

Brazilian government rehabilitates terrorist leaders from the 1970s

by Silvia Palacios

The Justice Ministry's Special Commission on Political Disappearances approved on Sept. 11 payment of indemnification to the families of two prominent leaders of the guerrilla movement which terrorized Brazil with their irregular war during the 1970s: former Army Capt. Carlos Lamarca, and Carlos Marighella, the latter a leading theoretician of guerrilla warfare used by urban terrorists around the world.

The commission was well-aware that the decision would generate a widespread revolt within the Armed Forces. To understand the significance of this decision, consider what would happen if the United States government, at some future date, decided to indemnify the families of those responsible for the bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City.

Brazilian President Fernando Henrique Cardoso tried to wash his hands of this decision, declaring that, in the thorny case of Lamarca, the Army captain-turned-guerrilla leader, he personally considered him a "deserter"—as, indeed, he was—as well as a traitor and a terrorist! With that said, Cardoso let the decision stand. The commission's decision was taken as part of a deliberate policy of his government, designed by the Anglo-American establishment, to punish and humiliate the Brazilian Armed Forces, as a step toward their dismantling—a replay of what has happened in Argentina. President Cardoso, a founding member of the Inter-American Dialogue, has been one of the most ardent proponents of this anti-military strategy.

The legal argument employed by the commission's president, Miguel Reale, to justify its ruling that the state bore culpability for the deaths of the two figures, reveals that policy: "They were absolutely under the control of their captors when they were killed. What there was, was the intention to destroy the myth of the guerrilla. And they [the Army] decided that they should not be taken prisoner, but be destroyed," Reale argued.

A communiqué issued by the three military clubs representing active and retired military officers in response, revealed the bitter response which the decision provoked within the Armed Forces: "Brazil consecrates terror. Brazil, the paradise of terrorists, of traitors, many of them elevated today to public posts. Brazil, which forgets its sons killed in the fulfillment of duty, those who honored it and defended it from communist shackles." Retired military officer Jair Bolsonaro,

now a congressman, stated that "the grave mistake of the military regime was that of not eliminating, once and for all, the dozens of Brazilian traitors, among them, President Fernando Henrique Cardoso."

The President ignored all the protests, however, and is proceeding on all fronts to dismantle the nation-state, in which the policy of demilitarization is but a crucial aspect.

Cardoso's allies: the São Paulo Forum

To revive the mythical figure of Carlos Marighella as a martyr of the Brazilian state, now, in the midst of a continent-wide terrorist insurrection even greater than that of the 1970s, has enormous consequences.

Together with "Che" Guevara, Marighella and his *Mini-Manual of the Urban Guerrilla* inspired the acts of irregular warfare by the terrorist left throughout Ibero-America in the 1970s (see box). His famous manual is considered by leading experts of irregular warfare, to have been important to the formation of guerrillas. In the book *Modern Irregular Warfare* (published by the Brazilian Army library), the late German military and legal expert Friedrich August von der Heydte singled out Marighella's instruction that "urban guerrillas must be always conscious that they can only survive if they are prepared to kill."

If the actions of Brazil's Landless Movement (MST) today are examined carefully, as, for example, in the confrontation with the Military Police in El Dorado de Carajas on April 17, 1996, which brought the group such international profit, it becomes clear that the MST's tactics demonstrate they have learned well the lessons taught by Marighella.

Marighella was the leader of National Liberating Action; he was trained in Cuba, and was one of the founders of the Latin American Solidarity Organization (OLAS), attending its founding meeting in August 1967 in Havana, Cuba. OLAS was the model used for the creation of the São Paulo Forum in 1990, initiated by the Cuban Communist Party and the Brazilian Workers Party, which brings together the narco-terrorist movements of the continent, including the MST.

One of Marighella's disciples is the transvestite cleric Fray Betto, who is the editor of *América Libre*, the official magazine of the São Paulo Forum, and who, in order to preserve the memory of Marighella, wrote *Baptism of Blood*,

which attempted to discredit police accounts that Marighella was killed after being betrayed by some Liberation Theology Dominican priests.

Because President Cardoso is aware of these facts, his decision for indemnification was not an accident; rather, it reinforces the tacit alliance which he has maintained for some time with the São Paulo Forum. The principal figure linking the President with these networks, is Cardinal Paulo Evaristo Arns, a sort of “chaplain” of the São Paulo Forum, friend of Fidel Castro and of such Anglo-American establishment families as Schlumberger/de Menil, leading financiers of Central America terrorism.

