korean citizens.

When they arrived in Pyongyang, their training not only included the elements mentioned above, but also antiarmor tactics, RPG firing, mortar practice and hand grenade throwing. The first group returned to Mexico by the middle of 1969. The second group was supposed to comprise 20 individuals, but only 17 could be recruited. This one came back to Mexico by the middle of 1970 after similar training. A third group, formed by 23 persons and led by one Rogelio Raya Morales, departed between January and February of 1970 and returned in August 1970.

When the subversives returned from North Korea, they organized themselves into "sections." Namely, these were "education," "recruiting," and "expropriations," under command of Felipe Penaloza Garcia, Paulino Pena Pena, and Salvador Castaneda Alvarez respectively. However, the higher echelons of command was apparently integrated by Fabricio Gomez Souza and Alejandro Lopez Murillo.

Immediately upon their arrival, preparations were made to establish "safe houses-schools," which would accomplish two objectives: to train subversives and to operate undercover in Mexico. They organized "Schools for Guerrillas." One school exclusively was designed to produce guerrilla warfare teachers. It was established in Salamanca, Guanajuato. Other schools were established in Mexico City, Zamora, Michoacan; San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato; Queretaro, Queretaro; Puebla, Puebla; Chapala, Jalisco; Jalapa, Veracruz; Pachuca, Hidalgo; and Acapulco, Guerrero.[46]

They confessed responsibility for committing over 80 assaults and felonies. Alejandro Lopez Murillo, the apparent leader and a

principal financial provider, indicated that follow-on plans included kidnaping diplomats in order to force authorities to release any MAR members held by the authorities. As he put it, "our comrades of MAR, those who are free, have a moral obligation to us (the detained) to carry out those directives . . . . I mean to kidnap a high public functionary or a diplomat . . . so we can be--in exchange--liberated."[47]

Eufemio Gonzalez Mancilla, captured on 16 February 1972, confessed that he began subversive activities in 1968, when he was put in charge of setting fire to public buses in Nonoalco Tlaltelco. His code name was "Alfredo." He confirmed that he was part of the third group which traveled to North Korea. His group was responsible for several bank robberies, and he said that their salaries as *guerrilleros* was 800 pesos monthly--an amount deducted from the money obtained through "expropriations."

Robbery and kidnaping stories featuring MAR are numerous. On 5 December 1970, for example, a Mazatlan, Sinaloa millionaire and local banker named Carlos Felton Rippey, was kidnaped in front of his house. Eleven days later, he was liberated after paying five million pesos. When he returned home, he observed about his abductors:

> I don't know what to say about them . . . I think they have a certain ideology. I don't think they are simple bandits, since they took nothing away from me. I came back with my watch, my wallet and the money I was carrying with me the day they got me. They treated me very well, they behaved very courteously. They did not hit me. They honor their word, since they released me right after the money was received . . . .
>
> . . . They insinuated that they are members of an armed group that is now being formed. Their enthusiasm when they carried out a mission was noticeable. They felt like some kind of proud soldiers when accomplishing objectives given by their leaders . . . They appeared to be familiar with communist ideals, but I felt also they were confused sometimes, since they added that nobody should serve a foreign country.[48]

Guerrilleros in Nuevo Leon State

On 31 July 1972, the First Circuit Judge in Monterrey sentenced Eugenio Pena Garza to prison under charges of homicide, attempted murder, illegal weapons possession, conspiracy, and falsification of official documentation. Pena Garza and four other members acknowledged being part of an organization called the *Movimiento de Liberacion Nacional* (National Liberation Movement--MLN). The group, basically organized in Monterrey, had been responsible for several bank robberies and other crimes.

A Federal Attorney accused Pena Garza and others (to include Cesar Yanez Munoz or "Pedro") of attempting to murder Federal Agent Julio C. Garza Espinosa in front of a "safe-house" located in Vista Ocaso # 601, Colonel Lindavista, Monterrey, Nuevo Leon. The Federal Attorney, attached to the local PGR delegation, expressed the view that some of the personnel convicted were part of the MLN. The main evidence for this charge had been previously found during a raid at the home of Irina Saenz, where Federal agents had conducted a search. Among other documents seized there, Federal agents found coded messages and tables in the Tzetzal language; materials used to change human facial appearance, an extensive manual dealing with how to use these appearance-altering materials; and weapons; ammunition; and other items.[49]

Almost six months later--on 14 January 1972 following another robbery--police confronted a group of seven armed students and professionals in an apartment at the Constitution apartment building. Following a clash, surviving members of the group were taken into custody. Those identified at the apartment included Jose Rhui Sauci

(reported to be a North Korean), Jorge Ruiz Diaz (an engineer), Ricardo Morales Pinal (an engineer); Juan Angel Garcia (dead), Rosa Alvina Garavito (daughter of the head of the Law Faculty at the University of Nuevo Leon), and Luis Angel Garza. A police officer was killed in the action as well. Two days later, as a result of follow-on investigations, Federal agents located a ranch where *guerrilleros* conducted weapons training. The "Las Moritas" ranch had facilities and materiel necessary to make "Molotov" bombs, and rifles, pistols, and empty cartridges also were found.

Engineer Jorge Enrique Ruiz Diaz, one of the convicted MLN members, expressed his anger about the disposition of money obtained in robberies, suggesting that it was not being used properly. He noted that "We have been told that the money would be utilized to gain more supporters, but this just didn't happen--so far, I haven't seen anything, not even a single typed page."[50] Juan Carlos Flores Olivo, one of the prosecuted, confessed that the group he belonged to began its activities as far back as 1965. By that time (1972), they had enrolled in two youth international organizations under the name of the "International Catholic Student Movement" and the "Catholic Youth Student Movement." He and his comrades had separated into a sub-group which they named the "Professional Student Movement." While he stated that his group did not participate in violent actions, he was, in fact, at the Constitution apartment building six months earlier when the police had forcefully entered the apartment and discovered subversive materials and weapons.[51] When asked about his relationship to "Pedro" (Cesar Yanez), he only answered that the group's sole objective was not to overthrow the government but to give stolen money to the needy.[52]

This and many other incidents related to pseudo-guerrilla actions were unaccounted for during those months. Several other organizations emerged spread around Mexico. With various names such as *Movimiento Revolucionario 23 de Septiembre* (23rd September Revolutionary Movement); *Comandos Armados del Pueblo* (Armed Commandos of the People--CAP); *Frente Urbano Zapatista* (Zapatist Armed Front--FUZ); *Central de Accion Revolucionaria Armada* (Revolutionary Armed Action Center, CARA); *Comite de Lucha Revolucionaria* (Committee for Revolutionary Struggle--CLR); and others.

Guatemalan Guerrillas

Marco Antonio Yon Sosa, one of the most important leaders of the Guatemalan guerrillas was killed on 20 January 1972, along with two other *guerrilleros* on the Mexican side of the border with Guatemala. The incident occurred when Mexican Army forces engaged in a hasty skirmish against elements of the Revolutionary Movement November 13 (MR13). The next day, the Secretary of National Defense, General Marcelino Garcia Barragan, determined that the Guatemalans were the ones who first opened fire against Mexican troops and that the latter only defended themselves. He added that "if they had requested political asylum, it is very possible that we could have reached an agreement"[53]

Nevertheless, that was the second important incident in only three months. Elements from both countries, Army and guerrilla, had had previous armed confrontations. In February 1970, an important refuge or base of operations for the Guatemalans had been discovered on Mexican territory, more precisely on the territory of Chiapas and Tabasco

states. The encampment was disassembled, and the revolutionaries were taken into custody.

The Mexican government finally showed its concern about the infiltration of Guatemalan *guerrilleros*, who were well experienced in guerrilla warfare. A considerable number of Mexican troops have been stationed there ever since.

Yon Sosa had been one of the pillars of the Guatemalan guerrilla group, *Fuerzas Armadas Rebeldes* (Rebel Armed Forces--FAR). He avoided many traps prepared against him by the Guatemalan government for over ten years, but by December 1968, he had been displaced from the leadership of FAR and was looking for a safe place across the Mexican border along with his followers when he was killed.[54]

Nevertheless, action by Yon Sosa's remaining guerrillas took place--about 25 Guatemalans took momentarily control of a landing field close to Boca Lacantun, Chiapas, near the Mexican border, destroying two small airplanes and threatening a group of Mexican hunters who were mistaken for soldiers. After releasing them, the Guatemalans identified themselves as the Guatemalan Revolutionary Brigade "Che Guevara." They expressed their desire for revenge after Yon Sosa was killed. "We are fighting for the same ideals that Lazaro Cardenas fought for . . . it is the welfare of the humble." After proving that the hunters were indeed hunters, they were released. The Mexican government initiated a major deployment of troops to safeguard the area, while Guatemalan officials declared that the incident would not disrupt cordial relationships between the two neighboring countries.[55] For Mexico, however, the presence of Guatemalan guerrillas inside Mexico added to the increasingly unsettled situation in Chiapas.

Ejercito Insurgente Mexicano (Mexican Insurgent Army--EIM)

The Mexican Insurgent Army's main objective was to organize guerrillas throughout the entire nation. They planned to synchronize actions in a campaign of terrorist actions in urban areas. Their "end state" was the overthrow of the government, and the seizure of power.

Manuel Montes de Oca Ancona and Orlando Ricalde Ricalde, both law students at the University of Yucatan, on 17 April 1969, denounced to authorities a project to "in the Sierras, organize guerrillas to provoke a generalized uprising in the country." According to Montes de Oca, another student Raul Perez Gazque, invited them to visit someone, who had "interesting" plans for Mexico. When they arrived, it turned out to be Mario Renato Menendez Rodriguez, Director of the magazine *Por Que?*. This was the same person who had been detained in Mexico City under charges, among others, of financing guerrillas.

The students encountered a number of fellow law classmates who were already there. Mario Renato Menendez himself started the meeting saying:

> . . . A guerrilla group is currently being formed and this is fully necessary, since government is a disaster . . . You may see it for yourselves by watching what the government is doing . . . I will give an example: We don't have any press freedom and the existing press has been `bought'. We are living under the worst dictatorship. Not even Porfirio Diaz's dictatorship experienced such lack of [freedom]. It is widely known when President Madero was in prison and wrote his presidential succession book, nobody impeded its publication.

Menendez Rodriguez added that he wanted to know if among them there was anyone who would like to collaborate in this effort. Their names were on a list provided by friends who identified them as the most promising young people in the State. Some of them expressed their

concerns about forming a guerrilla group. One went further, saying that it would be catastrophic for Mexico, as bad as a severe currency devaluation or North American intervention. Menendez Rodriguez responded "that this was precisely what we are looking for, once the United States entered into the problem, the whole country would rise in arms."

Menendez Rodriguez then expressed the view that he had already selected some places suitable for starting the movement, based on his experience with guerrillas in Colombia, Guatemala, and Bolivia. Three days later, Montes de Oca met with another friend of his who referred to a different group of activists that were inviting him to join a guerrilla formed by Miguel Cardin, Jorge Fernandez Souza, and Oscar Palacios Vazquez. Somebody under the name of Raul Perez Cervera, had recently arrived from Cuba, after a trip of ten days.

Perez Cervera announced to a group of selected students that he was "selecting young individuals to join a revolutionary movement organized to overthrow the present government by means of armed actions, following the initial steps formulated by Fidel Castro in Cuba"[56] At the same time, a former professor of Biology and Chemistry, Ignacio Gonzalez Ramirez, had been detained by Mexico City police under the charge of leading an urban terrorist group, the *Comite de Lucha Revolucionaria* (CLR). He confessed that in 1964 and 1968 he had traveled to Cuba at the invitation of the Cuban Education Ministry. In 1968, after his participation in the Tlatelolco incident, and fearful of detention by police, he had looked for help from Menendez Rodriguez. In response, he was advised to move to a guerrilla camp financed by him, and located in Chiapas State some 60 kilometers from Guatemalan border.

Once in Chiapas, Professor Gonzalez Ramirez, thanks to his knowledge of chemistry, became an explosives instructor. The group there called themselves the *Ejercito Insurgente Mexicano*. Life in the jungle proved too hard for him, however. After a while, Professor Gonzalez returned to Yucatan and offered his services, obtaining from Rodriguez, his authorization to leave the jungle and later consider establishing an urban cell in Mexico City. However, Menendez, in return, offered to set up contacts for him in the capital.[57]

Gonzalez Ramirez, as noted above, had formed an urban organization designated the *Comite de Lucha Revolucionaria* (Committee for Revolutionary Struggle--CLR), starting with only eight people, in September 1968. Their main activity consisted of detonating bombs in various institutions. He confessed his responsibility for detonating explosive devices in the newspapers *Heraldo de Mexico*, *El Sol de Mexico*, *Excelsior*, the Telesistema TV Station, the Ministry of the Interior, and the Attorney General's Office. (Coincidentally two bombs also exploded in the facilities of *Por Que?*).

Professor Gonzalez Ramirez pointed out that another organization existed, independent from his, that was oriented to overthrowing the government of Mexico by revolution. Their theme was "Liberty or Death." He also revealed that he went to a guerrilla training camp in Chiapas, attended training in Guerrero, and helped to develop similar groups in Morelos State. He reinforced information regarding the existence of an intellectual leader named Javier Fuentes Gutierrez, who was supposedly trained in China. By that time, he also denounced a former federal representative for the Socialist Popular Party (PPS), who was linked to

them and was currently performing activities related to President Echeverria's election.[58]

On 6 March 1972, three weeks after the conviction of Professor Gonzalez Ramirez, the PGR announced the capture of another independent *guerrillero* group formed by Javier Fuentes Gutierrez, Raul Ernesto Murguia Rosete, Rosalba Robles de Murguia, and Judith Leal Duque, who in confessing to authorities, declared that

> . . . I received training in Nankin, China according to Maoist theories. . . . After returning to Mexico, I organized the *Partido Revolucionario del Proletariado* (Revolutionary Party of the Proletariat), whose objective was to apply Maoist theories and establish in Mexico a government under that ideology even by the force of arms, acting as guerrillas.

