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Counterspy

THE MAGAZINE FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED TO KNOW

Secret Documents on South Africa



South African soldiers receiving combat training near Johannesburg.

Credit: United Nations/Contact

Also in this issue: Atomic Veterans • Eyewitness Afghanistan • "Yellow Rain" •
CIA in Chad • Pershing II • U.S. Naval Buildup in Pacific • Northern Ireland •
Thatcher Arms Pinochet

Counterspy Statement of Purpose

The United States emerged from World War II as the world's dominant political and economic power. To conserve and enhance this power, the U.S. government created a variety of institutions to secure dominance over "free world" nations which supply U.S. corporations with cheap labor, raw materials, and markets. A number of these institutions, some initiated jointly with allied Western European governments, have systematically violated the fundamental rights and freedoms of people in this country and the world over. Prominent among these creations was the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), born in 1947.

Since 1973, Counterspy magazine has exposed and analyzed such intervention in all its facets: covert CIA operations, U.S. interference in foreign labor movements, U.S. aid in creating foreign intelligence agencies, multinational corporations-intelligence agency link-ups, and World Bank assistance for counterinsurgency, to name but a few. Our view is that while CIA operations have been one of the most infamous forms of intervention, the CIA is but one strand in a complex web of interference and control.

Our motivation for publishing Counterspy has been two-fold:

- People in the United States have the right and need to know the scope and nature of their government's abrogation of U.S. and other citizens' rights and liberties in order to defend themselves and most effectively change the institutions.
- People in other countries, often denied access to information, can better protect their own rights and bring about necessary change when equipped with such information.

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News NOT in the News

GAO Censors for Israel

The CIA believes that U.S. arms sales to Jordan, Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries could "exacerbate Israeli concerns about the Arab threat and could foster Israeli preemptive attacks in future crises."

But the CIA apparently didn't want the public to know that, because its comments and many other portions of text were deleted from a new General Accounting Office report, "U.S. Assistance to the State of Israel." This censored GAO report was released publicly on June 24, 1983, almost three months after it was completed and distributed within the government. Subsequently, the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) in Washington, D.C. released an uncensored draft of the document. The uncensored version illustrates that the deletions were not made to hide U.S. military secrets, but because they are, in the words of the ADC, a "damning indictment of both the United States and Israel."

According to the ADC, the censored segments of the General Accounting Office report are significant because "they tell the story of how the United States has... allowed Israel to order whatever mix of economic and military assistance it chooses at the expense of America's unemployed, poor and elderly."

The secret segments of the GAO study reveal that:

- According to the CIA, "Israeli expectations are that the United States will fund half of its defense budget. Israeli documents show that U.S. assistance funded 37 percent of its defense budget for fiscal year 1982."

- The Pentagon believes that Israel is "overemphasizing" the Arab threat. The Pentagon also told the GAO investigators that "Israeli force modernization can be met at levels of \$1.4 billion annually whereas Israel believes it needs higher levels of military assistance."

- In spite of their assessment that \$1.4 billion is sufficient, the State Department and the Pentagon will increase military aid to Israel because, they say, "it is not politically possible

to submit to the Congress a lower [Foreign Military Sales] figure than that for the previous fiscal year." The U.S. is also prepared to increase aid to Israel when significant sales of military equipment are made to Arab countries, as it did when the AWACS radar and surveillance planes were sold to Saudi Arabia.

- U.S. officials acknowledge that although the Arms Control Act provides for sanctions against a country which uses U.S. arms for offensive purposes, it has no intention of applying them to Israel.

- Israeli officials say "the Lebanon campaign will not result in any increase in aid requested from the United States," according to the public version of the GAO report. The next sentence — deleted — tells a different story: "However, there is a substantial foreign exchange component directly related to these activities [Israel's invasion of Lebanon] which increases Israel's balance of payments deficit. This increase to Israel's foreign exchange needs can have an effect on its request for ESF," or Economic Support Funds.

- Israeli military strategists have contingency plans for attacks against all Arab states, including Israel's "peace treaty" partner, Egypt.

- The CIA reports that Israel could make up for its \$1.2 billion budget deficit by cutting its domestic programs and imports or by using foreign exchange reserves rather than seeking a further increase in U.S. assistance.

- Israel is facing a severe cash flow problem because grace periods for repayment of loans are ending and debt service payments to the United States will increase sharply over the next ten years.

- "The gap in Israel's civilian imports over exports will worsen dramatically in the next few years...Its military deficit will also grow," and it will "grow substantially if the Israelis move to replace equipment lost or damaged during the Lebanon campaign." The "financial gap," says the GAO report, "will probably force the Israelis to press for additional U.S. aid," or, as an alternative, to implement domestic austerity programs. But "Israeli policymakers prefer to make up this difference through increased U.S. aid."

- Giving money to Israel to alleviate its debt

problem will not help the U.S. economy. U.S. officials quoted in the GAO study say that the U.S. budget deficit will increase if the U.S. seeks to alleviate Israel's debt repayment problem by writing off Israel's military sales loans or increasing the amount of new loans.

Copies of the uncensored version of the General Accounting Office report, "U.S. Assistance to the State of Israel" are available from the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, 1731 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009. \$2.00.

You Can Take Your Pet in Case of War

"It Will Be Done" proclaims the title of a U.S. Army pamphlet describing evacuation procedures for "noncombatant U.S. citizens" in West Germany in case of war and other "emergency situations." The "Noncombatant Evacuation Order" obtained by Counterspy provides for the evacuation of some 160,000 Americans living in Central Germany.

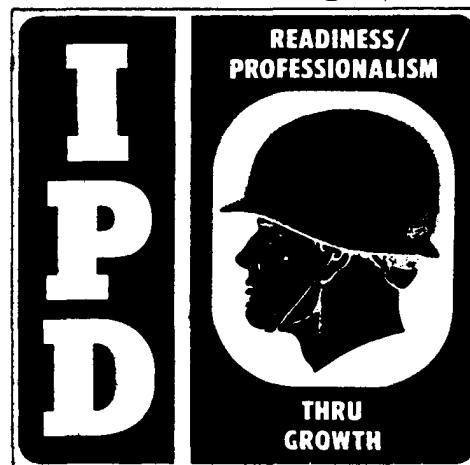
The document is not classified, but it emphasizes that this "pamphlet does contain sensitive data that should be disseminated on a NEED TO KNOW basis." Disclosure of evacuation plans to "unauthorized persons" (such as West German citizens), "could jeopardize your safety," the pamphlet warns. "A sudden surge in discussion of evacuation plans could make local national officials and the general public apprehensive concerning U.S. intent to defend Europe."

