

FACTS BEHIND TERRORISM

FALN set for terrorist action in U.S., Puerto Rico

Sources in the law enforcement community have confirmed that information indicating major actions by the Fuerzas Armadas de Liberacion Nacional (FALN) in both the continental United States and Puerto Rico is in the possession of federal and local authorities. In the weeks following the escape of FALN member William Morales from Bellevue Hospital's security ward, several suspected and wanted members of the FALN have reappeared in the New York metropolitan area. At the same time, it is suspected that Carlos Alberto Torres, who is a leader of the FALN on the FBI's Ten Most Wanted list, was recently sighted in the area of Seattle, Washington where the National Lawyers Guild and the American Friends Service Committee have conducted a massive exchange program for legal support and training between terrorist networks in the United States and Puerto Rico.

The immediate focus for such a terrorist activation is the upcoming Pan American games, which will take place in San Juan in late July. Already threats against the games, which include teams from the U.S., Canada, Mexico and all of Latin America, have been reported. Using the opportunity of having thousands of visitors to Puerto Rico for the games, the "Committee to Free the Five" and the Puerto Rican Socialist Party (PSP) have promised to stage a mass protest over the flying of the American flag. The Committee to

Free the Five, which is protesting the incarceration of the five Puerto Rican nationalists who staged an armed assault on the House of Representatives in the late 1940s, includes many members of the FALN support networks as well as several suspected soldiers of the terrorist operation itself.

The reported appearance of Carlos Alberto Torres in the Seattle area provides a key to the logistical preparations behind the threatened wave of terrorism. Seattle is an intersection point in the operations of the American Friends Service Committee, the Episcopal Church and the National Lawyers Guild, which have all played a role in sustaining and protecting the terrorist operations of the FALN, the George Jackson Brigade, which operates primarily in Washington State and Oregon, and a Seattle-based network of radical Palestinians connected to lawyer Abdeen Jabara in Detroit.

Informed sources report that the National Lawyers Guild/AFSC project was in fact recruiting terrorists for the FALN. A key figure in this operation is NLG attorney Michael Withey. In 1977, Withey was subpoenaed to appear before a federal grand jury investigating the George Jackson Brigade after he made several contacts with police concerning his defense of a George Jackson Brigade terrorist. Withey indicated advance knowledge of a Brigade operation before the arrest of his "client" had been confirmed.

Withey's contact with the ter-

rorist networks dates back at least to 1975 when he headed the National Lawyers Guild delegation to Puerto Rico to study repression of civil liberties on the island. Along with Withey on the team was Mara Siegel, who was later the lawyer for the several witnesses subpoenaed to appear before a federal grand jury in Chicago on the FALN. Siegel was also one of the attorneys for Lolita Lebron, one of the "Five" nationalists who attempted to assassinate President Harry Truman, and for the "Committee to Defend the Five," which operates in New York and Chicago.

Law enforcement officials connected to the investigation of the FALN are concerned that a major center of the operation—the Hispanic Commission of the Episcopal Church—has succeeded in evading investigators under the cover of "religious freedom."

Carlos Alberto Torres and Oscar Lopez Rivera, two of the FALN terrorists on the FBI's most wanted list were both paid members of the Hispanic commission.

The FALN is one connection which could lead to significant breaks in investigation of international terrorism. It has been revealed that the name of Helene Ellenbogen, another member of the Seattle National Lawyers Guild terrorist team, has been found in the address book of a Baader-Meinhof terrorist recently apprehended in West Germany.

—Michele Steinberg