

win national elections. The Cuban delegation, led by Communist Party Central Committee member Abel Prieto, argued that the Forum must be strengthened, to confront the “deepening geopolitical crisis,” and U.S. success in rebuilding hemispheric relations. Gains had been made, they argued, calculating that between the Fourth and Fifth Plenaries, the Forum had elected 291 deputies, 57 senators, 10 governors, hundreds of mayors, and obtained 29 million votes, or 24.01%—almost one-quarter—of the valid votes cast in that electoral period.

Self-criticism sessions, run by Harnecker, concluded that where Forum members had lost, they had made pragmatic concessions to electoral alliances, instead of staking their strategy on “social action.” They determined that they now must change the rules of the game, through “electoral reform” and by establishing “provisional governments” and “Constituent Assemblies,” as demanded by member parties in Mexico, Venezuela, and elsewhere.

The Final Resolution from the plenary endorsed the Zapatista insurgency in Chiapas, calling it representative of the “new forms of expression, democracy, and people’s power” developing in the region. The EZLN’s Sub-Commander Marcos had addressed the plenary, through a video brought by Mexico’s PRD delegation.

July 1995: *América Libre #7* outlined the parameters of the “Chiapas strategy”—combining armed uprising, mass land seizures, and a campaign for constituent assemblies to reform national constitutions—which has been adopted throughout the continent. Wrote Managing Editor Korol: “In how many regions of Latin America could a portrait be made, similar to that which capitalism has made of Chiapas? What could the Bolivian or Peruvian Indians tell? What would the people of Northeastern Argentina write, declared unviable by successive military and civilian governments? What would the forgotten of Brazil, Colombia, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Haiti, tell? Or will it be that Chiapas speaks for all of them; and that it is, at the same time, an invitation to add new voices of denunciation?” Chiapas, she adds, provides “the keys to future movements.”

Spain’s ETA sets up ‘Kidnappers, Inc.’

For more than a decade, the Basque terrorist-separatist ETA (as we will elaborate fully in week’s *EIR*) has been operating in Ibero-America, where it has established a broad funding network (through collection of revolutionary taxes, assaults and kidnappings, and its own businesses, particularly restaurants). In recent years, ETA (Euskadi and Freedom) has

fully integrated itself into the São Paulo Forum’s continental narco-terrorist apparatus, of which it now constitutes an essential element. Although some ETA members have played leadership roles in El Salvador’s Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) and other groups, its specialty is in the “kidnapping industry”; and it has trained the Forum’s continent-wide machinery in this “art.” This was proven conclusively in May 1993, when a secret arms cache in Managua exploded (see below).

The ETA is present above all in Mexico, considered an important international base second to France, and in Venezuela, although it also maintains an important presence in Uruguay, El Salvador, the Dominican Republic, and Brazil. Its presence in Cuba and in Nicaragua is of a special nature.

On April 30, 1992, in a visit to Buenos Aires, Spanish Interior Minister José Luis Corcuera said that “Ibero-America is the preferred location for ETA members.” Many of them left Spain under the government of Francisco Franco, claiming to be persecuted politically, and alleging that their terrorism was “revolutionary war.” There are apparently secret, semi-official agreements to grant them refuge in Mexico and Venezuela, as long as they don’t interfere in internal politics.

Nicaragua’s arms bunker

During the 1980s, Nicaragua under the Sandinistas became a key base of ETA operations. ETA members obtained false passports, they were incorporated into Interior Minister Tomás Borge’s security apparatus, and they used Nicaragua as a base to expand their continental operations. ETA leader Eusebio Arzallus Tapia, alias *El Patiforcorto*, traveled to Managua in the early 1980s to establish ties to the Sandinistas and El Salvador’s FMLN, and to organize an international network of 35 kidnappers. He became a naturalized Nicaraguan in 1990.

On May 23, 1993, a secret vault containing weapons and documents exploded in Managua, in a store belonging to one Miguel Antonio Larios Moreno, “a false identity behind which Eusebio Arzallus Tapia was hiding,” according to the Spanish magazine *Cambio 16*. The arsenal, built with hydraulic doors and tunnels, contained several tons of weapons, explosives, 19 surface-to-air missiles, 310 passports from 21 countries, many of them blank—one of these was found in the possession of Ibrahim Elgabrownny, who was arrested as a suspect in the February 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center in New York—as well as false identification papers and documents belonging to a kidnap ring. According to Interpol sources, among the documents found was a list of 77 “kidnappable” Ibero-American businessmen, 65 of whom were Brazilian, as well as pictures and other documents relating to the 1989 kidnapping of Brazilian supermarket magnate Abilio Diniz. Other sources confirmed that there were hundreds of names on the list.

Weeks after the Managua explosion, according to the

Mexican magazine *Impacto*, Arzallus showed up in Mexico where, according to Spanish intelligence sources, he still resides. *El Paticorto* reportedly entered Mexico using a phony Honduran passport under the name Julio Aguilar Cruz.