The Noncombatant Evacuation Order (NEO) tries very hard to strike an optimistic tone. Everything will be done. The old, the sick, and pregnant women will be evacuated first. All families will stay together no matter what. Transport to the airport will run smoothly; the West German government will use its traffic computers to keep the roads open for the departing Americans. You'll even be able to evacuate your pet, including, the pamphlet stresses, your "pet snake" — if you have a container. Why? "To some disposition of pets is an emotional issue.... In case of emergency evacuation, noncombatants are expected to be stretched to a highly tense state. They cannot be allowed to tip over into an uncontrollable state of hysteria" by not being allowed to take their pets. So even though it's a hassle from a "military point of view," you can take your pet. There is just one condition: "One must understand

that pets will not take a seat away from a person."

Even the most optimistic Army planners concede that there are two situations in which the evacuation procedures might not work: if all the airports are closed and travel by road and rail is impossible, or in case of a massive nuclear strike. What is to be done then? The Noncombatant Evacuation Order pamphlet has answers. In the first situation, the "NEO warden [will] form noncombatants in a column of two's, order 'follow me,' and lead the families westward." The NEO pamphlet sternly continues: "This is not a joke." But, in case of a massive nuclear strike, the Army runs out of bright ideas: Stay at home and "be prepared to weather the storm."

THE ARMY INSTITUTE FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT Fort Eustis, Virginia



ARMY CORRESPONDENCE COURSE PROGRAM

NUCLEAR WEAPONS FUNDAMENTALS

Nuclear Weapons Not All That Dangerous, Says Army

The U.S. Army wants to make sure that its corps of officers — any one of whom can initiate the process which results in nuclear weapons use — is prepared to deal with nuclear war. To reach that goal, the Army Institute for Professional Development in Fort Eustis, Virginia, has

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developed an Army Correspondence Course on "Nuclear Weapons Fundamentals" (Subcourse ISO216, 1979).

After completing the course, officers are tested with a 30-question, multiple choice exam. Since "to err is human," only 21 correct answers (70 percent) are required to pass the course. And, mercifully, there is no time limit for completing the test. Students are even invited to re-consult the text before answering a question.

The "Nuclear Weapons Fundamentals" course begins with the instruction: "Your greatest responsibility will be to instill in your subordinates a sense of confidence in their ability to survive a nuclear attack." The following 100 pages are geared to instill just that confidence. A nuclear attack might not be that dangerous after all:

- "Anything that provides protection from the sun will also provide protection from thermal radiation."

- "Dense materials, such as lead and iron, offer excellent protection against gamma rays. Soil provides fair protection against neutrons."

- "Beta particles are not hazardous unless they enter the body through ingestion, inhalation or open wounds."

- After a nuclear attack, due to fallout, "all dust and dirt must be removed from under the fingernails, and from the hair. All exposed skin surfaces and the head should be washed, or at least wiped clean with a damp cloth. As soon as the tactical situation permits, individuals should bathe thoroughly, and change all clothing."

- "Normally, troops in vehicles may pass through the point of ground zero [the point of the nuclear detonation, or in case of airburst, right below the detonation] and foot troops may pass within 300 meters of ground zero within one-half hour after the detonation without undue risk to personnel."

The "Nuclear Weapons Fundamentals" correspondence course stresses that it is important to follow all these and other directives. "A well-trained individual who observes the protective measures established can survive on the nuclear battlefield," it claims. ☐

by Robert Cavanagh

Thatcher Arms Pinochet

British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher is sending thank you notes to Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet for the aid he gave Britain during that country's 1982 war against Argentina

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over the Falklands/Malvinas Islands. These "thank you's" include sales of planes, helicopters, a Magnox nuclear power reactor, and some 300 tons of natural uranium. With these supplies, Chile will have sufficient plutonium to build dozens of nuclear bombs by the end of the decade.

During the war, to ensure that the Chilean government would allow British surveillance equipment and aircraft to operate from that country, Margaret Thatcher struck a deal with the junta. On April 24, 1982, just as Secretary of State Alexander Haig's shuttle diplomacy between London and Buenos Aires was collapsing, a Flying Tigers Boeing 747 took off from the British Air Base Brize Norton in Oxfordshire. Its cargo: six Hawker Hunter fighter planes from the Royal Air Force for delivery to Chile. Pinochet was anxious to replenish his Hawker Hunter contingent which a 1973 British Labor government-imposed embargo on military goods to Chile had long prevented. The Hawker Hunters are of little value in the European high-technology weapons arsenal, but for Chile, they are essential for carrying out "ground attack and close support" maneuvers. It was the Hawker Hunters that bombed the Presidential Palace in September 1973 when Pinochet seized power.

Since the April 24 shipment, British arms sales to Chile have greatly increased. Said former Foreign Secretary Francis Pym: "Chile was quite helpful to us in the Falklands conflict, and we ought to bear that in mind when we consider our relations with her now." Britain has sent additional Hawker Hunters, Canberra reconnaissance planes, and spare parts. Exactly what the British government is shipping to Chile is becoming harder and harder to determine: the Chilean Air Force has been allotted an exclusive fenced-in cargo area — free of charge — at the British Luton airport.

The British troops occupying the Falklands/Malvinas are linked to Britain only by aerial and naval transport via Ascension Island, some 2000 miles distant. Clearly, Britain needs an ally closer by. Chile is an ideal candidate. It has a long-standing territorial conflict with Argentina over the Beagle Channel Islands at the tip of South America, and the Pinochet regime wants British equipment to prepare for war against Argentina. In 1980, such a war seemed imminent when both the Chilean and Argentinian dictators moved troops to their common border. The British government also knows that arming Pinochet will keep the Argentine military preoccupied with the "Chilean threat" and prevent it from contemplating action against the British occupation of the Falklands/Malvinas.

Arms sales are only part of Britain's
This article is an expanded version of Dieter Maier,
"Atombombe fuer Pinochet?" which appeared in the West
German monthly, links, May 1983.



increasingly close relationship with Chile. The British government is already negotiating with the Pinochet regime for base rights in Chile. The Chilean Air Force has also gotten British pilots to train its crews; this secret arrangement was revealed only when a British pilot was killed in a plane crash in Chile in early 1983.