All of them were in contact with the guerrilla contingents of Genaro Vazquez and Lucio Cabanas.[59]

After the epoch of 1968, reporter Mario Renato Menendez Rodriguez ("Rodrigo") became director of an opposition anti-government magazine and devoted himself to gathering a group of followers. In his view, they should have the same radical bent as he did, and further be capable of, and willing to move to an area located along the boundaries of the Mexican States of Tabasco and Chiapas. Some individuals possessing the requisite Marxist-Leninist profile, eventually joined this organization, such as Alfredo Zarate Mota, and after him a group previously formed by Communist leader Heberto Castillo Martinez. The group, based in Monterrey, used the name of *Movimiento Revolucionario del Pueblo* (People's Revolutionary Movement--MRP). This group had been designed to constitute the armed hand of the *Movimiento de Liberacion Nacional* (National Liberation Movement--MLN).

While some of their members had spent time training in Cuba, part of them had been apprehended by police in Mexico. Victor Rico Galan, head of the captured group, led police to investigate Mario Renato Menendez's organization. Police confirmed as a consequence of this investigation, that Menendez's goal was to establish a rural guerrilla group in Chiapas, since conditions there were more than adequate for forming such a movement. And, moreover, Menendez had to promptly justify before the Cuban government that the help he had requested and obtained would be used productively.

Elements of EIM would remain in Mexico City. On 24 January 1969, those elements selected to depart for Chiapas got together in the offices-print shop of *Por Que?*, located in Mexico City. Besides Menendez ("Rodrigo"), Alfredo Zarate Mota ("Marcos"/"Salvador"/ "Santiago") and Jose Galindo Carbajal ("Justo") as third in command, there was Cesar German Yanez Munoz ("German"/"Agustin"), Margil Yanez Munoz ("Roger"), Graciano Alejandro Sanchez Aguilar ("Felipe"), and others.

When they arrived in Chiapas, they established a training camp in the vicinity of Ejido "La Trinidad," County Salto de Agua, close to the village of El Limar. They posed as workers of a "barbasco" extraction company. New members were incorporated into the group and led personally by Oscar Menendez Rodriguez ("Romualdo"). Within a short period of time, however, they suffered several desertions, since conditions in the jungle were harder than expected. Some members moved to Kanxoc, Yucatan, where they established a supportive relationship with peasant leader Inocencio Cohuo Choc. There, they planned to attack the 36th Infantry Battalion in Valladolid, Yucatan.

By July 1969, the EIM estimated that some members within the organization had not reached the political and military firmness needed to conduct armed revolution in Mexico. They argued internally, some members leaving and others, such as Ignacio Gonzalez Ramirez, requesting authorization from Heberto Castillo to form an urban guerilla element.

Other groups formed and moved back to Monterrey, Nuevo Leon again. There they had reorganized by August 1969 and provided a major reinforcement to the *Fuerzas de Liberacion Nacional* (National Liberation Forces--FLN). The newly created organization aimed to develop a nationwide structure in urban and rural areas designated "nets," which promised to continue their armed struggle until the end under the MLN cover.

EIM remained in contact with the Guatemalan guerrilla group *Ejercito Guerrillero de los Pobres* through the liaison provided by Manuel Rabasa Guevara, Beatriz Joffre Garfias, Mercedes Olivera Bustamante, Cecilia Guadalupe Vazquez Olivera and Emiliano Vazquez Olivera.

Fuerzas de Liberacion Nacional (National Liberation Forces--FLN)

The subversive FLN group was organized on 6 August 1969 at a meeting on the street 5 de Mayo # 657 in Monterrey, Nuevo Leon state. The founders were the same ones who moved back from Chiapas. Their meeting place was also the Mexican-Cuban Cultural Relations Institute "Fray Servando Teresa de Mier-Jose Marti," headed by Carlos Arturo Vives Chapa, himself an undercover *guerrillero*.

The very first head of the FLN was the aforementioned attorney-at-law Cesar German Yanez Munoz, with his second-in-command being

Alfredo Zarate Mota. The X-ray technician Mari Alberto Saenz Garza also served in a leadership role. All of them were University of Nuevo Leon graduates. Further, they established several nets in Mexico City (including contacts with Julieta Glockner ("Aurora") and Napoleon Glockner ("Jaime"). In Veracruz, there was engineer Mario Sanchez Acosta ("Alfonso"); Roberto Soto de la Serna was in Puebla; and in Tabasco, there was Fernando Yanez Munoz, who would re-take his brother's alias as "German") by the 1990s.

The FLN nurtured and expanded its rank and file with former members of the EIM. They operated in accord with the familiar Marxist doctrinal principle of "democratic centralism," under which debate over policies was closely controlled and "party" leadership decisions were law. Their ruling points expressly were:

1. To continue revolutionary struggle single mindedly to its final consequences, and in accord with Vicente Guerrero's motto: "Live for the Fatherland or die for it".

2. The fundamental approach of confronting the government was to be an armed one, following the guerrilla tactics in rural and urban environment. This represented the only feasible and real way to obtain revolutionary objectives.

3. To contribute to the defeat of imperialism and to consolidate world peace, in accord with the immutable Internationalist duty already expressed by the maximum leader Ernesto Che Guevara.

The leadership group had ample political experience, mainly due to Heberto Castillo's background and references. They also counted on continuous support from the Cuban authorities in Mexico. In this regard, financial support constituted a supremely important factor.

Because of this support, they were capable of building a clandestine organization which was firmly sustained by economic resources. That in return, allowed them to continue recruiting and training new individuals.

The FLN remained undercover for several months. Their operations were discovered by the police, thanks only to Mario Renato Menendez's detention on 12 February 1970. He was found to be responsible for violent crimes committed on 17 September 1969 (although, he had not been guilty of those actions in particular).

While he remained in detention, Menendez gave up the names of his former Nuevo Leon's partners, with whom he collaborated for a brief period of time in the Chiapas jungle. Group members in Nuevo Leon quickly reacted and fled to other safe houses located in Nepantla, Puebla. Since nothing occurred, they soon returned to Monterrey. However, on 19 July 1971 purely by chance, they were confronted by PGR agents who thought they were narcotraffickers. An armed confrontation occurred between the two parties at the Monterrey safe house. Mario Alberto Saenz Garza ("Abel"/"Guicho"/"Alfredo"), and Juan Guichard Gutierrez ("Hector"), after initially facing off with the police forces, fled. After seizing the house, authorities discovered evidence of a formal subversive organization. Not only was the FLN discovered, but so was its objective of overthrowing the government. The escaping members had fled to a Veracruz safe house guarded by Mario Sanchez Acosta. There, the remaining group moved to "Quinta Lucita," and for a time became integrated into the local guerrilla NET.

Other survivors included Alfredo Zarate Mota, Carmen Ponce Custodio, and an unknown individual operating under the code name of

"Concha." Puebla's Villahermosa cell, and another "Urban Net" in Monterrey remained untouched. These surviving elements soon improved their ability to conduct armed actions and sabotage and distracted the authorities from their search for remaining members. At this point, NETS began to receive different designations in order to make it even more difficult for police to track their linkages. The FLN developed two Fronts, one rural and the other urban. The "rural" would later become the incipient seed of the *Ejercito Zapatista de Liberacion Nacional* (EZLN).

On 13 February 1974, in another untouched safe house, located on 2429 Fortunato Lozano street, Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, Napoleon Glockner ("Jaime"/"Mario Sandoval Ruiz") along with his "evolutionary" wife Nora Rivera Rodriguez ("Sandra" or "La Changa" were detained by the Federal agents. While in custody, they informed the authorities about the activities of the FLN. Based on information provided the next day (14 February), police located another safe house (called the Big One), in Nepantla, Mexico and assaulted it.

As a result of the encounter, five *guerrilleros* died there, among them the second-in-command Alfredo Zarate Mota, whose code name was "Marcos." This is the reason that Subcommander Marcos used this code name in the 1994 Zapatista uprising. Also killed were Carmen Ponce Custodio ("Sol"), Denis Prieto Stock ("Maria Luisa"), Alberto Anselmo Rios Rios ("Gabriel"), and Mario Sanchez Acosta ("Manolo"). Two surviving members were placed under arrest, including Sergio Morales Villarreal ("Lucio"/"Martin"/"Babuchas") and Maria Gloria Benavides Guevara ("Ana"). As a consequence of information received from the

detained guerrillas, and a number of further denouncements, other members were captured.

Continuing investigations resulted in the identification of an FLN rural cell in the county of Ocosingo, Chiapas, where a refugee and training camp had been established again. The camp received the name of "Vanguard." It was located close to the Metzabok lagoon, which was part of an original property owned by Anastasio Lopez, subsequently bought by Nahum Guichard Gutierrez, and commonly referred to as "El Chilar."

The guerrilla camp had provided shelter to the rural net known as "Emiliano Zapata Guerrilla Nucleus" and also as the "Emiliano Zapata Brigade." Members made extensive efforts to help peasants in order to gain their trust. The guerrillas were surprised by Army troops and Federal agents in March 1974. After several skirmishes in the Chamizal, Ejido Plan de Ayutla, and El Naranjo areas as well as the surrounding lagoons, several guerrillas were captured, while others died during the fight. These included Raul Enrique Perez Gazque ("Alfonso"), Elisa Irina Saenz Garza ("Blanca"), Juan Guichard Gutierrez ("Hector"), Cesar German Yanez Munoz ("Pedro") and others. Pedro reportedly was buried on a hill at Ejido El Censo, and his code name was later taken by his own brother in 1994. Only two members of the guerrilla group escaped.

When "Pedro" died on the southern front, Alfredo Zarate Mota had already disappeared two months before in Nepantla. Therefore, the next in line was Mario Alberto Saenz Garza--"Alfredo." He assumed the position of General Secretary of the FLN. Julieta Glockner, by this time, presumably living in Monterrey, assumed the position of second-in-command.

On 7 February 1975, a new encounter with Federal agents took place in Cardenas, Tabasco. At least three died in this clash. Two other small training camps were discovered by patrols, one in Tenosique, Tabasco and the other, at a site close to Malpaso, Chiapas.

On 5 October 1976, in Mexico City, two persons were executed by the FLN for betrayal--Napoleon Glockner Carreto ("Jaime"/"Mario Sandoval Ruiz"), who had been responsible for the urban Net, and his wife Nora Rivera Rodriguez ("Sandra"/"La Changa"). An FLN member "Federico" had delivered a letter to Dr. Glockner, Sr., that described the way his daughter had died in 1974 at Tabasco. The reason for the execution was the assumption that Napoleon, under torture, had given up the addresses of remaining safe houses. The FLN perpetrators of the murder were Fernando Yanez Munoz ("New German"), Raul Sergio Morales Villarreal ("Lucio"/"Martin"), and Maria Gloria Benavides Guevara ("Elisa"). As "Marcos" would write some time after--460 days after their betrayal, those guilty ones, paid for their action.

On 7 March 1977, Mario Alberto Saenz Garza ("Alfredo") died of injures received in an automobile accident. His death forced Fernando Yanez Munoz ("Leonardo"/"Raul")--the third brother in the FLN organization--to occupy the position left by "Alfredo," but now adopting the name of "German."

By 1980, despite the heavy blows inflicted on it by Mexican authorities, the FLN still existed--but it was being torn by internal conflict and factional rivalries. On 18 August 1980, for reasons evidently associated with these rivalries, a group formed by Fernando Yanez Munoz, Maria Gloria Benavides Guevara, Alberto Islas de la Maza ("Abraham"), Catalina Rivera Olvera ("Teresa"), Josefina de la Paz

Aguilar Ornelas ("Olivia"), and Jose Maria Marcos Olmedo, executed two members of the Macuspana Commando. The two executed members were Jorge Velasco del Rincon (a) "Ismael," and Clemente Guichard Gutierrez ("Juan Javier Perez Poumian") at the El Bayito ranch in Tabasco, near Ciudad Pemex.

After the executions, on 6 August of the same year, the FLN began distributing their "National Liberation Forces Statutes." By doing so, they hoped to demonstrate internally and externally that their organization was capable of continuing the fight, despite past schisms within. They chose that precise date in 1980 as the eleventh anniversary of the creation of the FLN. The document, discovered fragmentarily at the El Bayito ranch, notes that FLN members "are a political-military organization." Their goal is insure "that peasants and workers seize political power, and then establish a Popular Republic under a socialist regime." The document went on to say that "our enemies are American Imperialism, local landlords, the Mexican bourgeoisie, puppets of bourgouisie power, and their armed elements: the police, Army and para-military corps."

The Statutes also considered that the only feasible path to achieve success was through a combination of three different types of struggle: Political-economic, Political-military, and Ideological. All of the struggle would be conducted through the Mass Organization, which represents the "Engine of the National Fight."

