

OAS and NGOs human rights mafia lead British assault on the Mexican Army

by Hugo López Ochoa

Once again, using the cover of “defending human rights,” those forces controlled by the British Crown which are out to annihilate the armed forces of Ibero-America, are using the case of Brig. Gen. José Francisco Gallardo to assault Mexican sovereignty, and especially the Mexican Army, the guarantor of that sovereignty. Heading up the offensive is the Organization of American States (OAS)—today dominated by the English-speaking countries of the Caribbean which form part of the British Commonwealth—as well as various of the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) which claim to defend human rights.

“Operation Gallardo” is not incidental, but rather the application of a model already used elsewhere, as in the case of Peruvian Gen. Rodolfo Robles. The model is simple: to find a soldier prepared to attack the Armed Forces, and to use him to try to discredit and factionalize that same Armed Forces from within, thereby destroying it. Thus far, the Robles case has not succeeded in Peru, nor has the Gallardo case succeeded in Mexico.

The offensive—both domestic and foreign—against the Mexican Army, has intensified in recent months. Internally, the NGOs are leading the charge, slandering the Army for violation of human rights. From abroad, British-dominated press such as the *New York Times* and the *Financial Times* of London, are carrying the banner. But the offensive took off on Jan. 23, when the Inter-American Human Rights Commission (CIDH) of the OAS, issued a finding stating that the Mexican government is supposedly violating the rights of General Gallardo, who has been held in a military prison since November 1993. The OAS is also demanding his immediate release. With this, the British hope to force a supranational decision upon the Mexican government, in a situation in which national institutions have *already* issued their decision.

Gallardo was jailed on charges of corruption and violating military discipline. In legal terms: embezzlement, destruction of Army property, and illicit enrichment, all of which constitute “serious crimes committed against the patrimony of the Mexican Army,” according to a Feb. 10 statement by the government delegation designated to deal with the CIDH.

The OAS, however, absurdly argued that General Gallardo was imprisoned because he wrote his master’s thesis in sociology on alleged cases of human rights violations by the Mexican Army, that he recommended in his paper that civilian authorities name a military “ombudsman,” and that Congress supervise the Army’s budget. In its finding, the OAS specifically demands that “the campaign of persecution, defamation and harassment” against General Gallardo immediately cease, that he be released, and that those who jailed him be “investigated and punished,” and even forced to indemnify him.

Why the campaign against Mexico’s Army?

El Financiero columnist Jorge Fernández Menéndez wrote that among the possible reasons for this campaign against Mexico’s Army is that “it has something to do with abroad,” with “the effort to get the Mexican Air Force to become part of a ‘Multinational Air Force.’” Fernández Menéndez is referring to a proposal to establish a combined Air Force, drawn from several Ibero-American countries and from the United States, based at Howard Air Base in Panama and supposedly charged with fighting the drug trade. The idea was first released as a trial balloon by the *Dallas Morning News*, which attributed the idea to the U.S. National Security Council.

The Mexican government and Air Force have systematically opposed this and other such proposals to establish a supranational force in the Americas, under the OAS. For example, in continental meetings of the defense ministers of the continent, organized by the Pentagon and held first in Williamsburg, Virginia, and later in Bariloche, Argentina, Mexico’s defense secretary did not attend, and the country was represented only by an observer.

Such opposition by the Mexicans to this supranational project pleased neither London nor the “anglophiles” in Washington. Thus, “Operation Gallardo.”

It is not the first time that these circles are turning a rogue into an international “hero” against “military authoritarianism,” as was done with, among others, Peruvian division general Rodolfo Robles Espinoza, known throughout Peru as “the scoundrel Robles.” In 1993, Robles accused several military

figures of responsibility for the assassination of a group of terrorists (the infamous La Cantuta case), without offering any proof; he then took refuge in the U.S. Embassy in Lima, fled the country for Argentina, and ended up in Washington, where he repeated his accusations and promised to come up with evidence to back his claims. The Peruvian Army expelled him from their ranks “for teachery,” and opened up a criminal case against him on five charges, among these “deceit” and “abandonment of duty, against the Nation.”

On Feb. 10, Mexico’s Foreign Affairs Secretariat (SRE) answered the CIDH, saying that the Mexican government “does not accept the imputation” that it has violated the American Convention of Human Rights in the case of General Gallardo, and that therefore, “as far as the Mexican government is concerned, the case is closed.” The SRE’s statement added that all judicial procedures in the case had closely followed the letter of the law. The CIDH’s response was to threaten that its annual report, issued in March 1997, would treat General Gallardo as a “prisoner of conscience,” and that the OAS would use the report in the organization’s general assembly next October.

