

# Seineldín tells Argentina to resist 'new world order'

by Gretchen Small and Dennis Small

In a dramatic defense, delivered on the last day of a four-month trial before civilian judges, Col. Mohamed Alf Seineldín, hero of the Malvinas War and leader of the nationalist forces in the Argentine Army, warned that if the Argentine nation did not change its current political and economic course, the country would soon be forced to enter the "new world order defenseless, with our hands behind our necks, crawling on our knees, poor and dependent." Accused, along with 14 other officers, of "aggravated rebellion and illicit association," for the military uprising of Dec. 3, 1990, Colonel Seineldín told the court on Aug. 8 that it is not he and the other falsely accused officers who threaten Argentina, but rather the ongoing effort of foreign financiers, backed by Great Britain and the United States, to dismember the armed forces of all Ibero-America, to undermine the fundamental institutions which sustain these nations, and to restore colonial rule.

"The international financial centers responsible for producing a change in the economic system, from production to speculation" seek to fragment Argentina, destroy its religious and cultural values, and expropriate its riches of energy, food, and natural resources, he warned. Once dominated psychologically, physical domination will follow. This foreign plan to destroy Argentina is already well advanced due to the complicity of both the military and civilian governments which have ruled since 1976. If it is not stopped, Argentina will descend into "total war" and continuous violence: "Blood will flow," Seineldín warned.

The Dec. 3, 1990 uprising, like those of Easter Week in 1987, Monte Caseros in 1988, and Villa Martelli in late 1988, sought to force governmental and military authorities to recognize this danger, and rectify their course, the colonel stated. "Had I not taken responsibility on Dec. 3, I would have been considered a traitor to the Fatherland and, undoubtedly, upon my death, condemned before God's Tribunal, the only Court for which, aside from feeling respect, I fear."

Government prosecutors, who painted the defendants throughout the trial as criminals, and mocked their slogan, "God, Fatherland, or Death" as delusional



Dennis Small

*Colonel Mohamed Ali Seineldín (third from the right in the first row), hero of Argentina's Malvinas War against Great Britain, stands trial as a political prisoner. EIR's correspondents were the only foreign press in attendance.*

fanaticism, had concluded their case by requesting that the court give the maximum penalty of life imprisonment to eight of the officers and sentences of 12-25 years to the rest. Eight of the defendants chose, despite the penalties faced, to exercise their right to speak before the court. To a man, they rose to defend, in ringing speeches, not themselves as individuals, but the cause for which they have been fighting: the survival of their nation. They named their foreign enemies and the Argentine allies of those enemies, and posed, in opposition to this, their pride in being both Catholic and nationalist, the cultural reserves which have repeatedly placed Argentina at the forefront of the battle for the sovereignty and development of the Ibero-American nations.

The courage, clarity of vision, and firmness of commitment displayed by the accused in the courtroom during the last two days of the trial, marked a turning point for Argentina, and with it, for Ibero-America as a whole. For months, to the extent that the *carapintada* cause—as the nationalist group in the Army has been dubbed, meaning “painted faces,” in reference to the camouflage paint worn by soldiers—had been covered at all in the press, it had been to echo government propaganda, vilifying its leaders, and assuring all that Colonel Seineldín and the *carapintadas* had been finished off once and for all by the events of Dec. 3, 1990. The message delivered in the courtroom Aug. 7 and 8, was a different one. The resistance to the new world order in Argentina, led by Seineldín, not only continues, stronger than ever, but through their precise identification of the broader issues underlying their cause,

has situated itself to now play a leading role in rallying resistance throughout the continent.

It could not come at a worse time for the government of President Carlos Menem, whose credibility has reached unimaginable lows. Immersed in a new corruption scandal daily, Menem's top advisers and close associates spend their days denying the mounting evidence of their ties to international drug trafficking. It has become a national pastime to mock the President, from the man on the street to foreign journalists, as evidenced most recently in a devastating portrait of the President as a playboy published in Chile's main daily, *El Mercurio*, on Aug. 4. It is a matter of public discussion that the President takes his orders, on everything from internal political matters to economic policy, from the omnipresent U.S. ambassador, Terence Todman, dubbed by the press George Bush's “viceroy.”