The FLN principles, according to the captured document, established that the FLN must strive to create and develop mass organizations, and from there, strive to support by actions their independence from the bourgeoisie state and its instruments. Their

demands must go beyond the limits of the economic struggle, and enter the political arena so that the people may seize power. Their immediate goals:

1. to continue the struggle along with the workers and peasants;

2. to integrate those efforts into a single program, especially in the most backward areas of the country; and

3. to form an Army under name of Ejercito Zapatista de Liberacion Nacional.

Their ambitious long-range goals included the formation of a unique political party, based on Marxist-Leninist principles; the dissolution of the Oppressing Army (i.e., Mexican Army); and the immediate creation a Popular Army from the EZLN to replace it. The motto of the guerrillas was "Live for the Fatherland or to die for freedom," while their anthem was "The Internationale." Their flag was to be red, with five tips under a black background.

On 17 November 1983, another FLN group moved again into Chiapas, in this instance to the *ejido* area of Tierra y Libertad, south of Miramar Lagoon. The guerrilla cell included in its membership Fernando Yanez Munoz, Rafael Sebastian Guillen Vicente ("Marcos"), Maria Gloria Benavides Guevara, Salvador Morales Garibay ("Daniel"), Ramon Gonzalez ("Rodrigo"), Silvia Fernandez Hernandez ("Gabriela"), Hector Ochoa ("Pedro"), Gabriel Ramirez Lopez ("Javier"), Ramon Gonzalez ("Juan"), and "Eduardo," "Manuel," "Rodolfo," and "Lucha." Through substantial amounts of civil action and recruiting, relationships began to be developed with surrounding Indigenous communities. Soon Indians began to join the organization to include "Mario," "Yolanda," "Frank," and

"Benjamin." Initially the FLN group used the name of the *Union Zapatista de Liberacion--Fuerza Lucha Armada* (Zapatista Liberation Union--Force for Armed Struggle).

The EZLN worked its own way in Chiapas Highland region from 1983 until 1994. According to Carlos Tello Macias's book *Rebelion of the Canadas*, during this period the Zapatistas strove to link themselves to the poor Indian communities with the help of an organization called *Desarrollo Misionero Indigena (Indian Mission Development*--DESMI), a secular branch of the San Cristobal de las Casas Diocese. DESMI's director was Jorge Santiago, an apostate priest who was married. DESMI--in coordination with the EZLN--developed several social programs in communities that were openly pro-Zapatista using funds provided from abroad. This approach gave them very effective cover for a long time.

Reports provided in the aforementioned book indicate that Marcos, as well as several other EZLN members, at a point in time, moved into Nicaragua. Once there, they worked with the Sandinista movement in order to improve their skills and expertise. This is when, most probably, a former Sandinista guerrillero named Elio Henriquez met Marcos. Elio Henriquez would eventually marry Amado Avendano's daughter, the same individual who claimed the position of "Chiapas Rebel Governor" for the shadow government backed by the EZLN. Reports also indicate that Marcos and other EZLN members traveled to Cuba several times, according to Jorge Fernandez Menendez's book, *Desestabilizacion*.

After the 1970s, the Mexican Left had two options: one, radical armed confrontation that, as observed, did not worked; and two, the covert option, which is characterized by the Mexican expression *Se fueron al Monte* (i.e., They went after tough land). They patiently

carried out their work for more than a decade to develop popular organizations among the poor communities in Chiapas.

On 23 January 1993, a General Directorate of the FLN was created, according to the decisions of the I Congress held at the Ejido El Prado rural school. A Central Committee emerged as the heart of a Partido Fuerzas de Liberacion Nacional (Forces of National Liberation Party--PFLN). The Committee was sworn in on 25 March 1993. It immediately proceeded to issue directives, while the groups meanwhile devoted themselves to refining their political-military structure and disseminating a broad policy message to their followers that was oriented toward the implementation of the Mass Organization techniques and the eventual creation of a "Socialist Fatherland." Three main lines of action were to be promoted:

1. Political-Military Struggle: Accomplished through the creation of armed cell-groups or radical groups in charge of incorporating vigilance committees; making advances on other fronts; or developing special projects. (i.e. the construction of the "Aguascalientes" Center). Some associated names of these projects are FPFV and UPVA-28, which have not been identified further.

2. Political-Economic Struggle: Carried out to capitalize on social resentment, and motivated basically by the economic situation prevalent around the country. Efforts include claims for the redressing of social problems and advancing demands that seem to be the most suitable mechanism for mobilizing social movements. This is particularly the case for movements such as "Barzon", "Todos por Chihuahua", etc.

3. Ideological Struggle: Undertaken to promote awareness of social ills and the necessity of "fighting against the State Party". Major activities include dispersing ideas and formulating concepts aimed at supporting the existence of the EZLN. These particular efforts are appropriate for the "National Democratic Convention," for example, the Provisional Commission Promoting National Dialogue, and, finally, for the so-designated Civilian Committees for Unity and Dialogue.

The PFLN leadership grouping consists of a Central Committee. One year after the initial uprising, "Marcos" would publicly disclose the grouping's designation as the Clandestine Indigenous Revolutionary Committee (CIRC). The CIRC chairman is called the General Secretary, CC, and is in charge of overseeing and coordinating the activities of diverse sub-groups. There is also an Internal Affairs Secretary, a Military Secretary, and a Masses Secretary. There are other agencies as well, to include the Ideology and Political Formation Commission; Honor and Justice Commission; International Relations Commission; and the Secretary of Agreements and Acts. Some of the specific functions known to be associated with a number of these and other positions and components include:

1. Political Bureau (Political Secretary): In charge of general orientation and also National Financing for the Party. It is headed by Fernando Yanez Munoz--"German". At the same time, he also coordinates the activities of the Internal Affairs Secretary.

2. Military Secretary: Subordinated to the EZLN General Headquarters, its functions are to elaborate and execute plans related to the "Liberation War". Rafael Guillen Vicente--"Marcos"--occupies

this position. He is supported by a "General Staff". Under his command are:

--Regular troops

--Militia

--Commandos

--Special Units

--Support Bases

The main forces are organized into regiments under the command of "Majors" such as: "Daniel" (voluntarily exiled to the U.S.; "Pedro" (who died in Las Margaritas attack in January 1994), and others. Regiments are similar to those battalions in the Mexican Army in that they are organized into companies, platoons, and sections. Each regiment comprises Insurgent Cells, Insurgent Officers, Militiamen, and Regional Commanders, Support Base Supervisors ("Responsibles"), Political Commissars, Party Militia Committees, Regional Responsibility Committees, and Party Support Base Committees.

3. Secretary of Masses (Party Masses Organization Secretary): This individual is in charge "...of coordinating the work of three entire Secretariats...." The work is coordinated by "Lucha", the first wife of "German", living in Mexico City. She reportedly works at the Metropolitan Autonomous University, as the head of the faculty for Data Processing Systems.

4. Under Secretary of Peasant Politics: In charge of developing awareness within, organizing, and directing peasant masses in accord with plans, principles, and programs determined by the Party. The incumbent Secretary is "Frank".

5. Under Secretary of Union Policies: In charge of developing awareness within, organizing, and directing workers' unions and masses in accord with plans, principles, and programs determined by the Party. The incumbent Under-Secretary is "Ana".

6. Popular Under-Secretary: In charge of applying Party policies among students, teachers, small landowners, and progressive clergy. The incumbent Under-Secretary is "Andres".

7. Ideology and Politic Formation Commission: This component is led by Sub-Commanders "Elisa" (Maria Gloria Benavides Guevara, former wife of "German" and now married to Jorge Javier Elorriaga Verdegue--"Vicente").

Positions and components that have been omitted by the CCIR include the Honor and Justice Commission; the International Relations Commission; and the Secretary of Acts.

Overall, then, the current political struggle in Mexico resembles in strikingly similar ways those struggles provoked earlier by Maoist organizations and doctrines. The final Maoist-style objective in Mexico is to constitute a political force capable to overthrowing the existing government and establishing "Zapatista" insurgent rule in its place.

Step by step, an almost predictable chain of events has developed, following a model whose phases are well known. Developments apparently came about in response to the most diverse actions and struggles by various factions that seem to have no obvious relationship. But they all converge toward the same goal--seizure of power.

Initially, as in the First Lacandon Jungle Declaration, the EZLN launched its strike against two separate targets: the Mexican

Government and the Army. (Incomprehensibly, the EZLN never attacked the Navy.) Current Mexican military doctrine, in regard of guerrilla warfare, was applied with distinct accuracy by Army forces, i.e., closely adhering to what is established in the Mexican Army's *Unconventional Warfare Manual*:

1. Forces must be identifiable at a distance;
2. Forces must be under command of a responsible leader;
3. Forces must carry their weapons openly;
4. Forces must conduct operations according to the conventional procedures of war.

And so events began to unfold rapidly as the EZLN and the Mexican Government faced off in the remote areas of southern Mexico as well as in national and international arenas. With this background on communism and the older insurgent groups in Mexico, it is now time to examine other dimensions of the reemergence of the communist guerrilla in Mexico and how the Mexican Government and the Zapatista rebels confronted each other in the first "new" post-Cold War insurgency in the Americas.

Endnotes

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28. Author's interview with Sargeant 2nd. Rifle Parachutist Noe Reyes Garcia, Mexico City, February 1977.

29. President Gustavo Diaz Ordaz, yearly Presidential address to the Union Congress, National Federation Official Newspaper, 1 September 1968.

30. In March, 1971, the Mexican government, under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior, expelled 4 Russian diplomats without a major public announcement. The Russian delegation was headed by Boris Kolombikoff. News of the expulsion was covered by the press but no official explanation was given. A similar expulsion would take place in 1976 when the Mexican government had to expell another group of Russian diplomats, this time led by Vladimir Vladimirovich. Reportedly this last group went to Cuba where they remained for several years, possibly coordinating their activities initiated in Mexico from the Caribbean island. Vladimir was reportedly seen at receptions held at Cuba's diplomatic missions, where he was presented as a simple functionary of the Russian Embassy there. See Memorias de la SDN 1976-1971.

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CHAPTER 3

DEALING WITH REBELLION

Introduction

Developing nations are typically considered to be "Third World" countries. The reasons for designating them in this way are various, but in general they are so-designated because of existing conditions in the social, political, economic, psychological, and industrial capability arenas. Developing nations, then, embrace a substantial array of diverse nations that according to the Tofflers' definition are still "agricultural societies" or in other words, as the Tofflers designate them "First Wave" nations.

Social Factors

Structure, history, background, weaknesses, and environmental conditions are all among those factors that are different in each case. For the most part, these factors--and changes in them--are products of internal development. Progress might represent, in many cases, an internal national decision to go well beyond strongly held traditions in the pursuit of goals aimed at improving the wealth, power, and well-being of a state. Traditions, however, have intrinsic value for people which can be brushed aside or minimized only at great peril to the state. Modernization, as a consequence, carries in itself both positive and negative potential and effects. The negative consequences, in

particular, are manifest among groups that do not want to alter the status quo, and whose association with tradition is strongest.

In Mexico, after several governmental experimental programs that touched on every kind of economic formula, people reacted with a mixture of anxiety, hope, enthusiasm, and frustration to the entry of Mexico into NAFTA. (This reaction was in some respects paralleled in the United States and Canada where debates also generated both enthusiasm and concern.) In President Carlos Salinas de Gortari's fourth National Address to the Congress, he was applauded for the almost modest manner with which he entered the building. He was the creator of the "Mexican Miracle," as it was known in the U.S. His neoliberalist policy had given the country an incredible energy for progress. He had definitively changed the trajectory of the nation, and statistics were tangible proof of this:

Inflation:	1988: 51.4%	1994: 6.7%
GDP:	1988: 1.2%	1994: 2.2%
Unemployment:	1988: 3.5%	1994: 3.6%
Commercial Balance:	1988: $272.1M	1994: -$13,520M
Deficit:	1988: -12.5	1994: 0.4

While President Carlos Salinas de Gortari had continued to maintain a substantial public debt, on other hand he had initiated a new era of free market enterprise in Mexico. At the Congress, responding to the tumult of the ovation he received, the president raised his arms in a significant salute meaning "Triumph." The opposition--including senators and representatives--joined in the general applause.[1]

While Mexican expectations for further development were clearly on the rise, not everybody shared this same perspective. Dissatisfied and ambitious individuals and organizations expected to gain advantages from these conditions of change and uncertainty. They saw the opportunity to obtain or recover power through peaceful or even violent means.

Modernization brought new ways of life to Mexicans, with clear preference coming to those living in urban areas. But modernization for Mexico represented also a lessening of traditional loyalties, with a lose of identity in matters of religion, family, language, tradition, and regional affiliations. Although it brought more goods and commodities, thereby improving the material quality of life for some societal sectors, it also introduced values and elements that could lead to future conflict. In gaining improved living conditions, it is quite possible that many Mexicans did not realize they would have to break so fundamentally with the past. In the agricultural arena, in particular, more people were inevitably displaced from the land and migrated to the cities as opportunities in the growing fields declined. There in the cities, the new arrivals would find unemployment and even more difficult living conditions than they had had in rural areas. They must have felt profoundly helpless and inclined toward increasing anger at their circumstances.