On the occasion of the cardinal’s 75th birthday, President Cardoso paid him homage, in an article published in *Folha de São Paulo* on Sept. 15: “The Cardinal of São Paulo is an ethical reference point for my generation, and for all Brazilians. In all the political campaigns in which I participated, including the last, for the Presidency, I always went to Dom Paulo, for advice, to know his comments and considerations, arrived at with wisdom and serenity.”

Cardinal Evaristo Arns continues to be active in the destabilization operation racking Brazil. For example, during the last round of land invasions in the Pontal do Paranapanema region in the state of São Paulo—an area which the MST has already turned into a powderkeg, and now seeks to seize, say its leaders, as “liberated territory”—MST leader Diolinda Alves de Souza met with the cardinal to request that he “mediate” for the MST with the authorities.

Another Colombia?

The MST escalated its violent actions in Brazil following a July meeting in Chiapas, Mexico, in which the MST consolidated its alliance with the Mexican terrorists in the Zapatista National Liberation Army, and while the response of the Brazilian government has fluctuated, on balance, it has been in favor of the MST.

The most scandalous demonstration of government support, was a meeting of the Solidarity Community, a group led by First Lady Ruth Cardoso, with the leaders of the MST. On Sept. 6, MST national coordinator João Pedro Stedile declared that the movement’s pressure tactics, criticized by President Cardoso, were based on the teachings of anthropologist Ruth Cardoso, the President’s wife! The MST left its meeting with the First Lady last Aug. 5, with the following understanding: “Doña Ruth told us that the art of politics, is the game of pressuring.”

“Pressure politics?” What the MST really aims to unleash in the country was announced by Stedile himself on Sept. 7, when he commemorated Brazil’s Independence Day—in his own manner—by declaring:

“The interior of Brazil can become a Colombia. Things will be out of control, there will be social convulsions, and society will come apart. The situation is already tense, and the government says there is no crisis.”

From Marighella’s ‘Mini-Manual’

Carlos Marighella’s Mini-Manual of the Urban Guerrilla, published in 1969, was used to create bands of terrorists around the world, which, as can be seen in these brief excerpts, served as shock troops of assassins and saboteurs against their nations.

The urban guerrilla is an implacable enemy of the government and systematically inflicts damage on the authorities and on the men who dominate the country and exercise power. . . . He must be a good tactician and a good shot. . . [and] conquer the art of dissembling. . . .

Experience has shown that the basic arm of the urban guerrilla is the light machine gun. . . . Molotov cocktails, gasoline, homemade contrivances such as catapults and mortars for firing explosives, grenades made of tubes and cans, smoke bombs, mines, conventional explosives . . . plastic explosives, gelatin capsules, ammunition of every kind are indispensable to the success of the urban guerrilla’s mission. . . . The urban guerrilla’s reason for existence, the basic condition in which he acts and survives, is to shoot. . . .

Action models which the urban guerrilla can carry out are the following: assaults, raids and penetrations, occupations, ambush, street tactics, strikes and work interruptions, desertions, diversions, seizures, expropriation of arms, ammunition, explosives, liberation of prisoners, executions, kidnappings, sabotage, terrorism, armed propaganda, war of nerves. . . .

A new type of urban guerrilla . . . participates in mass demonstrations . . . with specific and definite aims. These aims consist in hurling stones and projectiles . . . using gasoline to start fires, using the police as a target for their fire arms. . . . Snipers are very good for mass demonstrations. . . . Hidden at strategic points, the snipers have complete success, using shotguns, machine guns, etc. whose fire and ricocheting easily cause losses among the enemy. . . .

Execution is a secret action in which the least possible number of urban guerrillas are involved. In many cases, the execution can be carried out by one sniper, patiently, alone and unknown, and operating in absolute secrecy and in cold blood. . . .

The objective of sabotage is to hurt, to damage, to make useless, and to destroy vital enemy points such as the following: the economy of the country, agricultural or industrial production, transport and communication systems, military and police systems . . . repressive military-police system, firms and properties of North Americans in the country. . . .

Terrorism is an arm the revolutionary can never relinquish. . . .