

# The EZLN's terrorism: an eyewitness account

by Hugo López Ochoa

The self-dubbed insurrectionary movement known as the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) is neither indigenous, nor popular, much less Mexican. It is one of the most criminal narco-terrorist movements in history, modeled on Shining Path of Peru and Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge of Cambodia.

It is ironic that the Zapatistas and their international supporters have denounced supposed violations of their human rights by the Mexican Army. The truth is that the EZLN has systematically employed the most barbaric tortures and assassinations; has carried out more than 1,600 illegal land invasions; has terrorized and forced off their lands more than 36,000 Chiapans; and has caused more than \$500 million in material damage. The EZLN openly advocates a return to the bloodiest practices of the Aztecs and Mayans and seeks to impose by force a literally bestial view of man.

This reporter was able to confirm this all first hand, in recent trips to the state of Chiapas, and in private conversations and interviews with some of the victims of these practices. In the following, we document our charges, and present the direct testimony and evidence that shows that the EZLN's leaders should be tried for crimes against humanity in accord with the Nuremberg code.

*EIR* talked with indigenous Indians, collective farmers, small property owners, priests, and businessmen, all of whom stand ready to give witness before any national or international court.

## Demonic ideology

The criminal nature of the EZLN begins with its ritual ceremonies, which are a Wagnerian parody of pre-Columbian Aztec and Mayan cult rituals, characterized by the practice of mass human sacrifice.

On the eleventh anniversary of the EZLN, according to the Zapatista mouthpiece *La Jornada*, in October 1994, Rafael Sebastian Guillen Santiago, a.k.a. "Subcomandante Marcos," presided over a ceremony where a supposed Indian council handed him the seven symbols of leadership, the last of which was a cup of blood. *La Jornada* does not specify in its coverage whether the blood was human or animal, nor if "Marcos" drank it or not. Hundreds of EZLN militants lined

up in the shape of a snail, and Marcos reviewed the ranks, lighting the torches of each in turn. The snail is the symbol of Tlacaetl, the Aztec priest who initiated the demonic practice of human sacrifice. The ceremony was, of course, held in the dead of night in the Lacandón jungle.

As a Chiapan producer reveals in his interview below, the first measures taken by the EZLN and its various front groups, such as the CEOIC, the Anciez, the OPEZ, etc. in the "autonomous" zones of the Chiapan highlands, were to shut down the schools and hospitals, and expel the teachers and doctors. These were also the first measures taken by Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge, and by the Shining Path of Peru and Rwandan Patriotic Front in Rwanda in the areas they controlled. Teachers and doctors, as agents of western culture, were declared "enemies of the people" under a radical communist regime. "The people" would be reeducated to serve as slaves, through the terror methods described below.

## Demonic practices

On Feb. 20, 1995, Jorge Constantino Kanter, president of the Belisario Domínguez Regional Union of Rural Property Owners, denounced the murder of his relative Gustavo Mar Kanter by the EZLN, in Tumbala, Chiapas. Kanter maintained that when they went to collect Gustavo's body, they found that his lower extremities had been ripped from his trunk by two cars, and he had been allowed to bleed to death (*La Jornada*, Feb. 20, 1995).

Gustavo Mar Kanter was kidnapped on Feb. 6, one day after Jorge Constantino had issued a call before the national news media for the Army to intervene in Chiapas to stop the civil war. Mar Kanter's call had already sparked a national outcry; President Ernesto Zedillo announced the Army's deployment into Chiapas on Feb. 9.

The revival of the centuries-old practice of quartering in the killing of Gustavo Mar is but one variant in the EZLN's arsenal of tortures, Domingo Encino Jiménez, a collective farmer, told *EIR* during the hunger strike of 120 cattlemen and farmers from the Chiapan Highlands, which they carried out in Mexico City during October-November 1994 to protest the EZLN's vandalism.

December 1992: Morelia collective farm, near the town of Altamirano. The Zapatista organization later to become the EZLN is Anciez (Emiliano Zapata National Peasant Association). Anciez harasses the PRI members of the farm to force them to either leave or join their terrorist ranks. During a drinking bout, Mariano Encino Jiménez (brother of Domingo and a PRI member) gets into a heated argument with Anciez member Francisco. The argument turns to blows and Mariano ends up killing Francisco with a machete. The next day, after rousing from his drunken stupor, Mariano hands himself in to the local authorities.