Nor has Margaret Thatcher gone out of her way to publicize the nuclear deal with Chile. In September 1982, British trade minister Peter Rees visited Chile with several British nuclear industry officials in tow. Rees praised the Pinochet regime as a "moderating and stabilizing force" with which Britain was interested in "strengthening political relations." His visit was reciprocated several months later, when the president and executive director of Chile's Comision Chilena de Energia Nuclear, Lt. Gen. Herman Brady and Col. Juan Mir arrived in London. (Brady was one of the leading generals involved in the September 1973 coup.) The two Chilean officers and British government officials agreed that Britain would sell the Magnox reactor to Chile, along with 300 tons of natural uranium. Chilean nuclear engineers and reactor operators are to be trained in England, and British officials have assured the Chileans that the reactor could be completed within five years.

Chile's nuclear energy ambitions go back to the 1960s, when the Christian Democratic government bought two experimental reactors from Britain, one of them under civilian, the other under military control. The Chilean military had apparently decided early on that it wanted to preserve a "nuclear option" for itself

without any interference from civilians.

During the years of the Salvador Allende government (1970-73), Chile's nuclear program was virtually at a standstill. But only a year after the coup, the first controlled chain reaction took place in one of the reactors, reportedly with the assistance of West German engineers. Chile's nuclear scientist Igor Saavedra is said to have commented that Chile was now in a position to build nuclear weapons. Saavedra no doubt had gotten somewhat carried away by the excitement — it takes years to move from the first controlled chain reaction to building a nuclear bomb. Nevertheless, General Contreras Fischer, then-chief of the nuclear energy commission, stated that the ultimate purpose of the nuclear program was to build nuclear weapons.

Meanwhile, the artificially created economic "boom years" in the mid-1970s prompted exaggerated government calculations for Chile's energy needs, and the construction of a nuclear reactor was said to be the answer to this energy problem. These dreams were shortlived: Chile's "economic boom" of rapid economic growth turned sour, and the atomic energy commission declared in 1980 that construction of a nuclear reactor would not begin before 1985. At the same time, the government started two large dam projects in order to take care of Chile's energy needs. (Some two-thirds of Chile's electricity is generated through hydro power.)

As the economic justification for a nuclear reactor evaporated in the late 1970s, the military desire for atomic weapons grew. Neighboring Argentina was quite open about its intention to use its nuclear technology — supplied primarily by West Germany and Canada — to build nuclear weapons. Chilean-Argentinian tensions increased and brought the two countries to the brink of war. For the Chilean generals, the situation was clear: in order to keep up their side of the arms race with Argentina, they had to get their own nuclear weapons.

The Falklands/Malvinas war provided an excellent opportunity to advance toward this goal. Chile was the only country in South America to side with the British, which resulted in a de facto military alliance between the two countries. Today, Britain is supplying arms and nuclear technology to a junta whose internal problems could lead it to pursue an aggressive foreign policy. Pinochet's economic policy has culminated in disaster, popular opposition to the generals is growing, and Pinochet now faces opposition even from the rightwing.

Such a government, completely isolated from its people and unable to stop its own disintegration might be tempted to drop a nuclear bomb on its external "enemies." (This holds true for Chile's adversary, the Argentine junta, as well.) Once the British reactor in Chile is

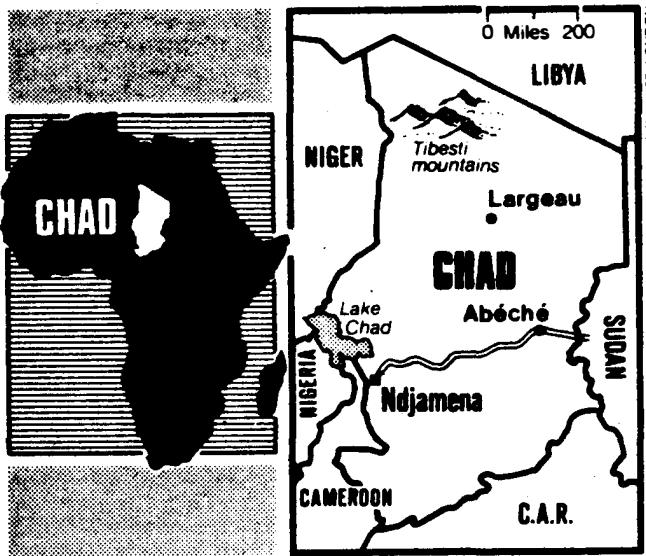
completed, the building of nuclear weapons could proceed fairly rapidly and without any possibility of outside intervention since the Chilean junta has an internal uranium supply over which it exercises complete control: the Chuquicamata mine produces some 40 to 60 tons of uranium a year.

CIA Keeps its Man in Power in Chad

The Reagan CIA has helped to bring about at least one successful coup, and the administration is now spending millions of dollars to prop up the ruler it helped bring to power: Hissene Habre of Chad.

Habre's forces entered the Chadian capital of N'djamena on June 7, 1982, and overthrew the National Transition Government of Goukouni Oueddi. CBS News has now confirmed that Habre's forces were backed by the CIA, which supplied at least arms and training. The operation is reported to have cost the CIA \$10 million. (See Jeff McConnell, "U.S. Responsible for Famine in Chad," *Counterspy*, vol. 7, no. 1.)

Reagan authorized yet another \$10 million out of his "discretionary fund" (which requires no Congressional approval) for an airlift to Habre in July 1983, to strengthen him against attacks from exile forces in northern Chad loyal to the



former government. These exile forces have been receiving help from Libya and would be friendly to Libya should they be victorious. Reagan informed Congress that he was supporting Habre because of "massive" Libyan support for the exile forces which have captured key northern towns and are engaging Habre's forces in heavy fighting

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as they move toward the capital in the south.