This situation represented ideal conditions for groups of ambitious individuals who called more insistently for new changes in the government. A key point regarding this developing opposition is that almost any radical or extremist cadre could have attracted attention and a following. Proof of this, in the author's view, is that throughout

the years not just one, but several groups tried to do it in Chiapas. An understanding of this is instructive in developing an appreciation of why peasants were attracted to Maoists and Liberation Theologists--even to the extent that they were willing to resort to violence. Given this pattern, it does not seems inappropriate for informed Mexican commentators to observe that the Mexican Revolution arrived to Chiapas in the 1990s! Ethnically and tribally, extensive sectors of the population in Chiapas had not became part of modern Mexico. Indeed, to a certain degree, regional similarities and perspectives linked Chiapans to Guatemalans, more than they did to residents of the Mexican high plateau. Geographical barriers, in particular, contributed to make the "Highland" Chiapans feel isolated from the rest of the nation, and especially from the technological and other innovations that had become part of a state undergoing rapid modernization.

The indigenous and peasant population of Chiapas had increased at a faster rate than services were created to satisfy their demands. In addition, the marginalization and isolation of that same population stood in sharp contrast to a comparatively wealthy, small, group, who refused to allow any change in the "establishment" or status quo. Money allocated by the Mexican Federal government to improve the living conditions of the poorest Chiapans ended up invested in unnecessary or poorly-conceived projects--or in a number of cases, simply in the hands of others who were not the intended recipients.

Indices of illiteracy among Chiapans were statistically high for a state that had firmly supported government economic programs and therefore should have received greater economic returns locally. While health facilities had begun to be built with resources from the

Solidarity Program, they were still insufficient. The exodus of Guatemalans fleeing their own authorities further led to an intensification of economic-social problems in the State. Ethnic minorities had no one--except the INI and the clergy--to speak in their behalf and otherwise advocate their positions. In many cases, Federal authorities were seen as strangers. Indeed, the perspectives of the latter were not always the same as the viewpoints of those who lived in the High Chiapas.

Economic Factors

A comparison of economic growth rates between Chiapas and industrialized Monterrey or Mexico City reveals, as would be expected, great unevenness. Even in Chiapas itself, the fertile coastal agricultural lands enjoy a much different level income return than those less productive areas in the Highlands of Chiapas. When coffee prices drastically drop, the main source of income for small land owners almost disappears. The same thing has occurred in adjacent Tabasco, where Pemex workers--earning disproportionate wages compared to most of the Indigenous communities--see their income vanish when oil and gas prices fall.

Those kinds of fluctuations motivated unrest among ranchers and peasants. Communications and transportation continued to represent a necessity for further resource development in the jungle. Agricultural technology was mostly imported--therefore, it was expensive and promoted extreme dependence on the part of those who used it. The Highlands of Chiapas relied too much on limited, basic crops such as coffee, and

alternative crop cultivation had not been developed there as it had in other areas possessing better communications.

The Mexican government wanted to expand its programs and at the same time it wanted to increase its GDP--a most difficult undertaking given the circumstances. Foreign capital investment had arrived in Mexico, but it was recognized that it could fly away just as quickly. Domestic investment, in contrast, was very small in comparison. Some foreign entities had begun aid programs for developing the Chiapas Highlands, in coordination with the Mexican Federal and state governments and--in some instances--with specific Church agencies. Unfortunately, despite supervision of the disposition of those foreign and national assets sent to Chiapas, once the resources were handed over, funds were sometimes used for different purposes. This was evident in a number of cases.

Chiapas is--despite its poverty--a land that is very rich in potential. Possessing quite different conditions than those present in northern Mexico, Chiapas represents a strange paradox in regard to self-development. This differential between existing poverty and potential wealth is due especially to the long-standing isolation and subsequent backwardness of its people. This was exacerbated by the highly restrictive availability of arable land due to its scarcity, unequitable Government dispositions, or a combination of both.

Political Factors

It can be said that in matters of political stability, Mexico represented a sparkling example, a "miracle." This view has been highlighted often in the American media, and stood in particular

contrast to developments further south in Central America. Mexican institutions grew, remaining stable and strong for many years. Shadows of a military coup d'etat had been long erased from the minds of government officials as a serious possibility, and from the minds of the military as well. The civil service, in some degree, had become efficient.

Local leadership in Chiapas, however, had remained unchanged for a long time. This leadership retained authoritarian traditions that supported and strengthened a well-defined status quo. In many instances, federal government representation was based solely on specialized delegations--e.g., sanitation teams or military civil-action brigades--working sporadically in the those areas where needs had become most acute.

Since appointed local authorities owed their appointments to personal relationships more than to recognized individual talent and capability, even very minor decisions were most often made at the highest level. That is, local responsibility was abrogated as a gesture of gratitude and servile submission to higher authority. In Chiapas--against this backdrop--the state government and the rebel government (a shadow of EZLN), were fighting to gain legitimacy in the eyes of the common citizenship. Eventually, the established government would succeed in this struggle. The reason for this, more than any other, was because the people of Chiapas did not want to suffer the hard struggles they witnessed south the border by several brother-nations.

Mexico, then, had by the middle of the 1990s entered into a period of transition that was more pronounced than any in the last 40 years. The time-honored practice of *Presidencialismo* required the

presence of a strong figure, at least for a little while longer. Economic neoliberalism had triggered the process of greater democratization. This process was waved like a banner by the Zapatistas as one allegedly of their own design.

It is important to emphasize that the EZLN only appeared and progressed in the areas that were religiously controlled by the Dioceses of San Cristobal de las Casas. Surrounding diocese such as Tapachula's, remained quiet despite the fact that the conditions of the Indigenous communities there were very similar.

Overall, then, in 1994 Mexico had reached a watershed in the process of becoming an industrialized economy. Sudden, unanticipated changes had left a considerable sector of the population in a state of unrest and resentment. While on the one hand, these changes promised better living conditions, it was also evident that they would only become tangible in the mid term to long term. In the short term, more sacrifices and hardships were to be expected by Mexicans along their path to higher competitive standards. Some Mexicans felt optimistic, while others felt disillusioned--and some felt left out of the journey entirely.

In a developing country, the government can respond only partially to the many problems that arise on the path to full modernization. Taking care of the hosts of problems that appear requires that the government spend considerable time, exercise great patience, and--of special importance--have access to adequate sources of money. It was natural that priorities were identified and followed in accord with what the government perceived as the most essential programs and policies.

Certain members of Mexican society--whatever their political affiliations might be--were willing to participate in even violent conflict when they felt that their expectations would never be met. And worse, they judged that their expectations would not be met as long as their present government remained in power.

It is true that conditions had to change in Chiapas. But it is very possible that Indigenous *guerrilleros* were not aware of the living conditions extant in Mexico City, or any other great metropolis. Indian expectations and their recognition of comparative rural-urban levels of deprivation are pertinent elements of the Chiapas problem.

But so, also, is the agitating effect created by Communists. This was clearly revealed when a native Chiapan, Pedro Mendez, detained by very same Tzetzal Indians at Oxchuc on 7 January 1994, mentioned earlier, declared to press:

> When I was a still a child, it was they (the catechists) who taught me how to pray--the same ones of 20 years ago, the same ones who invited us to join the Zapatista Army . . . . I am only looking for liberation, just the way God says.[2]

The key point is that dissatisfied persons are vulnerable. They are far more likely than their more or less satisfied fellow citizens to join or support organizations or movements committed to the violent overthrow of any government. Change, as noted earlier, brings enormous stresses to societies overall and certain societal sectors. Mexico, with its unique history, culture, folklore, and other attributes has experienced an incredibly rapid evolution that could be properly called "re-evolution." These circumstance alone, add impetus to ideas of opposition and change--including violent change--and increase the

receptiveness of Mexican citizens to these ideas even if these citizens are not among the societal sectors most affected.

The eruption of the EZLN onto the Mexican national stage has been discussed widely. Many authors have expressed the belief that civilian and military authorities were caught off guard. What seems to be actually the case, is that they were caught by surprise on two main issues:

1. The magnitude of the people that were mobilized; and

2. The number and diversity of hidden organizations supporting the EZLN and its mobilization.

One reason lies in the fact that the two main GOM organizations that dealt with the guerrilla struggle of the 1970s, had both disappeared by the early 1980s. One, *Direcccion Federal de Seguridad* (Federal Security Directorate--DFS), was dissolved when the head officer was found linked to the 1985 assassination of a well-known reporter (Manuel Buendia) in Mexico City.

The second organization, Mexico City's major police investigation office, was disestablished as well. That is, after several reports of abuses and excesses, and in view of popular demand, the police's *Direccion de Investigaciones para la Prevencion de la Delincuencia* (Investigation Directorate for Prevention of Delinquency--DIPD), disappeared from the police department. Their fileswere destroyed, and more importantly, the people who knew about the 1970s Communist uprising and its roots, were fired.

Moreover, the sole remaining agency, the *Procuraduría General de la República* (Attorney General's Office--PGR) capable of keeping track of national security interests was deeply concentrated on another major

security issue for Mexico: narcotrafficking. Therefore, it is probable that the fragmentation of data related to Communist activities in Mexico lost its invaluable cohesiveness, comprehensiveness, and continuity.

Nevertheless, intelligence agencies had continuously reported not only peasant resentment in the region generally, but also confirmed a potential threat to Mexico's security in Chiapas since the mid-1980's. As events developed in the first months of 1994, many features of the problem became more and more evident. The EZLN's initial demands for "Jobs, Land, Housing, Health, Independence, Freedom, Democracy, Peace, and Justice" contained in the First Lacandon Jungle Declaration, discretely shifted to very different demands. This is apparent in what occurred in the next three "Jungle Declarations," after reflexive accommodations to unfolding circumstances.

In the beginning, unlike many past communist movements, the EZLN expressly declared that it was not looking for the destruction of the legally established government. That posture gained the EZLN great credit among certain sectors of national, as well as international, public opinion. However, a closer look at the approaches and structures of "traditional" communist insurgencies is necessary to more fully understand the EZLN and how it compares to the earlier communist movements. At this point, therefore, it is instructive to recall the Maoist Strategies, as set out in the U.S. Department of the Army's Pamphlet 550-104:

> There are many strategies and techniques that Maoists have used in their attempts to gain political control of a nation. Regardless of the strategy pursued, each case has been different. Maoists have been capable of establishing methods of operations that adjust to the current situation in order to meet objectives.
>
> There is one called Right Strategy. It applies its action to legal operations within the established political system. In sum

there is little emphasis on open violence. The Right Strategy tries to infiltrate a society's political and social organizations. They use them to promote unrest. They use propaganda, sometimes accompanied by sabotage and terrorism to discredit the government and influence the populace.

Emphasis is placed on organizing parties, controlling mass organizations, and using coalitions. Little emphasis is placed on developing armed elements. It seeks to link the activists into a coalition with other political parties.

Its actions are directed at secretly emplacing members into existing organizations, and also by recruiting key elements from these. Then the communists draw a number of co-opted organizations into an alliance, therefore, gaining more political power. Their goal: to participate in coalition government with other parties. Evidently violence is almost unnecessary.

There is Left Strategy, where a great effort is made to gain power almost exclusively through violence. It tries to create a revolutionary situation primarily through acts of violence. (This is the typical case where a sole incident can trigger a sudden uprising of the masses against the government.)

Organizationally, the communist is prepared to carry out violent actions. On the one hand, there is a Communist Party. On the other hand there are armed elements becoming one single group. When this stage is achieved, then the leadership gains a dual leadership role: as a political leader and as leader of armed elements.

The Left Strategy might or might not place importance on developing mass organizations which support their struggle. That depends on how vulnerable the government become, and also if territory is being held.

There is the Mass Strategy, where both previous strategies are used, violent and nonviolent. Its place is somewhere in between the two strategies. It is difficult to define where one ends and where the other starts.

Mass Strategy is a most sophisticated form of activism. Its main feature relies on the extensive use of mass organizations. Logically it requires much more organization, much more time, and much more structure, but it is much more productive and more difficult to destroy. It utilizes armed elements and political organizations to challenge the established government.

The communist soon tries to establish a parallel government structure to defy government. It is based on a cellular organizational structure and a system of interlocking arrangements used to control access and operations. This organization may achieve a high degree of complexity.

A high-ranking U.S. official visiting the conflict area noted the similarities among the Chiapas uprising and various other communist struggles conducted in other regions of the globe:

> Well, just as you said, there is a common pattern here. As a matter of fact, you are the first one whom I have seen exposing

> accurately the real organization of this Mass Front Organization. This is the same scheme that I have personally observed in Rwanda, in Nicaragua and in El Salvador. I can assure you of this, since I personally dealt with this problems in order to find a solution. What most of the people are seeing is just the tip of the "iceberg"[3]

The ultimate goal of a Mass Strategy is to establish a government controlled by the Communist party. An associated military organization is considered essential for ultimate success of this type of strategy. But <u>if the outright military defeat of the government is not possible, Mass Strategy calls for a continuing effort to bring the population under control of the Communist political structure, which itself operates from a secure base while the established government is being rendered ineffective</u>.

According to U.S. Field Manual FM 100-20, *Low Intensity Conflict*, the progress of communist struggles employing armed elements--especially under the Mass Organization Strategy--can usually be categorized into three general phases: (a) Phase One: Latent and Incipient movement, (b) Phase Two: Guerrilla Warfare, and (c) Phase Three: War of Movement. At the heart of every Mass Strategy-oriented movement is a tightly disciplined party. The party eventually controls military forces and mass organizations. Mao Tse Tung's theory is based on the principle that a few must know a lot of ideas, and many lower-level supporters must know just a few ideas, in order that the masses be easily and effectively controlled.