Bush’s ‘human rights’ lobby

The farcical operation collapses under its own weight, once we take a closer look at the agencies that are defending Gallardo’s “human rights,” and at the context in which this offensive is launched. The promoters of the Gallardo case before the CIDH include the Center for Justice and International Law (CEJIL), headquartered in Washington, and MariClaire Acosta, director of the Mexican Commission for the Defense and Promotion of Human Rights (Cmdpdh). Acosta is a member of the Zapatista National Liberation Front, as well as of the Inter-American Dialogue, a think-tank based in Washington that proposes the destruction of Ibero-America’s armed forces and the legalization of the drug trade, and which defends the “human rights” of terrorists along with indigenist “autonomy.”

MariClaire Acosta began her human rights career with Amnesty International, the British organization that defends narco-terrorists, and in 1993 used the Gallardo case to foster an environment of hostility against the Mexican military and to promote the creation of the so-called “Truth Commission,” used to falsely accuse the Mexican Army of the 1968 student massacre. The OAS based its ruling on a report presented by Acosta’s Cmdpdh, which, in turn, was financed by the U.S.-run National Endowment for Democracy (NED), also known as “Project Democracy.”

Most recently, the Cmdpdh has devoted its efforts, along with other NGOs, to spreading rumors of a supposed “coup threat” in Mexico. This rumor began when President Ernesto Zedillo decided to take on the serious problem of criminality in Mexico City, and of police corruption, as well as to reinforce the battle against the drug trade. He named several generals to take charge of several areas, which were tradi-

tionally under civilian control: the Federal District Police, the Federal Judicial Police, the Federal District Judicial Police, and others. Added to the list of NGO “concerns,” is the necessary presence of the Mexican Army in Chiapas, the Zapatistas’ stronghold, and in the states of Guerrero and Oaxaca, where the Revolutionary Popular Army (EPR) terrorists are active. More recently, two generals were assigned to command civil airports in two state capitals where the drug trade flourishes: Toluca, in Mexico State, and Cuernavaca, in Morelos.

Of course, the drug traffickers and their narco-terrorist friends are hysterical. This is reflected in the Anglo-American press. On Jan. 13, the daily London *Guardian* published an article which said, “Unlike other Latin American countries experiencing regular coups d’état, Mexico has kept its army on a tight rein for over half a century. But when unleashed—as it was in 1968 when it massacred hundreds of student demonstrators, and in the 1970s during the war against guerrillas—it has been no less willing to engage in torture and extra-judicial killings. Now human rights groups fear President Ernesto Zedillo may be untying the military’s hands again.” Significantly, the author of the article, Phil Gunson, cites Jesuit priest David Fernández, head of the Jesuit-controlled Agustín Pro Center for Human Rights, which defends the Zapatistas and regularly attacks the Mexican Army.

What Gunson doesn’t say, is that in November 1996, Human Rights Watch/Americas, financed by master speculator and drug legalizer George Soros, gave a generous award to Father Fernández.

On Jan. 25, the *New York Times* said the same thing about the Mexican Army, and on Feb. 10, under the headline “Mexican Army Participation in Civilian Activities Causes Concern,” the *Los Angeles Times* published an article in which a professor at Mexico’s Autonomous Metropolitan University (a well-known terrorist breeding ground), was quoted saying, “We’re going from an authoritarian system to a totalitarian system.” Martin Anderson, a former professor at Johns Hopkins University, warned that “putting the Army in charge of police work is like putting an infected bandage on an open wound.” The *Times* commented that the OAS “provided a memo on the Mexican Army’s human rights history, when its Human Rights Commission issued a harsh report on the case . . . of Brig. Gen. José Francisco Gallardo.” This “history of abuses,” says Fernando Tenorio, the professor from the Autonomous Metropolitan University, “could lead to more abuses in the future . . . especially at a time when the military is trying to suppress armed guerrillas in several states.”

On Feb. 9, speaking at an official gathering, Mexico’s defense secretary, Gen. Enrique Cervantes Aguirre, reiterated the Army’s loyalty to republican institutions, and underscored that its presence in civilian areas is temporary, to last only until it can rebuild the collapsed structure of these security institutions.