Some of the U.S. money will also go to the more than 1,000 Zairian troops in Chad which have been there since early July 1983 to back up Habre. This is the second time the Zairian military is playing a key role in Chad. In late 1981, troops from Zaire, as well as Senegal and Nigeria, entered Chad as a "peacekeeping force" sponsored by France and the United States. Its stated purpose was to prevent further fighting between Habre, then trying to overthrow Goukouni's government, and forces loyal to Goukouni. It was a strange peacekeeping force: Prior to their movement into Chad, the Zairian government had publicly sided with Habre, and Zairian troops were reported actually to be assisting Habre's forces. Moreover, in coordination with the U.S., Zaire's contingent remained in Chad an extra month after Habre's victory, and after the Senegalese and Nigerian troops had left, to help Habre consolidate his hold over the country.

At the moment, Egypt and Sudan, the other principal allies of the U.S. in the region, apparently are not involved directly in the fighting. There is evidence, though, that the CIA operation against Chad to overthrow Goukouni Oueddi was carried out in collaboration with Egypt. Western diplomats in Africa report that many of the weapons Habre used in the earlier fighting were supplied by Egypt, whose arsenals were then replenished by the United States. Habre's forces kicked off a major offensive against Goukouni's National Transition Government in late summer of 1981, soon after they received a large airlift of supplies from Egypt. This airlift apparently was carried out in conjunction with the CIA. President Jaafar Numeiri of Sudan assisted as well, by permitting Habre's forces to use Sudanese territory as sanctuary and by providing logistical support through Sudanese military officers.

The CIA operation in Chad began early in 1981 just after Ronald Reagan took office. Libyan troops had entered Chad in December 1980 at the request of Chadian President Goukouni Oueddi, and stayed there for about one year. The CIA reportedly told the U.S. Congress that the purpose of the operation against Chad was to punish Libya for assisting the National Transition Government. This CIA operation, however, was only one small part of a much larger CIA-sponsored campaign against Libya set in motion at this time. The purpose of this campaign was to isolate and destabilize Libya, thereby either reducing its influence or bringing to power an entirely different government more to the liking of Ronald Reagan. Besides the Chad operation, parts of this campaign included:

- A plan to provide financial support for anti-Libyan political figures in Mauritius.

- Collaboration with Libyan exiles to form a "Libyan Liberation Front" in Somalia and Egypt.
- An Africa-wide anti-Libya propaganda campaign.
- Increased CIA and Pentagon presence in North Africa.
- Military pressures on Libya's borders.
- Disruption of Libyan oil sales.
- Fostering divisions within the Organization of African Unity to thwart Muammar Qaddafi's succession to the chairpersonship.
- Talks with the French government of Giscard d'Estaing, reported by Time, over cooperation in a plot, to be carried out by Libyan exiles, to assassinate Qaddafi.

Chad was thus a "sideshow" in relation to the Reagan administration's main event against Libya. But the costs to the Chadian people were enormous. Thousands died of starvation after Habre destroyed the crops and livestock of those judged to be supporters of Goukouni Oueddi. Hundreds more were executed after Habre came to power.

U.S. officials now claim that the CIA did not intend for Habre to overthrow the National Transition Government. But this claim is suspect. CIA support for Habre continued for a time after the Libyan troops protecting the Goukouni government had left Chad, and support from Egypt and Sudan, with whom the CIA had been working, also continued. And later, once Habre's victory was assured, Egypt and the U.S. reportedly airlifted arms into Chad to make sure he held on to power.

Although they claim it was "unexpected," U.S. officials were very encouraged by Habre's victory and are unlikely to allow him to lose power without another fight. And while fighting continues in Chad, the CIA is engaged, according to Newsweek, in paramilitary operations in at least ten other countries. Chad may have seen the CIA's first coup under Reagan, but nobody in his administration intends for it to be the last.

by Jeff McConnell



First Strike MX Missiles

Representatives of the peace movement have argued for years that the MX intercontinental nuclear missiles (dubbed "peacekeepers" by Ronald Reagan) are first strike weapons. Support for that argument that the Reagan administration's MX deployment plan is geared towards achieving a first strike capability now comes from an unexpected source: Brent



Scowcroft, chairperson of Reagan's Commission on Strategic Forces.

Scowcroft doesn't admit it publicly. He still sticks to the administration line, claiming that by deploying "just" 100 MX missiles -- which is what Reagan says publicly he wants to do -- the U.S. will not achieve "a full first strike capability against Soviet weapons and leadership targets." Only the deployment of 200 to 250 missiles would do that, Scowcroft says.

As it turns out, this is exactly what a secret Air Force document, the Program Objectives Memorandum proposes. (It is "designed to guide Air Force budgeting and planning for the five fiscal years 1985 to 1989.") The memorandum speaks of the 100 MX slated for deployment now as only a first stage, and describes a "phase 3 follow-on deployment of the MX." Phase 3 would involve stationing another 100 MX missiles, bringing the total to 200 -- the exact number Scowcroft has said is minimally necessary to achieve a "full first strike capability." (Sources: Washington Post, 6/17/83, p.A-18; 7/2/83, p.A-7.)



CIA War in Central America

DIA Report Shows Reagan Lies About Nicaragua

President Reagan repeatedly refers to the CIA-sponsored anti-Sandinistas as "freedom fighters," as distinguished from the "guerrillas" of El Salvador, and claims that the anti-Sandinistas at one time had "been members of the Sandinista revolution for the most part, in its effort to bring democracy to Nicaragua...." His administration continues to describe the covert operations along the border of Nicaragua as aimed at the interdiction of arms headed for the guerrillas in El Salvador.

A secret U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency report dated July 16, 1982, obtained by Counterspy, contradicts President Reagan on all three counts. (See document.) On the composition of the anti-Sandinista groups, the DIA report says that the Nicaraguan Democratic Front "is reportedly led by Col. Enrique Bermudez — former GN [Somoza's National Guard] member and last Nicaraguan military attache to the US under the government of President Anastasio Somoza — and by other ex-GN officers.... It is the largest, best organized, and most effective of the anti-government groups." Other groups include:

- The 15 September Legion: "Military arm of the Nicaraguan Revolutionary Democratic Alliance (ADREN), a 'Somocista' group founded by Bermudez and Heriberto Sanchez...."
- The 15 September Legion (splinter group): "Apparently led by Justiniano 'Tino' Perez Sales, a former GN captain, ex-GN Col. Francisco Rivera, and Manuel Porro...."
- The National Liberation Army: "This group is led by former Somoza business partner Pedro Ortega 'Juan Carlos' Macho...."
- The Nicaraguan Christian Army: "This group is said to be led by Roberto Constantino Pineda Arguello.... Some of its members are said to be former GN personnel, although not

necessarily Somoza supporters."