No sector of the country has escaped from the degeneration of economic and political life. The oldest and once-richest families in the country privately admit that they are nearing bankruptcy; businessmen warn of a financial “crack” which they expect to hit after the September elections, because of universal bankruptcy in the productive sector of the economy. The same week that the *carapintadas* came to trial, the Army high command informed the defense minister that either some payments be made to military suppliers, or the Army, in particular, would run out of all food supplies by September. Already, the Army has no meat, but only dried food to give its troops. This, on top of public anger within

even the "official" Army over the government's agreement—at the instigation of the Bush administration—to allow international arbitration to decide boundary disputes with Chile which Argentines considered settled decades ago.

For many with whom these correspondents spoke during their mid-August visit, the degradation of Argentina as a nation was encapsulated in the President's decision to encourage the importation of *used* foreign clothing "for the poor," a move which has dealt a mortal blow not only to the national textile industry, but also to national morale.

## Naming the names

The contrast between the generalized demoralization of the population and the leadership displayed in the courtroom on the last days of the *carapintadas* trial could not have been sharper. On Aug. 7, Col. Luis Baraldini, and Maj. Esteban Horacio Rafael, Maj. Pedro Edgardo Mercado, and Maj. Hugo Reinaldo Abete addressed the court. The following day, in the session attended by these correspondents, the last four officials, including Colonel Seineldín, took up where the others had left off.

Maj. Rubén Fernández spoke first, opening with a detailed enumeration of concrete cases of "illegalities and corruption" by high-level Army officers which he had personally sought to get the Army command to investigate and punish—to no avail. These ranged from the establishment of a shell company, EMOK, by four colonels at the Military Geographic Institute which charged for nonexistent services, to the looting of Fabricaciones Militares, the military's national defense production company—the facts of which the major detailed to the court.

At one dramatic point, he revealed that Colonel Smirnoff, head of the Data Processing Division of Fabricaciones Militares, "is arranging a way to transfer" to an Argentine company owned by the Anglo-American company, "the entire data bank of the Geological and Mining Exploration Center of Fabricaciones Militares. The data bank contains all the information pertaining to the entire country's mineral reserves." Speaking "as an Argentine citizen," Fernández requested the court open an investigation into this blatant thievery of "the national patrimony," offering the court the evidence in his possession of this and his other charges. At the conclusion of Fernández's explosive testimony, the court president promised that indeed these charges would be investigated.

The country's military production capabilities are being sold off, often to the country's historic enemies, to cover the government's deficit, Fernández charged. At the urging of "the powerful," Argentina's missile program, its nuclear industry, its military production, are being dismantled—while the Army high command "goes begging in search of a larger budget." The development of the military industry is vital for the development of the country's technological capabilities, but the generals have not protected it, because "the strategy was to 'come, steal, bankrupt throughout the person-

nel, and give it away to the private sector.' "

"What choice did I have but to act?" the major concluded, when such corruption abounds, and while Argentina's "historic enemy," Great Britain is once again acting in alliance with Chile against Argentina, through such mechanisms as the proposed creation of a NATO-type organization in the South Atlantic, which would leave Argentina isolated and surrounded.

## Catholic and nationalist

The next to speak was Maj. Héctor Romero Mundani, whose brother, Col. Jorge Romero Mundani, had played a leading role in the *carapintada* movement until he died on Dec. 3. With emotion in his voice, Major Romero Mundani began by noting that his brother had preferred death to association with the corrupt elements denounced by Fernández.

Dec. 3 was no attempt to overthrow the government, the major emphasized. "We had tremendous combat power, with 50 tanks; nothing could have stopped us had we decided to initiate combat, but we did not," he explained: Instead, "we were attempting to defend the Constitution with our lives, in the midst of generalized corruption. Corruption has taken possession of our country's ruling classes." Putrefaction can be breathed in all sectors, he said, the political, trade union, and military.

The major ripped apart the propaganda—spread by the proponents of the new world order—that the *carapintada* movement are "fanatics" led by a would-be "messiah." Lt. Gen. José Dante Caridi, former Army Chief of Staff, testified to this court, that although Colonel Seineldín was an excellent soldier, he had not been promoted, because he was "too Catholic and too nationalist," Major Romero Mundani stated. "If in my country it is a crime to love God and country unreservedly, you would do well to condemn me, but let it be with capital punishment," he demanded. Our Catholicism, he said, is a religion of love, which teaches that "we are all children of God, created in the image and likeness of God. This is the spirit which inspired our Constitution, and which governs all Argentines, whether they are Catholics or not—and which repudiates Nazism, fascism, or Zionism." If the Catholic underpinnings of the nation are lost, the nation will be lost, and that, not those who are "right" or "left" is what matters, Romero Mundani underscored.