The movement also controls "liberation" committees which parallel the country's existing government at the local, state, and national levels. These elements are interlocked to insure party control and secrecy. Despite the fact that the exact organizational

relationship of diverse elements may vary from one agency to another, the interlocking arrangement ties them to the highly centralized control needed in the Mass Organization Strategy. The Mass Organization Strategy is subdivided into components that include:

1. The party cellular organization. This is the base of the mass organization party structure. A party member normally belongs to two or more cells, (the local party and one or more functional cell (such as "school", "factory", or "trade"). There are parallel chains of command between the party structure and the various functional organizations. The party cells and the functional cells often overlap.

2. The party committee system. Although all the authority comes from the cellular party organization, functional committees carry out the party's day-to-day activities. The primary organization used for this purpose is the party executive committee, often named the Party Revolutionary Committee. These committees, with adaptations, normally exist at national, subnational, and local levels. Functional cells perform their tasks under the direction of local committees. At national level, control is exercised by the Secretariat of the Central Committee. A party youth organization is an indispensable and essential affiliate of the party, it is normally a parallel structure. Members engage in any activity and gain experience in party work. This will enable them to enter the core organization when they are prepared and eligible.

3. Mass organizations. Mass organizations are one of the primary means used by the communists to achieve control and influence over the population. The organizations obtain intelligence, logistics, and recruiting support from there. The aim is to use these

organizations to recruit many individuals into the party, some of whom are unaware that they are serving the party cause.

There are three types of Mass organizations, according to Mao Tse tung (and to FM 100-20):

1. Popular organizations. They are the most important organizations in the Mass Organization strategy, since they are large, of national scale, and subdivided into national, state, and local level elements.

2. Special interest groups. Oriented to special issues, they posses a smaller range of interests than popular organizations.

3. Local militia. Considered an element of mass civil organizations. Its task is to isolate the population from government control and actions. They are not in the military chain of command. Militias themselves are subdivided into a self-defense force; combat guerrilla unit; and secret guerrilla unit.

The Military Forces

Military forces are but one of several instruments through which the movement seeks to achieve power. The Mass Strategy movement allows for military reverses and the possibility of having to retrench, restructure, or even temporarily disband its military structure, if government forces prove to be overwhelming.

Mass movement strategy is based on the assumption that as long as the central leadership and the mass civil organizations remain intact, military forces can be reactivated or replenished. However, without the central nucleus and mass civil organizations the movement

can not succeed. Mass military forces fall in two classes: main forces and regional forces.

1. The main force is normally a body of well-trained soldiers who constitute a highly motivated, elite fighting group. Deployable where needed, the main force is usually controlled at the highest level.

2. The regional force is made up predominantly of indigenous (local) personnel recruited directly from the mass civil organizations or promoted from the ranks of the local militia. The regional forces normally confine their operations to a specific region or province.

In the case of the Zapatista model, it is easy to identify those different force groupings. They are also consistent with what was discussed above in regard to "Communism in Mexico."

Confrontation and Interaction

A number of revelations and insights resulting from the Mexican Government-Zapatista confrontation deserve to be highlighted. There are, for example, many similarities noticeable among the Zapatista uprising, and those communist-supported Central America guerrilla movements during past decades. The Zapatistas used the "mask" that was adopted widely in Korea and Japan, but more recently in the El Salvador and Nicaragua conflicts. People put a mask or bandana on their faces to avoid the possibility of recognition and subsequent capture. The habit came to Chiapas in several ways. One is attributable to the fact that the Zapatista leadership lived and trained in those two countries and adopted the protective measures employed there. It is possible that Marcos started wearing a full mask in order to appear in attire appropriate for a revolutionary leader. It is possible too, that the

mask was intended to inspire the "mystique" that emerged because of the fascination produced in human nature by anonymity or covertness. Later, after realizing the effect that the mask had, it remained there as an indispensable part of the Marcos identity and an EZLN symbol.

Documents and material found in the EZLN Las Calabazas Camp by the Mexican Army show a well-established military hierarchy. This is independent of other elements of Communist symbology such as the Red Star flag, the sickle and hammer, the leader's cultivated resemblance to Che Guevara, the well-known slogans, the Internationalist hymn, etc.--all of which were found there. Discoveries also showed that the Zapatistas had apparently copied almost entirely the legal Mexican military hierarchy in regard of ranks, unit level and designation. There was a unique exception; however, regiments were formed by two or more battalions, a level never utilized in the Mexican military. This feature clearly replicates an organization based on the Central American model, with minor differences applied.[4]

After negotiations began, the Zapatistas claimed that they controlled a determined area of the High Chiapas. There, a toll began to be forcibly demanded from every vehicle--the lowest at 50 pesos--at a time when this much currency equaled 16 dollars. This had been a common practice in Central America too. Therefore, this practice suggests that the successful experiences of guerrilla groups in Central America were being applied to increase the movement's financing.

According to DA Pamphlet 550-104, the Communist-based guerrilla conducts frequent harsh critiques and continuous internal review, especially after combat actions. These are carried out not only in order to avoid future mistakes, and also to allow political activism

among the medium and lower-level rank and file. After the Sierra Corralchen encounter, "Marcos" submitted to another, more senior, Zapatista leader "German," a document written by himself called "*Pendejadas*" ("Stupidities"). The document described a series of mistakes that were conducted in the skirmish which had negative results for the Las Calabazas Camp, leading to its later abandonment. It also addressed "strategic and tactical" concepts. This is not something that an authentic Indian and inexperienced revolutionary would prepare. After approval from "German" the document circulated widely among EZLN guerrilla units, ratifying in this way a prescribed communist technique.

Ritual

In terms of ritual, there is another distinct Zapatista feature that stands out in the region. The Zapatista rank and file saluted militarily with the left hand, when wearing a hat. When wearing a hat and also armed, they raised the left elbow when "presenting arms." (It is, coincidently, the same salute executed by Bosnians in the former Yugoslavia.)[5] Nowhere else has this feature been observed in the Americas, and it constituted a signature for Zapatista military members.

Operational Failure

Armed operations conducted by the Zapatistas in the first two days of struggle failed. The road to Palenque could not be taken by the "Josue" Zapatista forces. The "Pedro" force advancement to pre-arranged ambushe sites against 24th Cavalry Regiment in Comitan's outskirts was never initiated. The seizure of San Cristobal de las Casas in an effort to attract Mexican Army reaction, never worked. "Yolanda" (Marcos's woman) never expected such a determined defense around Rancho Nuevo's

battalion, despite reinforcements ordered by Marco personally, presumably failing in the Zapatista's main objective to capture stored weapons and ammunition there.[6] "Marcos" would later try to redress this failure one year later with his February 1995 second offensive. He produced a sketch for the media, upon which assembly areas and deployed units were depicted clearly on a map.[7]

Paradoxical Success

If it is true that from the military point of view, the EZLN's armed operations represented failure, then paradoxically it is also true that military failure gave the EZLN the chance to convert itself into a political and propagandistic success. Nowadays it can be said that the Indigenous motives advanced by the EZLN for their rebellion had been only that: motives. After only two months, analysts perceived that the surprise effect had gone, and that political negotiations were the unique options. By February 1995, Indians were no longer the real issue but a mere propagandistic flag, despite the fact that the conditions under which Indians lived in Southern Mexico were unfair. Two years later, the Zapatistas announced their plans to become a political party and to even unmask their main leaders. That promises to be difficult, especially after "German" and the rest of the Clandestine Revolutionary Independence Committee (CCRI) were detained and then released by the Mexican Government. It is always possible that the Zapatistas could bring in other unknown individuals posing as the actual CCRI members.

Smuggled Weapons

While overall guerrilla financing still remains unknown, some weapon smuggling routes are evident now. During the two years prior to

the uprising, the numbers of weapons seized by police and military detachments in the Southwest of the country had noticeably increased. More sophisticated weapons were being confiscated in diverse areas of Mexican territory. Weapons as difficult to obtain as RPG-7 and RPG-18 rocket propelled grenades, SA-7 shoulder fired surface-to-air missiles, and other weapons such as AK-47s and AR-15s which are easier to obtain in the U.S., began to appear more and more throughout the area. Those incidents were publicly attributed to an increase of Guatemalan guerrilla activity.[8] Some weapons were totally unknown--at least physically--in the area, such as the British Sten Mark II submachine gun. Some writers cited reports that Stens were being built in an EZLN safe-ordnance shop in Yanga, Veracruz.[9] The prevailing view thus far, however, is that a rustic shop would not have the technical ability to manufacture weapons like that one in particular. This still remains still an assumption, since serial numbers were not available at the time.[10]

Strong concern arose when instruction films of "Vietnamese Hat" bombs--and the actual explosive devices themselves--were found in Zapatista hideouts. Detonations within the "Aguascalientes" sanctuary for Zapatistas, however, revealed that the identified mine fields were not that extensive. Traps were found and other alarm devices and signals were dispersed around the whole encampment. Films describing in detail how to reproduce this particular type of demolition device indicated particular attention was required. Experiences in El Salvador, Nicaragua, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Cambodia where non-combatants, especially children, fell easy prey to these devices--even after conflict ended--remained in the minds of the authorities. The

Mexican Government could have used this factor to counter PFLN-EZLN propaganda, but preferred to remain silent in order not to raise more worries for people.

Guatemalan Guerrilla Participation

As noted earlier, there is a Guatemalan linkage to the rebellion in Chiapas. It is evident now that Guatemalan guerrilla factions actively supported the EZLN uprising, especially during the armed phase of the conflict. When the second phase (pacification) started, Guatemalan mercenaries withdrew back to Guatemala on foot along jungle paths, after quickly burying their dead. Those casualties had apparently been higher than reported. Therefore, it can be assumed that it would have been countereffective from a morale standpoint for them to have allowed a larger number of bodies to be discovered. There are indications that casualties were buried secretly to hide their true numbers and to allow the Guatemalans to return as fast and as light as possible to sanctuaries. And of more importance, the guerrillas would use those corpses in the future as proof that the Mexican Army carried out illegal executions. Mexican Army containment around the negotiated area impeded the Zapatistas from using this subterfuge, however.[11]

These, among others, are the dimensions of guerilla activities that step by step have been come to light recently.[12] As Guatemalan President Ramiro Leon Carpio honestly expressed during an interview to television reporter Pedro Ferriz de Con: "Unequivocally there are factual links between the EZLN and the Guatemalan guerrilla - We have discovered weapons, caches, names, documents related to the EZLN or addressed to it."[13]

Deliberate Provocation

Conditions were worsening in Chiapas by the beginning of 1993. Without apparent reason, two Army officers were kidnaped, and their bodies chain-sawed and burned. On 20 March 1993 Captain Marco A. Romero Villalba and Lt Porfirio Millan Pimentel took a walk from El Extranjero Hill to Villa Alcala. They never made it to their destination. Their bodies--calcinated--were found one week later, by a Army squad inside a one foot deep hole covered by animal excrement. Two of the responsible individuals were detained who related how the officers had been killed. The Army turned them over to the proper authorities.

Despite the fact that the responsible individuals were identified and that they confessed, the priests Pablo Romo and Gonzalo Duarte gathered hundreds of Indians the next day. This demonstration was intended to exert pressure on federal authorities in order that the detained men be freed. They were, in fact, released the next day. The incident harmed deeply the relationship between Bishop Samuel Ruiz and the Mexican military forces headed by Gen Magill Godinez Bravo. In general terms, the military felt that President Salinas's administration acted too precipitously in freeing those individuals and putting aside the case.[14]

General Godinez addressed Bishop Samuel Ruiz in a public letter, which appeared on 31 March that same year to clarify the actions of Ruiz's subordinate priests. In the document, he appealed to "Samuel Ruiz's human traits" and provided full names, facts, and details of the killings in order that the Bishop "be given enough elements to judge" the incident. He wanted to provide enough information so that Ruiz would be able to comprehend how surprisingly the priests Romo Sedano and

Gonzalo Duarte intervened to disrupt legal justice proceedings...."[15] He also expressed his reluctance when--during eight days of searching--no human rights abuse complaints were presented against the Army, but they suddenly surfaced only after the responsible persons confessed. General Godinez added: "If justice by one's own hand will never be acceptable behavior, it is equally ruinous to impede or set obstacles in the path of justice, thereby leaving unpunished felonies to get through." On 1 April Samuel Ruiz answered the letter in proper terms. He actually promised in person to Captain Romero's son "to bring his father back as soon as he was found," despite already knowing by then, that his father was dead.

General Godinez--acting prudently in the view of this writer--would answer that letter from Samuel Ruiz, asking him to stop the priests and Indians from inflicting scorn and even physical aggression against widows and others. Samuel Ruiz's next letter

> followed offering his promises of fraternity and his regard toward the General . . . [but] I [General Godinez] reiterated my intention to press on against the guilty ones and to reestablish public tranquility. Nevertheless, the community never got "purified" and the indicted were never convicted. Something had been broken forever[16]

In the aftermath of this still developing chain of events, these killings had the markings of a calculated provocation against the Army troops that was intended to be played out when the first wave of Indians launched the 1 January 1994 attacks. A major question is how the clergy was able to accept playing a part in this cruel undertaking.