Clearly, the anti-Sandinista forces are not "for the most part" former members of the Sandinista revolution. For the most part, they are and always have been Somocistas.

The DIA report refers to these anti-Sandinistas exclusively as "insurgents" and "guerrillas." There is no hint of freedom fighters, here. One group is even called "terrorist": The 15 September Legion, the report says, "is a terrorist group comprised of a small number of commandos.... The group has claimed credit for the December 1981 bombing of a Nicaraguan civil airlines AERONICA Boeing 727 in Mexico City,



the October 1981 hijacking of a Costa Rican SANSA airliner from San Jose, Costa Rica, and the 20 February bomb blast in a suitcase unloaded from a Honduran SAHSA aircraft at Sandino Airport in Managua."

Activity by these "insurgents" and "terrorists" in late 1981, says the report, was "largely limited to small and sporadic armed incidents along the Honduran border and in northeastern Nicaragua." But by the end of December 1981, "this activity increased significantly" and the events of March 14, 1982 marked a further escalation:

On 14 March, insurgents initiated a wave of guerrilla activity by sabotaging two important bridges in the northwest near the Honduran border.... Concurrently, guerrilla activity in

the northeast and along the Honduran border heightened, and security forces were confronted with a series of small-scale insurgent attacks that have continued unabated. More recently, at least two insurgent attacks have been launched from Costa Rica, and the Sandinistas are reporting increasing clashes with guerrillas in the interior of the country.

Since that date, the insurgency "has become increasingly widespread" and "is likely to escalate in the months ahead as opposition to the [Sandinista] leadership grows." During the 100-day period from March 14 to June 21, 1982, the report continues, there were some 106 insurgent incidents which involved the following types of operations:

- Sabotage of highway bridges and attempted destruction of fuel tanks at a military facility, using explosive charges.
- Sniper fire and attacks against small military patrols.
- Attacks by small guerrilla bands on individual Sandinista soldiers, and the assassination of minor government officials and a Cuban adviser.

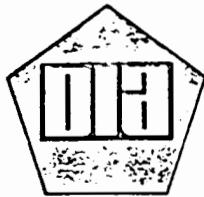
- Burning of a customs warehouse, buildings belonging to the Ministry of Construction, and crops.

In sum, the DIA report details an offensive insurgency which included assassinations — illegal even during war — and the burning of crops. The report never mentions El Salvador, let alone the interdiction of arms. Obviously, the interdiction of arms does not require the invasion of Nicaragua, particularly not from Costa Rica.

The other side of the Reagan administration's assertion that the real goal is arms interdiction is its claim that the anti-Sandinistas are not trying to overthrow the government of Nicaragua. The DIA report, in contrast, refers to an "anti-government insurgency" and assumes matter-of-factly that the objective is to overthrow the government. "Whether it will succeed eventually in overthrowing the government," says the report, "will depend largely on successful unification efforts, the extent of popular support received both from within and outside Nicaragua, and the effectiveness of Sandinista counterinsurgency operations."

The DIA Report (Excerpts)

INSURGENT ACTIVITY INCREASES IN NICARAGUA (U)



DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Insurgent Strength and Organization (U)

(S/WNINTEL/NOFORN/NOCONTRACT) Information on the organization and strength of anti-Sandinista insurgents is incomplete. Last year, sources linked to insurgent organizations alleged total guerrilla strength to be 3,000 activists. This figure appears greatly exaggerated. Government officials have also, at times, tended to overstate insurgent strength. On 5 April, Interior Minister Tomas Borge claimed there were 4,000 guerrillas in 17 camps throughout Honduras. On the 11th, Junta member Sergio Ramirez alleged 5,000 guerrillas were in 14 Honduran camps. There are probably about 1,000 active antigovernment insurgents, although this figure could be higher. Most appear to be based in Honduras, although some are believed to be based in Costa Rica as well as within Nicaragua. They belong to at least six major organizations representing the following three major political groupings:

- Former National Guardsmen (GN) and supporters of the late President Anastasio Somoza Debayle.
- Dissident Sandinistas, including followers of Sandinista revolutionary hero Eden Pastora. This group, the Sandino Revolutionary Front (ERS), was recently formed in Costa Rica and is believed to contain dissident Sandinistas as well as key members

of Nicaragua's major democratic opposition groups.

- Persons not identified with either Somoza or the Sandinistas, such as the Miskitos and other Indian groups.

(S/WNINTEL/NOFORN/NOCONTRACT) The six major insurgent organizations are as follows:

- (1) - Nicaraguan Democratic Front (Frente Democratica Nacional (FDN) - also known as the Nicaraguan Democratic Forces, Nicaraguan Democratic Movement, and Nicaraguan Democratic Armed Forces (FADN). Formed in 1981, it is a coalition group of various anti-Sandinista organizations. It is reportedly led by Col Enrique V. Bermudez - former GN member and last Nicaraguan military attache to the US under the government of President Anastasio Somoza - and by other ex-GN officers. It is based in Honduras and operates primarily in northern Nicaragua. It is the largest, best organized, and most effective of the anti-government insurgent groups. It operates the clandestine "Radio 15 September," which began broadcasting in mid-1981 and probably is transmitted from Honduras. The FDN claims to have sabotaged the Somotillo and Rio Negro bridges in northwest Nicaragua on 14 March. The group is anti-Communist and anti-Sandinista. The FDN is believed to consist of about 800 activists from the following organizations: - 15 September Legion, military arm of the Nicaraguan Revolutionary Democratic Alliance (ADREN), a "Somocista" group founded by Bermudez and Heriberto Sanchez. Most of the Legion apparently joined the FDN in late 1981. The Legion has also been referred to as the Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR) . . .

(3) -- Legion 15 September Legion -- Legion 15 de Septiembre. Apparently led by Justiniano "Fino" Perez Sales, a former GN captain, ex GN Col Francisco Rivera, and Manuel Porro, this group is composed of elements that split from the Legion after it joined the FDN. It is a terrorist group comprised of a small number of commandos believed to be operating out of Honduras. It takes its name from the date of Nicaragua's independence from Spain in 1821. The group has claimed credit for the December 1981 bombing of a Nicaraguan civil airlines AERONICA Boeing 727 in Mexico City, the October 1981 hijacking of a Costa Rican SANSA airliner from San

Jose, Costa Rica, and the 20 February bomb blast in a suitcase unloaded from a Honduran SALSA aircraft at Sandino Airport in Managua.

