

while, the Lebanese government fears an attack. "Israel has set precedents in the past in avenging attacks through military strikes in Lebanon," one Lebanese official told Reuters news agency, "now it has a strong pretext for doing the same."

A new Turkish move?

Meanwhile, a Turkish crackdown on Kurdish towns in its own southeastern territory bordering Iraq, beginning the weekend of March 21-22, is rapidly escalating into a potential civil war in the region, with Turkish jets bombing its own villages there.

Over the weekend, Turkish troops reportedly massacred some 100 ethnic Kurds in seven villages, triggering large-scale fighting. According to some Turkish claims, President Turgut Özal, a longtime Anglo-American tool, intentionally provoked the conflict in order to undermine the government of his rival, Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel. Özal, who has told Turkish media that "from now on, the Kurdish insurrection can only be suppressed with a bloodbath," may even be attempting to provoke a military coup, in alliance with elements of the military.

On March 24, Demirel, who, unlike Özal, had opposed Turkey's participation in the Persian Gulf war, asserted that the only way to deal with the crisis is to "build a wall along the border with Iraq so tight that not even a bird could get through it." Turkish jets are already bombing Kurdish villages in Iraq.

According to one report from Turkey, the Anglo-Americans favor a Turkish invasion into Iraq, minimally to create a so-called Turkish-controlled "security zone" along the border similar to what Israel has created in Lebanon. Reportedly, the United States is considering calling for lifting sanctions on the Kurdish regions in northern Iraq, while sanctions are maintained against the rest of that besieged state. These northern oil-rich regions would eventually be incorporated into an expanded Turkish state.

In early April, Turkey's interior minister will travel to Damascus to protest Syria's alleged sponsorship of Kurdish terrorist training camps in the Bekaa Valley in Syrian-controlled Lebanon. A similar claim, regarding Syrian sponsorship of anti-Israeli groups in the same location, is made by Israel. Turkish-Israeli relations have been considerably strengthened over recent years.

In addition to employing proxies, however, the Anglo-Americans might opt for directly engaging their own forces through a United Nations strike on Iraq or Libya. On March 19, the Iraqi government handed a note to Rolf Ekeus, head of a special U.N. commission, agreeing to U.N. Security Council demands that it dismantle any industrial capacity which could be used to build weapons of mass destruction, making a hit on Iraq apparently less likely for the moment. Libya, on the other hand, remains a top target, especially if the Anglo-Americans or Israel contrive a new "Arab" terrorist incident which kills a lot of Americans.

Carlos Menem fears anti-IMF backlash

by Cynthia Rush

When the embassy of Israel was bombed and destroyed in Buenos Aires on March 17, presumably by Arab terrorists, Argentina's Foreign Minister Guido Di Tella told the media that this occurred in his country because it is "so important." President Carlos Menem's alliance with the United States and his policies of economic "modernization" have ushered the nation into the "first world," the minister rhapsodized.

Having attained this status, he went on, Argentina must now expect more such attacks. If the country were unstable, racked by violence, labor strikes, and other upheaval, no one would even consider targeting Argentina, Di Tella argued. It is because of its "progress" that Argentina was hit.

The reality behind Di Tella's convoluted reasoning is quite different. In a manner of speaking, Argentina today *is* a target, not because it is "important," but because of Menem's obscene alliance with the Anglo-American powers, and his spitting on the country's tradition of non-alignment in its foreign policy.

When he first took power, the Argentine President boasted of his strong ties to the Arab world. But he abandoned those without a second glance, when he embraced Israel and joined the forces of the new world order in last year's genocidal war against Iraq.

This, combined with the devastation of the Argentine economy and people through the International Monetary Fund's "adjustment" policies, hasn't made Carlos Menem the most popular man around. In fact, the government's commitment to British-style free trade has begun to provoke the same type of resistance among labor and business circles visible in several other Ibero-American countries—especially since the attempted nationalist military coup in Venezuela last Feb. 4.

On March 19, the Argentine Industrial Union (UIA) declared "war" on Finance Minister Domingo Cavallo because his free trade policy has flooded the country with foreign imports with which domestic products cannot compete. A few days earlier, the minister's tax reform package, a key element in his deal with the IMF, suffered setbacks in the Congress, forcing him to seek other ways of raising the revenue he promised the Fund.

Menem is also facing significant labor strife, caused by his obsession with selling off the state sector, putting hundreds of thousands out of work, and declaring illegal any strike called to protest his austerity policies.

