

# Nation-state target of Argentine terror

by Cynthia Rush

Argentina was shaken on the morning of April 4 when the People's Revolutionary Organization (ORP), a little-known terrorist group, carried out a bloody attack on Dr. Jorge Bergés, a physician who worked for the Federal police during the 1970s. As Dr. Bergés walked with his wife on a street near his Buenos Aires home, he was approached by three individuals, shot 15 times, and left for dead. A short time later, an ORP spokesman called the *Todas Noticias* cable TV station to take responsibility for the murder attempt, stating that "we've just shot Bergés. That's for the 20 years," a reference to the 20th anniversary of the March 24, 1976 military coup which overthrew President Isabel Martínez de Perón.

The coup anniversary, coupled with the 14th anniversary of the April 2, 1982 attempt by the Armed Forces to take back the Malvinas from the British, not only set the context for the vicious shooting of Dr. Bergés. It also was the pretext for an intensified assault on the institution of the military by the international human rights mafia and allied narco-terrorist networks grouped within the Castroite São Paulo Forum.

Rather than focus on the bestiality of the attack on Bergés, virtually all media pointed instead to his alleged "torturer" past, describing him as the "Argentine Dr. Mengele" (a reference to the Nazi death-camp Dr. Josef Mengele). Although some groups offered token condemnation of the shooting, they largely railed about the "environment of impunity reigning in the country," which, they alleged, allowed current and former military officers who served in the 1970s war against subversion, to escape prosecution for human rights violations.

## Defense of sovereignty a crime?

"Impunity" is the buzzword used by supranational forces operating to dismantle Ibero-America's military institutions, in pursuit of their goal of eliminating sovereign nation-states. The message relayed in the Bergés incident, is that narco-terrorism is *not* "criminal"—either in the 1970s or today—but any individual or institution acting to defend the nation-state, is. As ORP leader "Raúl Martínez," told the leftist Uruguayan daily *La República*, "our actions will continue over the next 12 months, until March 24, 1997, inscribed in our total struggle against the impunity of torturers and

genocidalists who now live in freedom."

The response to the speech given April 2 by Gen. Mario Cándido Díaz, head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, reflects the environment. Díaz paid homage to "the fallen, and the veterans of the war against subversion who gave their lives to fight the plague which was eating away at the very essence of our republican institutions." His statements immediately provoked the wrath of the pro-terrorist lobby, including former Montonero, Horacio Verbitsky, who charged that it was a "by-product of reigning impunity." On April 10, the Chamber of Deputies approved a resolution rejecting Díaz's speech, and a human rights lawyer filed a suit against him, alleging that the speech was an "apology for crime"—the "crime" being the 1970s military offensive against narco-terrorism.

It is not just the narco-terrorists who are targeting the Armed Forces, however. The response to Bergés's shooting revealed division inside the military itself, between those angered by the attack on the institution, and those like Army Chief of Staff Gen. Martín Balza, who are colluding with the demilitarizers. It was Balza who reportedly ordered the Military Hospital not to admit the gravely wounded Bergés, arguing that he had no "military status." Bergés was finally taken in by the Naval Hospital, in front of which a bomb was deactivated a few days later.

In this anti-military environment, the ORP's backers have launched a major promotion campaign. Indicating that the group is not simply a local phenomenon, two regional conferences which occurred at the time of the Bergés shooting, enthusiastically applauded the attack. One was the "First International Conference for Humanity and against Neo-Liberalism," organized by Mexico's narco-terrorist Zapatista leader, "Marcos," in Chiapas's Lacandón Jungle; the other was the "First Southern Cone Conference for Human Rights and Against Repression," held in Colonia, Uruguay, and organized by offshoots of that country's terrorist Tupamaros movement. The ORP has also shown up on the Internet, the primary vehicle through which narco-terrorist networks and the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) which support them, operate internationally.

Closer to home, Uruguay's *La República*, run by leftist Federico Fasano Mertens, has been the biggest promoter of the ORP. The daily gave space to ORP leader Martínez, permitting him to describe in sickening detail how he shot Dr. Bergés, and rant on about how the attack on the police physician was totally justified. *La República* editor, Enrique Alonso Fernández, conducted a three-hour videotaped interview with two ORP members in Buenos Aires, excerpts of which were then shown on two separate Argentine television programs on April 25. Over the weekend of April 27, the daily published the entire text of the interview in a 16-page special supplement, including glossy color photos. Observers in Buenos Aires are asking who financed the slick supplement.