The Zapatistas organize a demonstration to demand that the authorities hand over Mariano to them, or they will storm



*The cathedral of San Cristóbal de las Casas, seat of Bishop Samuel Ruiz. Graffiti on the adjoining wall (r.) proclaim, "Long Live the EZLN, Democracy and Justice."*

the prison. The mayor, Amilcar Pinto Kanter, is a Zapatista and a member of the collective leadership of the EZLN. Pinto Kanter hands Mariano over, tied hand and foot, to the Anciez.

For the next three days, Mariano is tortured. His teeth are pulled out, one by one. They put out his eyes. They cut off his ears. They cut out his tongue. They cut off his testicles. On the third day of this, Mariano dies.

The Anciez members did not personally engage in the torture. Rather, they forced Indian members of the PRI, one by one, to commit these bestial acts with hammer and chisel. *EIR* interviewed one of these Indians, whose name we withhold, who was forced to commit these inhuman acts.

According to Domingo Encino, he has submitted a complaint to the Attorney General of the state of Chiapas against the following members of Anciez-EZLN for this horrible crime against his brother: Francisco Luna Santis, Miguel Pérez López, Leonardo López Santis, Jesús Santis Vazquez, Marcelo López Gómez, Emilio Santis Pérez, Sebastián Santis García, Estanislao Luna Santis, and Mario Pérez Luna.

According to the cattlemen of the Highlands, there has been at least one other such case of torture, in 1993, when a dissident was set afire before he died of his tortures.

The method of forcing the friends of the victim to carry out the torture is for the purpose of humiliating them and destroying their identities, eradicating any sense of moral authority so that they can be more easily recruited to the EZLN ranks. This is the method used by Shining Path, according to the testimony of hundreds of survivors from the

regions once dominated by Shining Path in Peru. This is not some sort of natural savagery on the part of Chiapan Indians. Rather, these are methods that were refined at London's Tavistock Institute and copied from the methods of the Communist Chinese and Koreans, among others, who brainwashed U. S. prisoners of war.

Another cruel case was denounced by Army Division General Miguel Angel Godínez Bravo, commander of the VII Military Region, in a letter to Bishop Samuel Ruiz on March 31, 1993, published in the magazine *Impacto* No. 2333 on Nov. 17, 1994.

General Godínez relates how, on March 20, 1993, officers Marco Antonio Romero Villalba and Porfirio Millán Pimentel "disappeared" in San Isidro El Ocotal. Their bodies were discovered a week later. The general told how they had been literally roasted to death. "They were burned for eight days, and then moved to another pit whose sides and bottom . . . were lined with cowchips, to conserve the heat I suppose, and they continued to burn them."

Cattlemen from the region interviewed by *EIR* told how the officers had been mutilated by a chainsaw before being incinerated.

At the time, those believed responsible for this crime were protected by the Fray Bartolomé de las Casas Center for Human Rights, run by priests Pablo Romo Sedano and Gonzalo Ituarte Verduzco. Both are lieutenants of Bishop Samuel Ruiz. They mobilized their ranks to pressure the Attorney General's office, and launched a human rights propaganda campaign both nationally and internationally to prevent the criminals from being tried.

In his letter to Bishop Ruiz, General Godínez refers to this "sad and disappointing spectacle," and writes: "I was there . . . when an investigator from the Attorney General's office confirmed this, and I personally saw and heard an individual named Erasmo González López cynically describe how they had been burned, even telling how they had placed them on the pyre; if this doesn't move you, I am awed by your hardness."

Members of the EZLN directorate, according to information published in the magazine *Impacto* and confirmed by *EIR* through the testimony of cattlemen who knew them, are Gumaro Trujillo Fritz, Javier Trujillo Fritz, and Hugo Trujillo Fritz, all secretaries of Samuel Ruiz's diocese.

### Robbery and recruitment by terror

Like many others, "Jaime" (whose full name we withhold for security reasons) personally experienced the EZLN's "recruitment" methods: "In January [1994], you could still enter [the area controlled by the EZLN], but you arrived in the afternoon and they showed up at nightfall to tell you, 'Okay, either you join us or you get out of here.' And if you didn't, they gave you a beating, or tied you up, or killed you.

"Those who didn't join them had to flee, and had to be careful how they escaped, because if they left by road they would be seized.

"From that time onward, we could no longer enter our ranch. . . . We had fat pigs, lambs, calves, cattle. . . . When we returned, in February-March, they had taken everything. They left empty ranches behind. They carried off an average 350 cows. It was a small property. We each had some 50 hectares, others 60, others 40."