Capt. Gustavo Breide Obeid, the youngest of the accused officers, followed. His testimony was short, and direct. Breide accepted full responsibility for acting on Dec. 3—and more. "As a citizen, I'm responsible for not understanding talk of a 'new world order' which is based on misery, marginality, and the sacrifices of poor nations such as ours. I'm responsible for not wanting our nation to go back 150 years in history, and become a colony in which ambitious foreign powers and treasonous local leaders exchange our sovereignty for economic deals." I am equally responsible, he continued, "for not understanding the toleration of the

spread of drugs, the looting of our natural resources, the rolling back of 50 years of labor rights; for being proud to be nationalist and Catholic."

Breide reminded the court of a reality which the Menem government is loath to admit: that the *carapintada* movement is no longer limited to the military, but is rapidly spreading as a sentiment of resistance throughout all sectors of Argentine society who do not wish to submit to the oppression of foreign looting. Dec. 3 was "an act of resistance in the face of the destruction of the armed forces," he noted. Moreover, he said, "it is an act of resistance which has spread to the rest of society," because the government has chosen to denounce as "*carapintadas* . . . any sector of society which wants to avoid its own destruction."

### Reversing foreign-imposed divisions

The last to speak was Colonel Seineldín, who stood for more than an hour and a half before the judges, microphone in hand, using a blackboard, to deliver a detailed exposition of the foreign threat facing Argentina, and how that threat has advanced during the past 15 years. His starting point was 1976, the year the Argentine military overthrew the government of Isabel Martínez de Perón and installed the government which became known as the Process of National Reconstruction, or "Proceso," a coup against which he had protested at the time, he noted. The decision to impose the military government was taken as part of the planned division of the world according to a "New Yalta," he charged.

The colonel's review of recent Argentine history—overturning the generally accepted myth that Argentine society, since 1976, has been irrevocably divided between civilian and military by the apparent bitter confrontations between the right and the left—can be expected to revolutionize current Argentine politics. Seineldín asserted that usurious financial interests, foreign and domestic, deliberately created those divisions. They first financed the subversive movements, which had "Marxism in the head but dollars in their pockets"; they then encouraged the military to seize power; and then indebted the country; and finally brought Raúl Alfonsín, an agent of "the red Second International," to power to lead a "human rights" campaign designed to turn the country against the military. Menem has continued the work of Alfonsín, only more intelligently than his predecessor, he noted.

Seineldín went after the underlying issue which unified the "Proceso" with its apparent mortal enemy, Alfonsinism: the plan, designed by Great Britain, to dismantle the region's militaries. He revealed that he could personally confirm efforts by the State Department, its Agency for International Development and the U.S. Southern Command against the militaries, because he had, almost by chance, attended a meeting in 1987 in Panama where the campaign against the militaries was discussed. As part of this strategy, a new regional defense system is sought, based upon a U.S.-directed alliance of the Argentine Navy, the Brazilian Army and

the Chilean Air Force, he charged.

During his testimony, he noted two incidents which displayed the depths to which these forces were willing to descend to destroy the opposition to the new order: at the La Tablada infantry regiment in January of 1989, when the Alfonsín government arranged for terrorists of the All for the Fatherland Movement (MTP) to seize the base in the name of Seineldín and the *carapintadas*; and when President Menem, in the immediate aftermath of Dec. 3, demanded the leadership of the uprising be shot.

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There were other startling revelations in the colonel's testimony. For example, Seineldín's step-by-step review of how the rebellion in the Argentine military against their worsening condition had grown with each act of resistance, from the uprising in one base during Easter week of 1987, involving 300 men, to the events of Dec. 3, where 1,500 men in seven bases actively joined the nationalists' side. At every point, Seineldín sought to warn the ruling civilian governments of the danger of continuing to assault the military—but it all fell on deaf ears: "The [individual] directly responsible for the republic's current state of defenselessness, and for the situation which evolved on Dec. 3, 1990, is Dr. Menem, as commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces," he charged.

What left some in Argentina sputtering, however, was the colonel's statement that 26 colonels had been involved in the Dec. 3 planning, and that, had the *carapintadas* not called off the action after the government deliberately sought bloodshed that day, another 3,000 soldiers would have joined the uprising on the second day. With only three colonels on trial for Dec. 3, and one dead, the government paper *La Nación* was left to ask on Aug. 9: "Are those colonels still among the Army's ranks?"