Nationalists under every bed

Perhaps this is why the President is so jumpy. Immediately following the March 17 bombing, and before anyone had any indications or proof of who might have been responsible, Menem bellowed that “Nazis and fundamentalists” were behind the action. Later, he included “anti-Semites and coup-mongers” in his accusations.

More than anything, Menem’s statements revealed a rather unsettled state of mind. “Fundamentalist” in Argentina is the adjective used by the Anglo-American-allied political establishment to refer to Army nationalist Col. Mohamed Alf Seineldín.

Although now imprisoned as a result of the Army uprising of Dec. 3, 1990, through which he and other patriots attempted to force a change in the U.S.-dictated policy of dismantling the Armed Forces, Colonel Seineldín is respected not only in his homeland but throughout Ibero-America as an uncompromising defender of national sovereignty and the institution of the Armed Forces. In an interview with *EIR* last year, he described himself as a political prisoner.

There’s no doubt that Menem is worried that, at some point, his government might be subject to the same humiliating treatment Venezuelan President Carlos Andrés Pérez got. He has worked himself into such a lather, in fact, that he blames the *carapintadas*—“painted faces,” the name by which the Army nationalists are known—for literally anything that goes wrong in the country, be it crime, bank robberies, strikes, or military unrest.

Menem’s outburst against the Army nationalists reportedly caused such a degree of unrest among the top leadership of the Armed Forces, that Defense Minister Antonio Erman González had to make public statements on March 18, disavowing the President’s remarks and characterizing them as “unjustified.”

Several other political leaders and media analysts were critical of Menem’s statements, and even blamed him directly or indirectly for the bombing attack. But it was Colonel Seineldín who most accurately analyzed Menem’s personal responsibility in the bombing.

‘How long must we tolerate. . . ?’

In a letter published March 20 in two Buenos Aires newspapers, Seineldín responded to the President’s accusations, saying “I am a Catholic and an Argentine, and proud of it. Under no circumstances could I hate my brother, in the form of racial violence or in any other demented form. . . . The tragedy which has occurred can never be attributed to me. Only a sick mind could conceive of this.”

The real culprit, the colonel wrote, addressing Menem,

is “You, with your ‘First World’ pretensions. . . . You who, within a framework of corruption and impotence, have been unable to control the republic’s borders, have permitted the unrestricted entry of drug traffickers and their poison, of epidemics once definitively eradicated in the country . . . and of international criminals who sow terror and death.”

“How long,” Seineldín asked, “must we tolerate the suffering of children, the elderly, men and women being used to satisfy your inexhaustible capacity for hatred toward anyone who dares to tell you frankly and loudly the truths you don’t wish to hear?”

Referring to Menem’s economic policy, which has particularly targeted the most vulnerable sectors of the population—the poor and the elderly—Seineldín charged that “You, with your lack of social sensitivity, are liquidating the nation’s patrimony and the hope of our people. . . . For you, we [the Army nationalists] are the excuse you need to cover up your own ineptitude, your impotence, your improvisation.”

On the mark

It is irresponsible, the colonel continued, “to keep deceiving the nation’s people, associating each objectionable and condemnable incident with my name or with those of the leaders, officers and non-commissioned officers of the Argentine Army and Navy Prefecture who are here with me” in prison.

Seineldín’s letter encapsulated much of the rage felt by a people which has had to endure not only Menem’s destructive economic policies, but his personal corruption and playboy antics. “You, who are frivolous and unthinking, think you can fix the tragedies which Argentina and the world suffer with a change of hairdo, a set of tennis doubles, or showing up at the national jet set’s parties with your latest girlfriend.”

Judging from the outcry the letter provoked among Menem’s cronies, the letter hit home. Guido Di Tella whined that Seineldín suffered from an “inferiority complex” and was “confused,” presumably for thinking that the defense of national sovereignty was more important than joining the “First World.”

Alberto Lestelle, director of the government’s anti-drug office, was even more hysterical, charging that because Seineldín was a “participant in the [1976] military dictatorship”—an outright lie—he had no moral authority to criticize anyone.

In a press conference March 24, Menem defensively admitted that he might have spoken “somewhat too soon” when he accused the *carapintadas* of involvement in the bombing.

But, he added, had the Army nationalists been victorious in their Dec. 3, 1990 uprising, “today we’d be in hell, in the fourth, fifth or tenth world.”

Some Argentines are probably wondering about Menem’s definition of hell.