"We were all working men," relates Roberto Trujillo Trujillo. "We dedicated ourselves to the land, we had good coffee crops, but every time they began to organize . . . they stopped working, stopped cultivating the land, stopped clearing the coffee fields, they abandoned everything completely and only dedicated themselves to training, nothing more. . . . They had their animals, but they sold them and turned that money into buying weapons. And everything was gone.

"They seized everything, all the land, the houses. There, in the presence of the owner, they would ask you if you wanted to join them, and if not they would tell you to go to hell, because they owned everything now.

"So, what could one do? Nothing more than cross one's arms and withdraw. . . . When we left, we had nothing more than the shirts on our backs, the same with our families. We weren't even allowed to take a glass with us, imagine! But what could we do? We had to leave and they kept everything. . . . You can't just join them and go out and rob your neigh-



*Zapatista "justice": This very elderly shopkeeper was assassinated by the EZLN for refusing to join them. His 12-year-old grandson (inset), who witnessed the crime, escaped in a hail of bullets. The photos were provided to *EIR* by Altamirano cattlemen.*

bors. I think that is wrong.”

“Pedro,” a collective farmer and cattle raiser from the town of Ocosingo, told *EIR* how he managed to avoid recruitment to the EZLN:

“On Jan. 3, I was there on my ranch, when some 100 armed individuals showed up. I was rounding up the cattle. They tied me up, they tied up my son. They destroyed the doors of the houses. . . . Some 20 of them held our women at gunpoint. . . . They said they wanted to talk with my wife and I. Then I told them, ‘Look, there’s another ranch up the road where my brothers are. It’s better if we go there and we all talk together.’ We’ll see, they said.

“When I arrived, everyone was already tied up. Then they began to tell us their rules. As we had little cattle, we had to give them 20%. They wanted our sons to begin to train, ‘and those of you who are too old can bring food to the camps.’

“We gave them four cows. . . . The people who opposed them had already left. . . . Only pure Zapatistas remained. They told us, ‘We aren’t going to do anything to you, but you have to join with us.’

“They left. But after about five days they came back again, to find out what we had decided.

“We told them okay, but when they left we got a small airplane to get the little ones out of there. . . . We five brothers remained . . . and then, at night, we escaped by river and arrived in Comitán.

“Afterwards, when we returned, people who had been my friends, were now Zapatistas. They sold all their cattle to buy weapons. They robbed everything from us. They left us with nothing.”

## Foreigners

There is a great deal of testimony from the people of the Chiapan Highlands confirming that the EZLN is largely made up of foreigners. Here we present two eyewitness accounts gathered by *EIR* from that area:

“Jaime,” a farmer from the township of Ocosingo, told *EIR* how, when the narco-terrorists stopped him and stole his truck on Dec. 31, 1993 on the collective farm of Guadalupe Tepeyac, he realized that the majority “were not from the farm but were foreigners. . . . A few were from the farm . . . but those who were armed with machine guns and other sophisticated weapons were foreigners. . . . They had many foreigners among them.”

“Pancho,” a collective farmer from Guadalupe Victoria, township of Altamirano, who participated in the early recruitment meetings to the EZLN organized by the “catechists” of Bishop Samuel Ruiz, added: “Later, people from El Salvador, from Guatemala, from elsewhere, began to arrive. They came to Guadalupe Victoria, we saw them.

“They held their meetings at the church. They held their meetings in the houses of Armando Jiménez Aguilar, of José Trinidad Cruz Vázquez, of Pedro Cruz Cruz, of Carmelino

## The EZLN is on the move in Chiapas



García Morales, who were the catechists, they totally ran the situation.

“Later . . . they sent the same kids from Guatemala to buy their uniforms, their red neckerchiefs.

“On the last day of December, at five in the afternoon, I saw some ten with their military uniforms at Pedro Cruz’s house. They all left his house with weapons, with their bags of tortillas. . . . They went to the El Porvenir ranch . . . where they gathered to stage their takeover of the municipal seat of Altamirano, which was on Jan. 1.

“On Jan. 1 . . . more strangers arrived . . . some tall, some fair, some dark, they went directly to Armando Jiménez Aguilar’s house because they had the communications center there. They were in touch with Guadalupe Victoria, San Francisco, Delicias Pachan, San Antonio La Esperanza, San Miguel Tzipic, Belisario Domínguez, El Triunfo, San Marcos, La Florida, Puebal, these were the collective farms that were involved in the conflict, which are all in Altamirano township.”