Mexico: An estimated 100 to 200 ETA members currently live in Mexico, many of whom entered as tourists from Spain and France. Others arrived from Nicaragua, among them members of the Donosti command who sought refuge there "after having worked closely with the Sandinista government in 'Section Five' (secret service) led by ideologue and writer, Tomás Borge," according to *Impacto*.

In most cases, ETA members arrive in Mexico with no financial resources, but tap into an established support network for help. It is suspected that sizable sums of money are also transferred to them through bank drafts from abroad. Most of them are concentrated in Mexico City, but can also be found "in at least four states of the Republic of Mexico . . . Hidalgo, Querétaro, Nuevo León, and Guanajuato," *Impacto* and the Spanish daily *ABC* report.

There have been recent indications that ETA is also in the state of Chiapas. *ABC* reports that Spanish anti-terrorist police traveled to Mexico at the beginning of 1994 at the request of the Mexican government, because there was evidence of ETA's presence in Chiapas. The Barcelona, Spain daily *Observador* reported that a group of terrorists led by ETA members and Guatemalan guerrillas had set up operations in the region of Soconusco, Chiapas. The French news agency AFP reported early in 1994 that "EZLN leader, Subcommander Marcos, confirmed that he hopes to establish 'autonomy' in Chiapas similar to what the Basques and Catalans enjoy in Spain."

According to the Spanish daily *El País*, "the Spanish minister of justice and interior possesses 'confirmation' that the terrorist ETA gang provides economic assistance to the Zapatista guerrillas, but affirms that, for now, it has no evidence that the Basque terrorist organization has provided military training or weapons to the EZLN, according to high-level individuals in Madrid's anti-terror apparatus.

". . . Spanish intelligence services say they have 'confirmation' that a part of the infrastructure established in Mexico does contribute money to maintaining the Zapatista guerrillas. . . . Sources in the Spanish anti-terror fight also believe that there have been contacts between the leaders of political groups linked to ETA and leaders of the EZLN, to give the latter 'indoctrination' and ideological support."

Venezuela: For over a decade, a "non-aggression pact" has existed between Venezuela and ETA: Cadres of the latter are allowed to use the country as a place for rest and rehabilitation, as long as they don't operate inside the country. This was formalized in 1989, when then-Venezuelan President Carlos Andrés Pérez and his friend, Spanish Prime Minister Felipe González, agreed that detained ETA members would be "deported" to Venezuela, where they would report their movements and location to the political police, DISIP.

For example, on May 29, 1992, eleven ETA members arrived in Venezuela on a Spanish Air Force jet, but they were not classified as political refugees. On June 1, 1992, Carlos Andrés Pérez declared that ETA members are *not* terrorists: "It is a mistake to call a group of Basques terrorists."

Cuba: According to the Miami-based *Diario las Américas* on Dec. 15, 1994, there are 15 top ETA people in Cuba, from both the "military" and the "political" branches of the group. They maintain excellent relations with agents of Cuba's military secret service, and some Spanish anti-terror experts estimate that, on a smaller scale, they are witnessing a case similar to what happened in Nicaragua where ETA members became part of "Section Five" of the Sandinista Interior Ministry.

Anti-terror experts underscore the "complete freedom" given the group by the Cuban regime, and say that they may well be receiving training from their hosts. On Jan. 14, 1992, Spanish officials arrested a member of the Chilean Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR), René Valenzuela (alias "Gato"), on charges of participating in ETA kidnapping and bombings. Valenzuela had reportedly been a close collaborator of Cuban intelligence's Manuel Piñeiro for more than 20 years, operating much of that time in Mexico.

Uruguay: On May 21, 1992, the Argentine daily *Clarín* reported that "a high-level source of the Uruguayan Interior Ministry told *Clarín* today that the Uruguay police are carrying out an intense search for a militant of the ETA organization, who evaded the operation through which the Basque separatist sanctuary was dismantled in Uruguay." The operation netted 13 Basques, "four of whom definitely participated in bloody incidents provoked in Madrid and Valencia by itinerant ETA commandos," among them Rosario Delgado Iriondo, identified as "Comando Madrid." Three of the ETA members were arrested in the high-class La Trainera restaurant, owned by a Basque who was also arrested.

Modus operandi: The explosion of the Managua arms cache brought to light evidence of ETA's direct participation in the 1989 kidnapping of Brazilian businessman Abilio Diniz, by a group of Chilean, Argentine, and Canadian leftists. ETA is suspected of involvement in the Mexican kidnap industry. In 1993 alone, there were hundreds of kidnappings in that country, and in the first half of 1994, some 500 kidnappings were officially reported, ransoms for which were sometimes as high as \$15 million. Over the past few years, there have been close to 2,000 kidnappings in Mexico. According to the June 1993 edition of the Mexican magazine *Proceso*, "experts in the anti-terror fight consulted by the Spanish daily *ABC*, say that ETA is behind some of the kidnappings which have been occurring in Mexico."

Reliable sources say that ETA members also collect "war taxes" from wealthy Mexican and Spanish citizens. The same is done with residents of Spanish and Portuguese extraction in Venezuela, and if they don't pay, their businesses and lives are destroyed.