The Discovery in Corralchen

On 14 May 1993, the 83rd Army Battalion, reportedly conducting training exercises, entered Sierra Corralchen. Eight days later, at

sunset on 22 May, the unit's forward element fell into an ambush. That would result in the discovery of a Zapatista training camp called Las Calabazas. Apparently, a nervous Zapatista guerrilla fired when he encountered the advancing patrol, killing one soldier and wounding another. Army troops enveloped the area and waited for instructions. By 2300 hours Zapatista groups tried to break out the encirclement, but failed. At dawn, they tried once again to escape unsuccessfully. This time an Army second lieutenant died. Scattering, the Zapatistas escaped individually through the area's rough terrain. The next day, Army reconnaissance teams observed from high ground, as fleeing Zapatistas entered the town of Laguna del Carmen Patate. The Army troop commander dispatched a company to detain those rebels. Once there, the company commander gathered every male over 18 years of age, and eight alleged Zapatistas were turned over to the Attorney General's Office (PGR) and then sent to prison. Samuel Ruiz's Human Rights's organization in San Cristobal de las Casas would claim those Indians were innocent.[17]

The Calabazas training camp discovered in the course of this engagement turned out to be immense. It had an electric power plant, television, radio, classrooms, dormitories, and a volley ball court. But of much more importance, there was a full scale replica of the Army Base of Operations in Ocosingo and replicas of Army armored and transport vehicles. There was no doubt to the Mexican Army now, that something big was being prepared. National newspapers reported what they knew about developments, speculated on who the guerrillas really were, and circulated every type of version. Some associated the armed groups with narcotraffickers, others linked them to Guatemalan guerrilla elements, and others some simply did not know what to think. Porfirio

Munoz Ledo, the PRD opposition leader, expressed the view that the "guerrilla stories are a pure invention of the Government"[18]

Samuel Ruiz's Nobel Prize

The San Cristobal de las Casas Diocese under Samuel Ruiz had openly defied the authority of Vatican representative, Monsignor Prigione. While in 1993, on one hand, Ruiz's popularity was high, other sectors of the San Cristobal "Coleto" society was more and more beginning to turn against him. This was due principally to the threat posed by his sponsorship of an Indigenous march against the 1992 celebration of 500 years of Spanish heritage.[19] If Samuel Ruiz really helped the Indigenous people of Chiapas, this had occurred in the past. Based on Liberation Theology, his liturgical work had bypassed religious dimensions and entered political ground. By the middle of 1993, M. Prigione had obtained authorization to end the tenure of Samuel Ruiz in San Cristobal--begun in 1960--and replace him. Samuel Ruiz requested authorization to remain at his post until the end of 1993 in order to finish private issues with which he was involved. It was the assumption that Samuel Ruiz would depart when his goal was so met.

This might be a factor to consider among the other reasons associated with the January 1994 Zapatista uprising--that is, the impending termination of Samuel Ruiz's tenure. This is especially suggested, given that there were members of the PFLN-EZLN who were against the idea of attacking because they recognized that their organization was still weak. It would had been much better to wait for the new government be inaugurated, considering that they would have been stronger and the government more vulnerable. President Salinas's tenure

had not been a particularly yielding one. The conclusion of the NAFTA agreement, of course, constitutes a counterbalance to the above speculation. In any event, the timing of the Zapatista rebellion will remain speculative until more data comes to the surface.

After January 1994, Samuel Ruiz maneuvered secretly among the Indigenous communities and, of course, with the EZLN. As a consequence, he was designated to be the mediator between the government and the EZLN itself. Therefore, his orders to depart from San Cristobal never took effect. Later on, in a continued effort to tie Samuel Ruiz to a resolution of the Chiapas conflict, non-government organizations (NGO) secretly--or at least not publicly--linked to the Diocese by Jose Santiago, began promoting the candidacy of Samuel Ruiz for a Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of his campaign to achieve peaceful negotiations between the two opponents.

Samuel Ruiz traveled to Rome in an unsuccessful effort to have an audience with the Pope. But the Pope denied him an appointment for more than a week. He later asked to be received by other Vatican authorities, but that request was not realized either. Finally he requested authorization to use a small chamber within the Vatican to conduct what was termed to a "small" ceremony. Whatever transpired, Samuel Ruiz claimed in Mexico that he had been honored for his peace efforts in Chiapas. This was quickly denied both by the Vatican press office in Rome, and Monsignor Prigione in Mexico.

Perspectives and Agendas

The Chiapas uprising was not fundamentally a response to the backward conditions in the region, but a struggle for political

position--and hence power--by groups whose goals transcended the region's needs.[20] This is suggested by a number of factors discussed below.

"Marcos" and "German" Political Maneuvers

When the Zapatista uprising began on 1 January 1994, Marcos appeared publicly for the first time before the media reporters' pool--which coincidentally had gathered already in San Cristobal de las Casas. A great propagandistic surprise had been achieved, perhaps executed much more effectively than expected. There, Marcos initially made several references to his immediate superiors and to a larger organization outside Chiapas, located "in the entire country."[21] Little by little, he would reveal facts in regard to the shadowy leadership council designated the Indigenous Revolutionary Clandestine Committee--or CCRI in the Spanish-language acronym.

In retrospect, it is possible to observe that Marcos in the beginning was merely delivering a well-known speech, adding touches of his personal style, but always referring vaguely to a superior organization. After two or three weeks of interaction, a change was noticeable. That is, Marcos began to acquire a much more independent style. There is the assumption that Marcos, after obtaining such successful notoriety and popularity, was "given" more freedom to conduct interviews with the national and--especially--with the "well-seasoned" international press.

Later on, Marcos was widely reported in media releases to be complaining about the lack of a wider, evidently anticipated, guerrilla response in other areas of the country. Those limited actions that had

occurred, had been just symbolic and rather ambiguous in terms of the perpetrators. They included the bombing of Mexico City's Mall (with minimal damages) by Guatemalans and PROCUP-associated members, and the pretended destruction of a CFE electric tower (also by members of PROCUP, who allegedly formed part of a Para-Central "Front").[22]

But in fact, Marcos's success had gone beyond anyone's expectations. He had, in fact, bypassed the organization he was supposedly subordinate to, and had gained full control of the movement. In any event--as he would claim later--he had been the one who conducted the armed uprising, and he was the one who had "actually" held command. Therefore, he probably felt that he did not have to fully adhere to, or rely on, the CCRI's directives any more.

As time went, Marcos clearly overcame the upper leadership level, where the always-hidden CCRI continued to try to orient the struggle from behind the scenes. This is typical of the Communist-Maoist style.[23] Analysis of Marcos's "communiques"--those controversial initial 32 demands, the sudden call for a National Democratic Convention under the patronage of the EZLN, and the four Lacandonian Jungle Declarations--allows analysts to notice a gradual, but substantial, change in Marcos's theme and style. This is the assessment found in *Proceso*, *Excelsior*, *El Financiero*, *La Jornada* and other Mexican media reporting, as well as the judgement of free-lance writers, such as Luis Pazos, Sergio Aguayo, Andres Oppenheimer, and others.

There was a point at which Marcos assumed apparently total control of the dogma and theory of the Zapatista movement. Negotiations between the government and the EZLN would take almost two years to actually initiate. By this time, public opinion had gone from surprise

and consternation to hope; from hope to cheering; and from cheering to boredom and disinterest. This latter disinterest developed after the media decided to stop spot-lighting developments as they had in the past.

It is true that the EZLN has shown a powerful influence among the Chiapas Indigenous communities. But it is also true, that the EZLN has demonstrated that it is not an Indigenous organization, and that it is not looking for genuine solutions to Indian problems in accord with native objectives.[24]

Almost one year after the uprising, the Mexican Government directed the apprehension of the CCRI hidden members, with the aim of exposing publicly the thus-far hidden "cupula" (as the CCRI leadership cell was termed). In the meantime, through his actions, Marcos in some respects received unconscious recognition from the Mexican Government emerging as the most visible representative of the EZLN leadership. But despite his early popularity and mystique, people were becoming far more preoccupied with their own survival amidst a spectrum of developing crises which were created--among other factors--by Marcos's rebellion itself.

The Mass Front Structure Achieves Its Objectives

In the early 1970s, the Tlatelolco-Guerrero-Guerrilla drama left a stigma among Mexicans, who never wanted such events to happen again. Those things, they felt, should belong to the past, and that is where they were supposed to be left.

Despite the essentially isolated efforts by the SDN to clarify the original circumstances under which the so-called "Massacre of

Tlatelolco" really occurred, it appeared as if the subtle campaign initiated long before 1994 against Mexicans institutions, and particularly the Army, regained its former momentum.

A medium-range EZLN objective was evidently to create conditions under which rebel forces would confront an already discredited Army in the forthcoming Indigenous uprising. Diverse, unexplained incidents were linked in this effort, to include results of the unsuccessful "1968 Truth Commission" report, the incident related to the elementary School text books, and the false incrimination of military elements in the assassination of Monsignor Cardinal Posadas Ocampo. These, as well as General Gallardo's imprisonment for his article on the creation of an military ombudsman, are just the most notorious.[25]

With above-mentioned disintegration of DFS and to a lesser degree the DIPD in the resulting public clamor for their disappearance, an "intelligence" vacuum existed for a certain period of time. In the meantime, other National Security agencies tried to regain control of those vital issues. That is one of the reasons why so many potentially critical problems must now be considered by the Mexican Government. The only Intelligence agency that successfully reported during this period of disarray was the military intelligence establishment, but the overall impact of their reporting was unsuccessful. Therefore, the Army's main enemy was its lack of credibility, and how this enemy was defeated is one of the issues addressed in this thesis.

Mass Front organizations enjoyed substantial periods of time, as well as resources, which enabled them to undetectably, penetrate all type of social, politic, and economic organizational structures in the Mexico. The EZLN was only one visible portion of a vast structure. It

has been proven--and is now well known--that Mexico City's Public Transportation Union was a financial supporter, among others. Up to a total of 160 different Human Rights organizations appeared before, during, and after the conflict, to "voluntarily" collaborate in defending the Zapatista cause from the presumed abuses committed against them by the Mexican Government.

Mexico had never signed Protocol II of the Geneva Convention (dealing with international oversight in regard to certain human rights and other issues asscoiated with conflicts that were not international in character). This was because Protocol II represented a major departure from Mexico's largely-sustained Estrada Doctrine of Self-Determination. The acceptance of Protocol II could mean acceptance of what was seen as infringement on Mexican soverignty, interference in Mexican internal affairs, and a potential basis for various claims by guerrilla forces like the Zapatistas. For example, Protocol II would grant the International Red Cross the right to supervise matters that--in the Mexican view--fell to national institutions. In any event, NGO's moved frenetically to press the Mexican Government to abrogate the traditional Army mission of disaster relief in favor of the International Red Cross.[26]

The Jurassic Charge

What becomes more and more evident as one examines the Chiapas uprising, is that some support for the Zapatista rebel actions was actually received from out-of-date sources.[27] As in the initial phases, the EZLN continued to reject and humiliate PRD leader Cardenas's personal offer to associate his party with the EZLN. This, and other

action, portrayed the idea that the Zapatistas were authentically an Indigenous movement. This was not the case--at least not deeply.

What is now known, is that hidden groups supported the EZLN from a distance. Presumably, the PROCUP-sponsored kidnapings generated resources substantial enough to allow the Indians to conduct military drills instead of harvesting their crops. President Salinas's administration had contemplated a new approach to solving Mexico's problems. This new approach inevitably left no more room for the Old Guard politicians, who used to permanently "live within the National Budget." Since their possibilities under President Salinas were closed after the August 1994 elections, they made their own conspiratorial plans. Others, quite simply, associated themselves with these plans in order improve their positions by other means.[28]

Diverse political factions worked in their own ways to associate themselves with the same slogans of the Zapatistas. Existence of a Shadow Government (commonly and successfully used by communists in other countries) represented at least a possibility of assuring for themselves an official position in the next government--after the current one fell.[29]

With a minimum investment in terms of ideology, morale, and minimal economic support (in global terms), rewards could be enormous. This is the reason that PRD, PST, PROCUP, ADHDF, and many more joined, or tried to join, in common cause with the Zapatistas in confronting the PRI-Government. This, rewards and justifications were there for many reasons.

Leaving the Original Indigenous Cause Behind

The Zapatista uprising tried to create a myth under a mask hiding a face--a popularly accepted view that "We all are Marcos."[30] They set out to accomplish this not only through rhetoric, but mainly by using the cruel reality of Indian living conditions. That scheme had worked in Central America. In no way, however, can the uprising be accepted now as an authentic Indigenous insurrection, conducted against an established government. If that had been the case, the Zapatista would not have started with a detailed and strongly ideologically "War Declaration" against the Mexican Army in particular. Nor would they have raised the promise of a long protracted popular War extending all the way to Mexico City. Instead, they would have made precise demands for the improvement and enhanced respect for the Indian Communities.

What would have happened if, after the first months on the Mexican and world stage, Marcos had been killed? In the view of the author, there would had been enough materiel to create a story and a myth that would rival that of Che Guevara. This did not occur, however. As soon as certain pre-programmed phases were achieved, Indigenous demands were left behind. The EZLN reoriented their goals, as they had learned from experiences in Nicaragua and El Salvador. Undoubtably, the Zapatista uprising accounted for the participation of huge Indian contingents. But it must be recognized that the EZLN political organization also had--deep within it--political advisers and professionally trained military contingents who worked laboriously for many years to produce planned results. This is an approach that resembles a Che Guevara-style model more than an Indigenous insurrection.[31]

There is actually a long-range strategy, aimed at seizing power and overthrowing a discredited political structure with another shadow government prepared beforehand. This is evident by carefully reading Marcos's declarations. In these--in several instances--Marcos explained, how it took them 10 years to develop an armed force with a mixture of radical and moderate leftists, and in coordination with Church-oriented sectors of the Chiapas population.