(4) -- National Liberation Army -- Ejercito Nacional de Liberacion (ENL). This group is led by former Somoza business partner Pedro Ortega "Juan Carlos" Macho. It is believed comprised of a small number of guerrillas, possibly no more than 50, operating out of southern Honduras. The group's leader has claimed credit for the sabotage of the two bridges on 14 March as well as two unspecified bridges in the region.

Eden Pastora Unmasked as Longtime U.S. Agent

Eden Pastora, "once one of the best known Sandinista revolutionary figures, has come full circle, from a position in the Sandinista government to disillusionment with its increasing alliance with Cuba, to exile and finally to the place where he began." So goes the "tragic" story of Pastora as told by most of the U.S. media. Pastora, now based in Costa Rica, is said to be fighting the Sandinistas because they "betrayed" the revolution, because they turned "communist," and Pastora is portrayed as the good guy who wanted to keep the Sandinistas on the "democratic path."

Hector Frances, an Argentine intelligence officer who until December 1982 served in Costa Rica in an operation "designed to overthrow the revolutionary regime of Nicaragua," has an different story to tell. During his work in Costa Rica — on the joint Argentine intelligence-CIA operation — Frances met with Pastora: "I met with a man who had abandoned the revolutionary mystique and had come under the profound mystique of money and power."

The money Pastora "discovered" was CIA money — the CIA is now funding and supplying his "Democratic Revolutionary Alliance" (ARDE) in spite of Pastora's earlier statements that he was not interested in such aid. According to Hector Frances, Pastora wasn't telling the truth even then: "The CIA plays two games, supporting the counterrevolutionaries in Honduras [ex-members of dictator Somoza's National Guard] but also supporting Pastora in Costa Rica. The support is not new, because...Pastora had as early as 1979 been informing the State Department about the Nicaraguan revolution, because he was finding out that he was not going to have the degree of power that he thought he should have within the revolution." (1979 is the year of the Sandinista victory in Nicaragua. At that time

Pastora held high-ranking positions in the government.)

Frances points out that Pastora was potentially important to the CIA for two reasons. Unlike the ex-National Guardsmen fighting the Sandinistas from Honduras, Pastora had strong anti-Somoza credentials as a daring Sandinista commander during the liberation struggle. The CIA also considered Pastora to be the one Nicaraguan capable of causing a "split" within the Socialist International, the world-wide association of Social Democratic Parties, which so far has supported the Sandinistas. In March 1983, Pastora visited the Social Democratic parties in Western Europe and Latin America in a bid for their support. He returned to Costa Rica with a briefcase full of rejection slips. Most party and government leaders had refused to meet with him.

Eden Pastora, of yet, then, has not been particularly useful to the CIA. He has not been able to attract a sizable following inside Nicaragua. The international propaganda coup the CIA hoped to pull off by using a former Sandinista commander has not materialized. And, Hector Frances says it isn't easy working with Pastora. Pastora is unable to give "a clear and coherent definition" of his political program and plans. (The Washington Post reported that one reason for Pastora's lack of success in winning support from Social Democratic parties is his "inability to present a creditable and comprehensive program for Nicaragua's future.")

Pastora's role in the Reagan administration's plan to overthrow the Nicaraguan government is likely to grow as he receives a regular supply of arms and money to pay his men. Pastora has also begun to coordinate his military operations with the CIA-funded ex-National Guardsmen attacking from the north along the Nicaraguan-Honduran border. This open collaboration with his former enemies illustrates what Hector Frances calls "Pastora's lack of definition" and his hunger for power. Several months after Pastora left Nicaragua in July 1981, denouncing the revolution, he condemned the CIA for aiding the Somocistas in Honduras and magnanimously offered to join the Sandinistas in fighting the

Somocista invasion. About a year later, that same Pastora and his men were on the CIA payroll, coordinating military operations with the Somocistas.

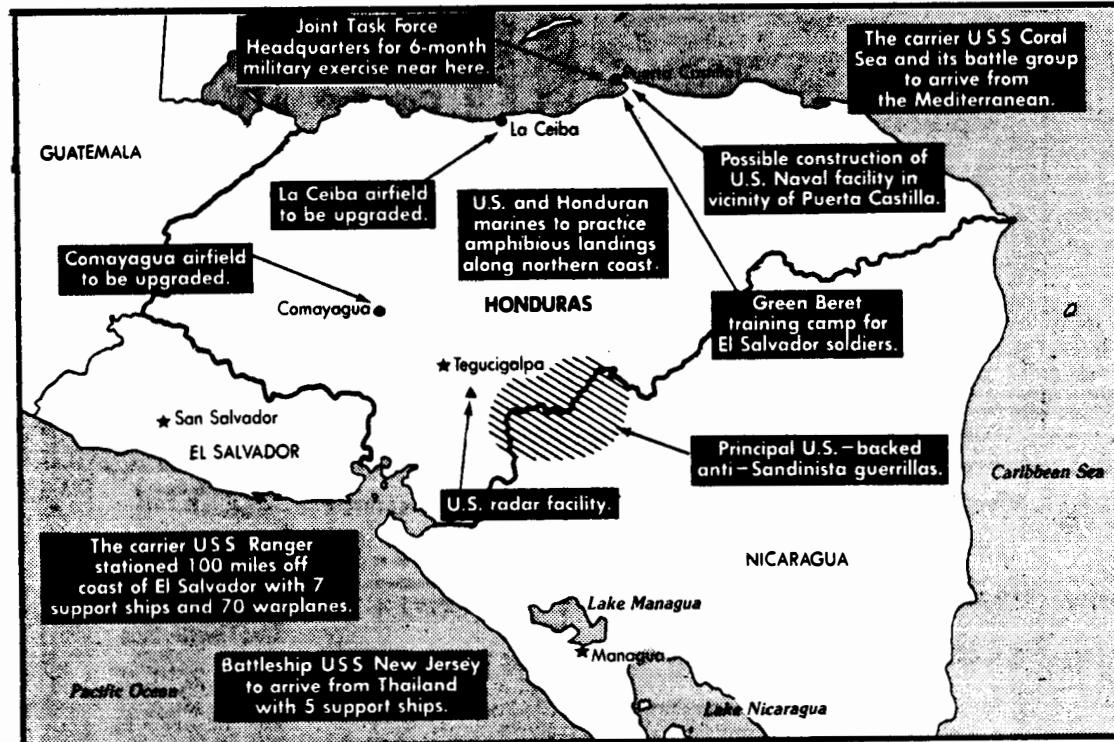
(Additional testimony from Hector Frances about his collaboration with the CIA in aiding the Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries can be found in Target Nicaragua, a film by Saul Landau. The film is available from New Time Films, 74 Varick Street, New York, NY 10013, tel. 212-226-8097.)