## Comandante Samuel and his catechists

“Pancho,” the farmer from Guadalupe Victoria, in the township of Altamirano, told *EIR* how he learned that Samuel Ruiz was EZLN’s commander:

“We know perfectly well how the problem came about . . . directly through organizations of priests, of Marists,

with the catechists, because they directly trained in a course at the Castalia de Comitán. . . . They were handled by Bishop Samuel Ruiz, because he went twice to Guadalupe Victoria where meetings were held to inform us that all the Indians were preparing to rise up in arms.

"That organization was in preparation for more than 20 years. We realized this . . . because when they began to organize we also went.

"First they taught us the Gospel, but later they weren't teaching us the Gospel so much as that now we were a political organization.

"Later still they began the training, from eight at night until two in the morning."

Father Luis Beltrán Mijangos, a Catholic priest from San Cristóbal de las Casas, was interviewed by *EIR* on Sept. 8, 1994. He explained how Bishop Ruiz created this network of narco-terrorist "catechists." He described how, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, Ruiz shut down the seminary in San Cristóbal de las Casas, and pressured, expelled, or forced all the priests who opposed him to leave. Today, all the churches of San Cristóbal are controlled by followers of Samuel Ruiz.

The only priest opposing him whom Ruiz was unable to expel is Father Beltrán. Asked by *EIR* what Ruiz has to do with the EZLN, Father Beltrán responded:

"He is the commander! . . . And I say this because of all the actions he has carried out since 1967, when he began to ideologize all the catechists. I have written proof, since 1978, to demonstrate the kind of ideology he was spreading."

The radical priests around Samuel Ruiz today are:

Hervé Camier Duploux (French).

Heriberto Cruz Vera, from Torreón, now in Tila.

Jorge Barón Torres (Argentine).

Ramón Castillo Aguilar, from Amatenango del Valle.

Joel Padrón González (commander).

Eugenio Alvarez Figueroa, from Comitán, now in San Cristóbal.

Mauricio Olvera, from Las Margaritas.

Rogelio Victoria, from Michoacán, now in Frutis.

Eduardo I. García Ruiz (Salvadoran).

Gonzalo Ituarte Verdusco

Pablo Romo Sedano

On Jan. 1, 1994, according to the interview with *EIR*, Beltrán was nearly assassinated by EZLN thugs who, after seizing and burning down the mayor's offices, deployed a death squad to the cathedral at the hour in which Father Beltrán was supposed to be there. However, acting on a hunch, he did not go to the cathedral that day, despite repeated telephone calls insisting that he attend. The priest who went in his place was about to be killed when one of the Zapatista assassins shouted, "It's not him, it's not him."

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## Interview: Jorge Constantino Kanter

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# Government must act against Zapatistas

*The president of the Belisario Domínguez Regional Union of Rural Property Owners of Altamirano, Chiapas, Kanter headed the growers' hunger strike in Mexico City. His property is 55 hectares in the township of Altamirano, part of a joint property of 165 hectares held among three brothers, of which 15 hectares are for coffee, and the rest is pasturage for cattle. Because of the armed conflict, he told EIR, they*

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## The economic toll

The state of Chiapas has a total population of 3.5 million, of whom 28% are of Indian origin and 8% speak no Spanish. Of the state's economically active population, 58.3% is employed in agriculture, and the main productive activities generating jobs and income are in coffee, corn, beef cattle, bananas, and beans.

The state is one of the country's principal sources of energy, both in terms of oil and in hydraulic and hydroelectric resources.

Before Feb. 9, when President Ernesto Zedillo deployed the Armed Forces into Chiapas to dislodge the EZLN from the "free zone" granted them by the Carlos Salinas de Gortari government, Chiapas had suffered severe economic disruption because of the war declared by the Zapatistas on Jan. 1, 1994. Until the monetary crisis of 1994, losses incurred because of the Zapatista insurgency in Chiapas equaled more than \$500 million, equivalent to the state's entire gross product in 1988.

According to local journalistic sources, and according to information gathered firsthand, the statistics were the following:

Until Feb. 9, 1995, some 36,000 families were displaced from their homes as a result of the EZLN's "liberated territories," and more than 1,600 land invasions outside those territories.

More than 120,000 hectares of land have been invaded by Zapatistas and their sympathizers. The last 50,000