A "Cyberspace" Mass Front Organization

As a U.S. Army publication put it, "international support, primarily psychological but also material, has always been a determinate in successful insurgencies, or at least has contributed greatly to the outcome of them"[32] Never before in an insurgency, however, had the direct availability of high technology communications means been as significant as it has been in the Zapatista conflict. After the Cold War, this would be one of the very first times that images and words, transmitted through computer linkages, would reach influential individuals directly, avoiding the filters that the media networks had represented in the past--at least in Latin America.

The "informational structure" of the uprising was something carefully prepared long before 1 January 1994. The PFLN-EZLN had been able to place the Director of International Relations Committee (LUCHA) as Chief of Computing Sciences at the Universidad Autonoma Metropolitana, in Mexico City. This was the school were Marcos once taught political science. This factor alone, represented an opportunity to introduce the new insurgency's ideology to readers on the World Wide

Web and electronic forums on the Internet--in a way that was timely, direct, inexpensive, and free of censorship.

While the Mexican Government--through its respective Public Relations offices--applied itself in desperate and largely unsuccessful ways--EZLN predominance in the quick dissemination of news about the Chiapas revolt to the rest of the country and internationally was masterfully done with limited risk and expense.

Traditionally in Mexico, every media source virtually depends on the approval of government authorities. President Salinas's administration had allowed the opposition to exert a genuine balancing influence. This was considered, indeed, to be a democratically progressive step. So, typically, opposition newspapers, such as *La Jornada*, *El Tiempo*, *El Financiero*, *El Norte*, *Proceso*, *Nexos*, etc., constituted a real and tangible vehicle for expressions of dissent.

Nevertheless, many highly bureaucratized structures, such as Public Relations offices, had <u>not</u> realized the unbelievable range of possibilities that the Internet offered. But the PFLN-EZLN did, and used it extremely well. News of human rights violations went around the world without any obstruction. True or false, they had been sent. The National Human Rights Commission (CNDH) received as many as 142 allegations of human right abuses committed by the Mexican police and Army forces.

The CNDH judged that only two of those deserved to be fully investigated. As a matter of fact, however, all of them would be investigated. In one of the instances, claims regarding the disappearance of three men resulted in discovery that they have left their families behind and moved somewhere else. One of the men was

determined to be living on Veracruz state with a new woman. In the other case, alleged human remains that were presented as evidence of killings, turned out to be a collection of diverse animal bones mixed with human ones. The individual's death had occurred more than three years before the alleged murder.

In another case, an infamous picture circulated around the world, showing a Zapatista militia-man lying in blood, having a rifle-shape wooden stock beside him. Investigations would prove that the wooden rifle had been planted there in exchange for a real rifle by an unscrupulous reporter just in order to have a better picture. Nor even a word, however, would be said about the soldier kidnaped by hard core Zapatista elements, chain-sawed while still living, and whose only discovered remains were his spinal cord still attached to a skinless skull.

The fabrication of false abuses constituted another propaganda instrument that was widely utilized. NGO's claimed there were over 42 incidents. The Mexican Government, in an attempt to facilitate negotiations, brought to the area as many investigation teams as necessary to demonstrate that all were false. But the effect had been achieved. International organizations and NGO's appealed to people's inner sentiments and managed to create anxiety for people around the world. Reproduced letters were disseminated via fax. The only request by the organizers was to change the sender's address heading and deliver them back to Mexican public offices asking for a halt to the slaughter.

In the SDN building, over 650 almost identical letters in English, Japanese, Chinese, German, languages were received via fax, demanding a stop to the killing of Indians. In response, the SDN

Minister expanded the Human Rights office, established previously, in order to properly answer the original senders of those letters. It is hard to believe that responses actually achieved their purpose, since letters were only part of the EZLN propaganda program.

Accommodating Zapatista Rhetoric

After only four days of armed conflict, the situation in Chiapas changed radically. President Salinas declared a cease fire on 12 January and quickly ordered troops to halt. A General Amnesty Law to protect participants in both sides was put forth. With this unique gesture, the Mexican Government accomplished in a single stroke something distinctive and unusual in the world, as regards dealing with uprisings. Instead of just crushing it, as everyone expected in a classic Latin American insurgency, the Mexican Government sought a peaceful and civilized solution.

In response, realizing its military weakness, the EZLN initially accepted a cease of fire. The Army counter-offensive had been surgically quick, forcing the EZLN to disperse as they withdrew into the jungle. They were given no opportunity to become the anticipated, and very necessary, human rights martyrs required. Perhaps one of the most decisive factor in changing the direction of the uprising is the fact that the Army reacted with unexpected speed. In less than six days, about 12,000 troops deployed in Army battalion and regimental strength, and counterattacked in the area.[33] The EZLN presented a Petition Letter of 34 demands for the initiation of talks after a ceasefire. Many speculative assessments circulated then and now, some saying that the Army should had been allowed to conduct operations for a few days more.

Others expressed the view that it was only one more stroke of President Salinas's genius. The Zapatista leadership was given everything that it demanded, with two exceptions: the resignation of President Salinas and the total withdrawal of Army units from what the EZLN called "liberated" areas.[34]

At that point, the Zapatistas assumed an uncompromising stance with regard to Democratic reform. They believed that this was a position that the entire Mexican society would support, while at that time the EZLN remained very weak militarily. Neither side wanted to resume fighting, but Zapatista leaders did not accept anything as long as the two impossible demands remained unmet.

Eventually the Mexican Government found itself dealing with a dual structure. While some elements were conducting guerrilla activities, other underground elements continued to infiltrate, manipulate, and conduct political subversion, intensifying the creation of a shadow government and conducting rallies for funds, organizing food caravans, and conducting demonstrations against the government in Mexico City.

The PFLN-EZLN called for national passive civil resistance, a term new and fashionable to many Mexicans, but extremely applicable considering the economic situation. Terms such as civil disobedience, shadow government, and democratic society, circulated profusely among the Zapatista manifestos, and from there they quickly found their way into media reporting of all types. Mexican Government authorities did not know how to deal with this dual-activated campaign.[35]

Based on experiences in Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua, the PFLN-EZLN organizational skills and tactics had reached a point of

both high effectiveness and simplicity. Almost every communist principle and practice has been tracked to preceding liberation movements. This time, however, it would encounter a high degree of resistance.[36]

It is important to note that for many years Mexico had been known as the "Sanctuary" for any political refugee. Mexican Embassies used to be asked frequently for diplomatic protection. By doing so, more than 14,000 Chileans associated with the Allende regime wound up living in Mexico after 1972 and Allendes's fall. More than 200 ETA activists have been detected as living in Mexico as well.[37] Uncountable numbers of Uruguayans and Argentineans have moved to Mexico too, as a result of the internal conflicts in their countries.[38]

The Government Posture

At first, Marcos declared freedom for everybody as the Zapatista movement's main goal. While he demanded a transitional government, he had not revealed yet that it was to be a Socialist one. As the political phase of the conflict emerged, it became more evident that the Zapatistas were only planning to force a democratic opening, rather than take power themselves. Attempts to raise a shadow government did not obtain a solid response. Finally, after almost two years of negotiations, Marcos announced that the EZLN wanted to convert itself into a political party--but without turning over their weapons. He ultimately expressed his plan to take off his mask and fight for democratization, in the political arena.[39]

In January 1995, one year after the uprising, Marcos was conscious that the Zapatista movement was losing momentum. The Mexican

Government had offered to fulfill CCRI demands, but Marcos would not accept them. This was because acceptance represented accommodation with the enemy. President Zedillo, at this time, had just traveled to Miami, Florida for the Presidents' summit.

On 9 February 1995--perhaps as an information-gathering maneuver, perhaps as a propagandistic move--Marcos ordered his Zapatista groups to advance, bypassing the Amnesty Law's agreed confinement areas. In response, the next day Army troops advanced deep into the Lacandon Jungle, all the way up to Marcos' Headquarters in "Aguascalientes." Documents, a satellite dish, radio antennas, and a very expensive Immarsat telephone, computers, and a library with an incredible amount of foreign subversive books and manuals estimated at 16,000 volumes were found. (The Immarsat telephone recovered was the same one which Marcos had used to personally address listeners in a massive briefing in a Mexico City theater, thereby provoking strong reactions.) Also found were vast quantities of stored food, the same food brought by the "Caravan for the Peace" program. Also recovered was the national flag, in front of which Marcos and his followers had sung the Internationale, in October 1994.

A remarkable situation was discovered at the headquarters. A great number of foreign immigrants posing as Zapatistas, were living in the original--now displaced--peasants's houses. All of them, outsiders and foreigners, had been fed for over one year by the Zapatistas and used for propagandistic purposes in return. When troops arrived there, Red Cross representatives had dramatically gathered all of them inside the recently built "Solidaridad" hospital there, reportedly to protect them against abuses by the soldiers. That hospital, an 80-bed health

facility, strangely had been built in a community of only 200 houses. But nothing happened when the troops arrived and the people gathered by the Red Cross soon dispersed. The provocation had not worked, not even when the leading column's commander, Colonel Hugo Manterola Cedillo, was assassinated by sniper fire when entering town.

Government Counteraction

Following the advance, which basically resulted from the stubborn negativity of the PLFN-EZLN in coming to the negotiations table, there was a point at which the Mexican Government decided it was time to unmask the secret Zapatista leadership, and convince Mexicans that they were not who they pretended to be. Fernando Yanez Munoz--"German"--was detained on 21 October 1995 along with several other members of the CCRI. A whole communist organization was exposed, and public opinion was informed of the rebels' unpopular Maoist roots. This move was required because two major weapons shipments arranged by German, had been detected and stopped while still overseas.[40]

The Mexican Government released "German" after few days of confinement. By doing this, Mexican officials achieved two major goals. First, they demonstrated to the Zapatistas the government's knowledge of their secret roots and structure. Second, they demonstrated openly to the public opinion that the genuine intent for conducting peace talks was on the government side.

Another additional objective emerged out of this. Mexicans in general terms were disenchanted to discover that, after all, the Zapatista uprising had only been another bloody fight for political and

economic power, financed by "who knows who." The real provocateurs have yet to be found.

The issue, of course, has not ended. The Brazilian Leonardo Boff, recognized as Liberation Theology's most noted specialist, came to Mexico in March 1996 to reinforce the Zapatistas eroded movement. His attacks were directed toward many issues, to include the Pope, the Government, and the Mexican Right. He was brought into Mexico by no open host.

A Mexican specialist made the following observation. "In the first days of November 1995 reports of an alleged coup d'etat by the Mexican Army came out of a New York Dow Jones organization. It provoked the formal beginning of a financial crisis that still persists. Its objectives were not only to affect Mexican economic stability, but to harm the credibility of one of the principal institutions supporting political transition."[41] The possibility of an Army coup could not be farther from reality, as anyone who has seen the Army from the inside would testify. Institutionally, the senior military leadership, as well as the field grade officers, junior officers, and troops have long abandoned the perspective of a military coup. There is a sense of pride in having left far behind those "underdeveloped" ideas.

It seems, in light of the above discussions, as if the PFLN-EZLN, or the associated front organizations, were trying to reorient the movement's direction. The Mexican people did not vote on 15 August 1994 for a specific political party, but for peace and stability. There will be, certainly, other attempts in the future, and the long process of building a more open system lies ahead. The Zapatistas have declared publicly their will to convert their movement into a political force.

Presumably, radical leftist groups will join in efforts to reach this goal, and this may lead to future troubles before resolution is reached.

As Marcos commented to German: "What is decisive in war, is not armed confrontation, but the policy that plays in the confrontation itself. The EZLN does not need firearms, but they do need to possess them."[42]

Endnotes

1. Excelsior, 1 November 1994.

2. Luis Pazos, Por Oue Chiapas ?, (Mexico City: Ingramex, 1994), 42.

3. Author's personal interview during the visit of a high ranking foreign official, conducted in the vicinity of Rancho Nuevo military facilities, on 4 November 1994.

4. Author's personal interview with a Salvadorian officer conducted in November 1995.

5. Author's personal interview with a East European officer conducted on 8 April 1996. See also the videotaped documentary broadcast on CBS Television News program, "60 Minutes," 27 February 1994.

6. La Jornada, 7 February 1995.

7. Proceso, 28 February 1995.

8. SDN Memorias, 1995.

9. Carlos Tello Macias, La Rebelion de las Canadas, ed. Cal y Arena, (Mexico City: Cal y Arena, 1995), citing an interview with Cuba's delegate for the Americas, Commander Manuel Pineiro, conducted on January 1995.

10. SDN Memorias, 1995.

11. Author's personal interview with a Guatemalan military officer, conducted in Mexico City, March 1994.

12. SDN, Memorias, 1995.

13. Jorge Fernandez Menendez, Desestabilizacion, ed. Rayuela, (Mexico City: Rayuela, 1966), 79.

14. Jorge Fernandez Menendez, "Reasons," El Financiero, 30 March 1995, (NEED PAGE NUMBER).

15. Ibid.

16. Jorge Fernandez Menendez, "Reasons," El Financiero, 10 April 1995.

17. Cited in Proceso, 7 June 1993.

18. Cited in Tiempo (Mexico City), 4 June 1993. Reportedly, the priest J. Romo, one of the clergymen attached to San Cristobal Diocese, visited the area of Corralchen trying to determine how much EZLN structure had been discovered by the military. However, he was not allowed to enter the area. Later on, he reportedly incited the Indians

to set fire to their own houses and declare that damages had been inflicted by military personnel searching for guerrillas.