representatives, has designed a \$100 million project innocuously dubbed the "Northern Zone Infrastructure Development."¹ The United States has already announced plans to allocate at least \$7 million for the project, while the Inter-American Development Bank has allotted \$10 million to construct roads, aid "development" and initiate the settlement of this remote, sparsely populated region.² This generous funding cannot be justified on economic grounds; Costa Rica has no problem of overpopulation. Rather, the "geopolitical objectives" of the project, publicly recognized by U.S. Ambassador Francis McNeil, are the motivating force.

Development of the settlement will include high-technology infrastructure. Israel, which has cultivated close ties with the Costa Rican Ministry of Security, agreed in August 1982 to construct a valla electronica or electronic barricade on the Costa Rican border with Nicaragua.³ U.S. officials have admitted to chipping in more than \$500,000 for the military communications network to be used by Costa Rican rural security forces.⁴

Publicly, the Costa Rican government has maintained a position of neutrality and non-involvement with regard to the Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries, or "contras," and has fairly successfully detracted attention from the estimated 2,500 contras amassed on its border. Costa Rican officials claim to have dismantled 21 contra compounds, the majority of which are clustered around the Orosi Volcano, just 30 kilometers south of the Nicaraguan border. Officials admit, though, that they have captured

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Features

Atomic Veterans

Victims of U.S. Nuclear War Strategy

by Arjun Makhijani and Annie Makhijani

Sitting on the fantail of the destroyer Allen M. Sumner in his shorts and tennis shoes, John Smitherman watched Test Baker, the first underwater nuclear explosion. The 20 kiloton plutonium bomb was exploded on July 25, 1946, in the lagoon of the Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands. It sent a million tons of water shooting 6,000 feet into the sky.

Test Baker was the second atomic test (after Test Able, an atmospheric explosion on July 1, 1946) of Operation Crossroads — so named because the generals and admirals felt that civilization was at a "crossroads," and that they would be leading it in the right direction through these tests. One of these officers was Admiral W. S. Parsons — he had recently been promoted from captain, presumably because he had been the one to arm the atom bombs aboard the B-29 bombers before they were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Parsons and the other military leaders were enacting the designs of U.S. Secretary of War Henry Stimson who had said of U.S. nuclear weapons policy: "If the problem of the proper use of this weapon can be solved... our civilization can be saved."¹

The Pentagon established a special task force, Joint Task Force-One, to conduct the massive operation which involved 42,000 people and almost 250 ships. Top Secret and Secret documents from the files of the chief medical officer of the operation, Col. Stafford L. Warren — now declassified — confirm the tests were conducted in a manner which was grossly negligent to the health and safety of the participants.

These "Warren Papers," obtained by Atomic veteran Anthony Guarisco and Mary Guarisco show that the preparations for Test Baker were made in great haste. The instruments did not work properly, when they worked at all. There

was a serious lack of protective equipment and even of elementary precautions and training. No one knew how to decontaminate even one radioactive ship, let alone an entire fleet thousands of miles from any adequate port facilities. Thus, every aspect of Operation Crossroads was fraught with danger for the 42,000 people present.

The commanders of the operation knew of many of these dangers, but chose to ignore them. The Radiological Safety Section of the Joint Task Force had warned that if the radioactive "column" from the underwater explosion did not rise above 10,000 feet, the radiological conditions would be "extremely serious" because all of the radioactive materials would come down instead of being blown away by the wind. The Safety Section further predicted that the unmanned "target" ships would become thoroughly contaminated with radioactive spray. The commanders were also warned to watch out for contamination of the staffed ships taken into the radioactive Bikini lagoon.

Each one of these warnings was ignored. Instead, orders were given in direct opposition to them. Pentagon documents show that almost every ship in the task force became radioactively contaminated and the personnel were routinely exposed to serious radioactive dangers. This stemmed from the "attitude of indifference" to radiological safety on the part of many officers. Captain George Lyon of the Safety Section, in

Arjun Makhijani is a consultant on energy and economic development. Annie Makhijani is a chemistry student. Unless otherwise noted, all information in this article, including the quotations from the documents are from Arjun Makhijani and David Albright, Irradiation of Personnel during Operation Crossroads: An Evaluation Based on Official Documents, International Radiation Research and Training Institute, Washington, D.C., 1983.

response to a written complaint from Ensign Coffin almost a year after the test, had to admit that there were officers "like Captain Maxwell, who insists on a blind, 'hairy-chested' approach to the matter of radiological safety with a disdain for the unseen hazard, an attitude which is contagious to the younger officers and detrimental to the radiological safety program."

Yet, so anxious were the top officials to suppress the truth about the dangers of Operation Crossroads that Captain Lyon wrote: "In view of the near-rightness of so many of Ensign Coffin's points, I would recommend that he be given a letter of reprimand, or admonition."² (See documents.)

This "hairy-chested" approach meant that men were sent into the intensely radioactive Bikini lagoon the very day after both Test Able and Test Baker. And, only three days after most of the target ships of Test Baker were heavily contaminated by the million-ton column of radioactive spray from the underwater explosion, personnel were sent aboard the ships to retrieve experimental animals and instruments. On the very day of Test Able, John Smitherman was sent into the lagoon to fight a fire aboard the aircraft carrier Independence. It was hot, he recalls: "Right after that, we went swimming in the lagoon there. There were dead fish around there, lots of them, but they said 'Nothing to worry about, no harmful effects,' and there were no restrictions on us whatsoever."³

All the personnel at Operation Crossroads were constantly exposed to radiation from the radioactive elements given off from the explosion and from plutonium. As they swept, hosed down, scrubbed and scrapped the target ships, they inhaled radioactive air. They slept, ate and drank aboard the "non-target" ships all of which had become contaminated because they were moved into the radioactive lagoon. They even slept aboard the highly contaminated target ships, encouraged by officers indifferent to their safety. As a result, Col. Warren noted two weeks after Test Baker, "contamination of personnel, clothing, hands, and even food can be demonstrated readily in every ship in the JTF-1 [Joint Task Force-One] in increasing amounts day by day."