19. Diaz, La Rebelion de las Canadas, 129.

20. Pazos, Por Que Chiapas ?, 18-19.

21. Mario Menendez Rodriguez, Por Esto !, 7 January 1994.

22. SDN, Memorias, 1994.

23. See Department of the Army, Human Factor Considerations of Underground in Insurgencies, Department of the Army Pamphlet 550-104, (Washington, D.C., September 1966), 7.

24. Interview with Subcommander Marcos by TV Univision News, Channel 17, (Miami Florida), 1700, 25 March 1996.

25. Stephen Wager and Donald Schutz, Awakening of the Zapatistas, (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 30 December 1994), 21.

26. Wager and Schutz, Awakening of the Zapatistas, 42.

27. Menendez, Desestabilizacion, 41.

28. Ibid., 92

29. Wager and Schutz, Awakening of the Zapatistas, 27.

30. Raul Benitez Manaut, "El Desafio de las Guerrillas",. Nueva Sociedad, Vol. 130 (March-April 1994), 24-26.

31. Department of the Army, Human Factors Considerations, 8.

32. Ibid., 18.

33. Author's interview with a foreign military attache in Ejido "Aguascalientes," Chiapas, Mexico, 13 February 1995.

34. Sergio Ramirez, "Hechos paso a paso," Epoca, 10 January 1994, 18-19.

35. Luis Hernandez Navarro, The New Mayan War, NACLA Report on the Americas, Vol 27, No. 5, (March-April, 1994), 6.

36. Department of the Army, Human Factors Consideration, 17.

37. SDN, Memorias, 1993.

38. Author's interview with a Chilean officer conducted in Mexico, November 1995.

39. Raymundo Riva Palacio, "La apuesta del EZLN," El Financiero, 26 January 1994; and Interview with Subcommander Marcos, TV Univision News, Miami, Florida, 25 March 1996.

40. Jorge Fernandez Menendez, "Reasons," El Financiero, 28 October 1995.

41. Macias, Rebellion of the Canadas, 72. Reportedly, Marcos sent a letter to his ostensible superior, Commander German, describing the series of failures that resulted into the Corralchen skirmish.

42. Ibid.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS

This thesis, while recognizing that a host of factors has shaped developments leading up to the Chiapas uprising and its aftermath, has deliberately avoided detailed discussions of internal political activities related to the Chiapas troubles, as well as the many economic and international issues that have also played a role. Rather, the thesis has been written with a deliberate focus on pertinent social-cultural issues, with a particular emphasis on the nature of the insurgency and its antecedents, military actions associated with the rebellion, and the nature of the Mexican Government's response to events as they unfolded.

The impact of the Zapatista uprising has, of course, been felt in fields of endeavor far beyond the purely military, and as a consequence has shaped the national "dynamic." But this dynamic is continuously evolving as this is written, and there is no way to solidly predict its final outcome. Analysts and specialists can only identify likely future scenarios. While the Zapatista rebellion has generated many problems for the country, not every consequence has been a negative one. Indeed, something "true" and intrinsically positive has emerged as well, and Mexico clearly is not going to be the same in the wake of the Zapatista uprising.

As this thesis has discussed, the PFLN-EZLN was very careful in its effort to hide its origins and its linkages to the guerrilla movements of 1970s. This is because the Zapatista leadership recognized that in no way was it advisable for them to reveal to the public that they were the remnants and heirs of an unpopular and hated Communist struggle from past decades. Marcos has always been cautious in describing EZLN goals and in identifying for what the EZLN was fighting: that is, as the author has set out to demonstrate above, fighting for "The Dictatorship of the Proletariat." After all the manipulation and distortion is removed, what is revealed is a post-Cold War communist guerrilla movement repackaged for a new world.

The PFLN-EZLN has basically been fighting for the "legitimacy" of its declared and demonstrated positions in opposition to the Mexican Government. If it is true that the EZLN uprising opened a gap in the political establishment of Mexico, this gap has to be mended not by military and police actions, but by peaceful means. The Zapatista rebellion caused Mexicans and Mexican society to tremble. It exposed the inner conditions of the country. But at the same time it divided the consciences of Mexicans, disrupted the national economy, accentuated political violence, and destabilized the country in other ways.

Perhaps one of the fundamental reasons why the Mexican Army presented a solid block against a forceful movement capable of so strongly weakening Mexican institutions, is that the military had traditionally remained discrete, austere, and devoted to its work of preserving national security. That is the most distinctive feature of the Mexican armed forces, and these characteristics have been interpreted wrongly as "secrecy" by outsiders.

The Mexican military reacted to events in Chiapas in strict accord with the roles and missions set out in Article 86 of the Army's organic law. This provision stipulates that the Army not only has the mission of defending the country from foreign invaders, but also of protecting Mexico from internal subversive destabilization such as that encountered in the current struggle in Chiapas.

The *Unconventional Warfare* manual of Mexican origin and restricted character, gave the Army's Officer corps a profound understanding of the "Communist Threat," even after the end of the Cold War. This was a comprehension that many other sectors of Mexican society simply did not, or could not understand. The military felt that they had a mission to accomplish. In the Mexican military, there is no room for empty rhetoric.

On the eve of the 1990s, doctrine and concepts related to national security remained clear and unchanged within military institutions, while other societal sectors debated such topics as the implications of the openness of neoliberalism in economic integration. The Mexican military did its mandated task of preserving the stability and security of national institutions.

In Mexico, people have long learned from adversity, from scarcity, and from their own faults and errors. Mexicans like to consider their problems as solely their own, founding this posture on "noninterventionism" and "self-determination." The Zapatista rebellion represented a harsh awakening for Mexican pride. But as many people in the country are pleased to hear and to say: *There is nothing like Mexico. The country is greater than its own problems.*

GLOSSARY

Clandestine Revolutionary Independence Committee (Comite Clandestino Revolucionario Independiente--CCRI): Top national-level, clandestine Marxist-Leninist organization responsible for organizing and controlling subordinate radical factions which strive to provoke armed revolution in Mexico. One of the factions is precisely the *Ejercito Zapatista de Liberacion Nacional--the EZLN*. The EZLN was designated to initiate fighting in Mexico's Southern portion, involving the States of Chiapas, Tabasco, and Oaxaca in coordination with the "Paracentral Front" and the "North Front".

Clandestine Revolutionary Workers Union of the People--procup, Party of the Poor--pdlp, and National Revolutionary Civic Association--acnr (Partido Revolucionario Obrero Clandestino Union Del Pueblo--procup, Partido De Los Pobres--pdlp, and Asociacion Civica Nacional Revolucionaria--ACNR): These are radical leftist organizations which originated mainly within the State of Guerrero, Mexico. They were formed by elements trained presumably in Cuba and the former Soviet Union. They were under command of Genaro Vazquez Rojas, Lucio Cabanas, and others in the early 1970's. This uprising represented an element of major concern to the government of Mexico at that time. More and more unconfirmed reports indicate that the remnants of these earlier disrupted organization are currently involved with the EZLN.

Emiliano Zapata National Independent Peasant Alliance (Alianza Nacional Campesina Independiente Emiliano Zapata--ANCIEZ): One of the most radical organizations in the Chiapas region. It is formed mainly by the militiamen/farmers of the EZLN within rural areas of the state. Under this name, numerous covert activities prior to the armed EZLN actions of 1 January 1994 were conducted.

Emiliano Zapata Peasant Organization (Organizacion Campesina Emiliano Zapata--OCEZ): OCEZ is an Indigenous farmers organization located around in the highlands of Chiapas. It includes in its membership the most predominant tribes in Chiapas to include such groups as the Tzotziles, Tzetzales, Tojolabales tribes. This organization, furthermore, may support the EZLN.

Federal Government of Mexico (GOM): Constitutionally established government of the Mexican Republic, with major agencies and organizations located in Mexico City. At the time of the

Zapatista uprising, the Mexican head of state was President Carlos Salinas de Gortari, ruling under a term of six years that ended on 1 December 1995. He was succeeded by President Ernesto Zedillo.

Liberation Theology (Teologia De La Liberacion): A relatively new dogmatic posture adopted by certain sectors and priests of the Roman Catholic Church, which states that human beings have the right to pursue and to fight for better living conditions. This may be accomplished even by overthrowing governments not capable providing adequate solutions, whether because of official corruption, manifest incompetence, or just due to economic conditions.

Ministry of Internal Affairs (Secretaria De Gobernacion--SG): The SG is a Federal organ of Executive Power responsible for conducting internal politics. It is constitutionally in charge of internal affairs and in general terms it constitutes two Vice-Secretariats and the National Security Institute.

National Defense Ministry (Secretaria De La Defensa Nacional--SDN): The SDN is the Federal organ under Executive Power that is responsible for military affairs as well as national security and national defense. The national security responsibilities are carried out in coordination with the Ministry of the Interior.

National Indigenous Institute (Instituto Nacional Indigenista--INDI): A para-governmental organization designed and created in the 1970's by executive order under former President Luis Echeverria Alvarez to protect and to represent the rights and territorial possessions of indigenous communities in the entire country. INDI also was created to provide a high-level legal advocacy tool for indigenous interests. In some respects, it has been commonly understood that INDI has failed to achieve its objectives of protecting and representing them adequately.

National Security Institute (Consejo-instituto De Seguridad Nacional--CISEN): CISEN was established in a semi-independent manner, and is officially in charge of coordinating at the national level all issues affecting National Security. These range from narcotrafficking to subversion. (Under a recent Mexican Congress proposal, CISEN is to be divided into two different organizations).

National Union of Autonomus Regional Peasant Organizations (Union Nacional De Organizaciones Regionales Campesinas Autonomas--UNORCA): An independent agricultural organization basically formed by farmers, that is national level in scope through its various regional associations and communities. It is not sympathetic to the federal government, and represents an increasing anti-government force.

Rural Association of Collective Interests (Asociacion Rural De Interes Colectivo--ARIC): The ARIC is a recently created rural

organization composed of farmers and peasants in Chiapas. It is supposedly tied to the EZLN, but it has managed to remained non-associated openly with the Zapatistas.

State Government/chiapas Government: Constitutional Government of the southern state of Chiapas, Mexico. At the time of the rebellion it was headed by Attorney Patrocinio Gonzalez Blanco, who under special local Congressional authorization and by special request of President Salinas, left the office to act as Secretary of Interior Affairs {*Secretaria de Gobernacion*}. Thereafter, a temporary governor was designated to take charge of the State government in the city of Tuxtla Gutierrez, Chiapas.

23 September Communist League (Liga Comunista 23 De Septiembre--LC23): An extreme radical cell organized during the early 1970's with strong financial and doctrinal Marxist-Leninist support. It constituted a destabilizing factor within Mexico during the decade of the 1970's. After their violent terrorist actions were strongly confronted by the government, its members were eradicated, entered prison as criminals, or simply vanished.

United Front for Urban Protection (Frente Unico De Proteccion Ciudadana): This is a citizen-based organization created by the temporary governor of the State of Chiapas and San Cristobal de las Casas in February 1994. It was created in response to the emerging power and influence of diverse extremist indigenous organizations in Chiapas State including, of course, the EZLN.

Zapatista National Liberation Army (Ejercito Zapatista De Liberacion Nacional--EZLN): An armed group formed by a mixture of diverse indigenous organizations basically in Chiapas State. It was secretly created to confront both State and Federal Governments, and supposedly aimed at installing "the rule of the people" over the entire country. This politically-based organization--formed and prepared over a long time--undertook armed conflict on 1 January 1994 to attain its goals.

Selected Bibliography

Notes on Sources

From a Mexican military standpoint, the unconventional warfare publication *Manual de Guerra Irregular* states accurately in one of its initial passages that unconventional warfare--even after the Cold War had become a central focus for many Western military establishments--still required knowledgeable attention from real specialists. The above-mentioned manual indicates that some doctrinal tenets developed for conventional military operations or regional conflicts, are not necessarily responsive to irregular conflict. Assessment problems sometimes arise in evaluating unconventional conflict, especially when writers coming from assorted nationalities, having varying objectives, and with diverse backgrounds, have tried to address the topic. There has sometimes been a tendency to make such conflicts more passionate matters than is reasonable, with cooler judgements clouded by individual purposes and perspectives.

So, suddenly, with the uprising of the Zapatistas, every novice military writer became a studious strategist or an experienced tactician in regard of the operations conducted in Mexico's southeastern state of Chiapas. A considerable amount of related reports, analyses, and studies have been published thus far. Some of these publications and reports are accurate and precise, reflecting the seriousness and professionalism of their authors.

Others, however, have a distorted--and sometimes even a manipulative--character when compared to the real cause and effect of the Zapatista uprising.

One of the issues that most contributed to creating an atmosphere of distortion is the fact that for the very first time on a massive scale, news was being sent via computer in the form of "e-mail" press releases, decrees, news group discussions, archived document collections, and in other formats throughout the world. In many cases, these materials bypassed the traditional sources of print and broadcast media, which while having their own perspectives, nevertheless must receive some critical review before publication. Thus, the wholesale distribution of "unilateral information", reflecting highly politicized agendas and alternative versions of the truth, were distributed under a mask of compassionate concern or angry accusation. On the other, hand, enormously valuable materials are distributed in this way as well. For the researcher, the difficulty lies in distinguishing what is accurate and valuable, and what is not. The bibliographic entries below constitute those published works that the author found most valuable in further developing the perspectives of the Chiapas conflict presented in this thesis. They have been used to broaden and shape the author's own, direct personal experience in the Mexican Army and in dealing with past and more recent Mexican insurgency problems.

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