Doses of Gamma radiation (like X-rays) greater than the "tolerance dose," which was then much higher than today's still inadequate standard, were also frequently recorded. The personnel were also subjected to other kinds of radiation like that of plutonium and the radioactive products of atomic explosions called fission products. Doses of Beta radiation (electron rays) greater than tolerance were "exceedingly common."

Beta radiation, according to several experts, has destroyed the lymphatic system of John Smitherman. His legs began to swell

irremediably, and he became too sick to work. His legs eventually were amputated. Now his right arm and hand are swelling. He also has cancer. Smitherman has made six appeals to the Veterans Administration for assistance. Six times the agency has denied that his diseases are related to his exposure to radiation at Operation Crossroads where radioactive spray rained down on his bare chest.

Indeed, the Veterans Administration claims that radiation exposures at the 235 U.S. atmospheric nuclear tests were generally low, and routinely denies "service connection" for the diseases from which atomic veterans are now suffering and dying. The administration utterly denies the possibility of significant genetic defects in the children and grandchildren of the veterans to the extent of opposing an epidemiological study as "unnecessary." Such a study would mean contacting each atomic veteran in order to get a complete statistical overview of the genetic and medical effects of nuclear tests.

The once-secret Warren Papers directly contradict the position of the Veterans Administration and of the Defense Nuclear Agency (note the acronym-DNA) which is the branch of the Pentagon responsible for determining how high the radiation doses were.

The atomic veterans are probably the largest group ever to have been used as guinea pigs by the Pentagon in preparation for nuclear war.

An analysis of the Warren Papers by the International Radiation Research and Training Institute shows that it is very likely that large numbers of personnel were exposed to large amounts of radiation, though it is impossible to calculate the exact doses. The report further concluded that "it is more than likely that a great many of the men who were made to do work such as sweeping, scrubbing, hosing down decks, scraping and repainting the sides of some ships, inhaled and ingested very dangerous quantities of fission products and plutonium." Indeed, the report concludes that the Defense Nuclear Agency's assumptions were "without foundation in fact — which renders its conclusion

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about doses unscientific."

The Pentagon has steadfastly maintained that internal doses of radiation were "essentially insignificant" and that the exposures to a quarter of a million personnel during the atmospheric tests were "generally low." Faced with mounting evidence of both negligent conduct during the atomic tests and inadequate medical care for the veterans, the Pentagon refuses to concede either that low doses of radiation could cause a lot of harm or that the doses were much higher than it cares to admit.

There are two principal reasons for the Pentagon's denials. One relates to the cost of atomic weapons. The Pentagon has contended that nuclear weapons would provide "the biggest bang for the buck." But if the Department of Defense and the Department of Energy were to bear all the actual costs of the production and testing of these weapons, they would be staggering. Besides treatment and compensation for the veterans, the government would have to pay for medical testing and care of the workers in factories that make nuclear bombs, in the nuclear reactors and in the reprocessing plants. Still unresolved is who will pay the billions of dollars it will cost to dispose of high-level radioactive waste. And the Pentagon would have to pay for the care of other victims of radioactive fallout, such as the people of Marshall Islands who were exposed to radioactive fallout from the atomic tests in their region.

The Pentagon fears public awareness about these questions. As early as 1946, Col. Fields reported that Gen. Leslie Groves, the director of the Manhattan Project which made the first atomic bombs, "is very much afraid of claims being instituted by the men who participated in the Bikini tests." In order to prevent them and other atomic veterans from doing so, the Pentagon argued for and got a ruling from the Supreme Court which bars military personnel from bringing suit against the government. Veterans are effectively barred from getting legal help to appeal the decisions of the Veterans Administration, since government regulations forbid them from paying more than \$10 to a lawyer for handling their claims.

A second reason for the Pentagon's stout denial of responsibility is that nuclear bombs are at the heart of the Pentagon's post World War II military strategy. This strategy has relied heavily on nuclear threats.⁴ The U.S. government is afraid that once it admits how devastating radiation damage could be to U.S. and NATO soldiers, its entire strategy would be in jeopardy. In a letter to the House Committee on Veterans Affairs in 1981, William Taft IV, general counsel to the Department of Defense, stated his position about the possibility that low level radiation could hurt people:

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This mistaken impression has the potential to be seriously damaging to every aspect of the Department of Defense's nuclear weapons and nuclear propulsion programs. [It] could adversely affect our relations with our European allies, impact upon the civilian nuclear industry, and raise questions regarding the use of radioactive substances in medical diagnosis and treatment.⁵

The atomic veterans are probably the largest group ever to have been used as guinea pigs by the Pentagon in preparation for nuclear war. Counterspy has reported on others: Healthy prisoners whose testicles were irradiated; poor people, mostly Blacks, who were irradiated under the guise of medical treatment for Pentagon experiments.⁶ Dr. Eugene Saenger, who performed those experiments on Blacks, defended his work: "The most important field of investigation today is that of attempting to understand and mitigate the possible effects of nuclear warfare upon human beings. I am a person who takes the defense of this country very seriously. I think it is important to find out the kinds of things [effects of radiation on humans] we are learning in this study."⁷

Apart from the question why this patriotic gentleman did not experiment upon himself, this rationale is entirely in accord with the Pentagon strategy of "survivable" and "winnable" nuclear war. This strategy implicitly assumes that nuclear war will take place — so that the most

Faced with mounting evidence of . . . negligent conduct during the atomic tests . . . , the Pentagon refuses to concede that either low doses of radiation could cause a lot of harm or that the doses were much higher than it ever cares to admit.

important question is not how to prevent it but how to win it. Nuclear experiments funded by the Pentagon and the Department of Energy are the logical extension of "civil defense," first strike weapons and the use of nuclear threats.

The atomic veterans are living and dying victims of the U.S. government's nuclear war strategy. Their suffering is a warning to current U.S. soldiers who might have to put the U.S. nuclear strategy into effect in war. The peace movement must unite with the atomic veterans and help them achieve their demands. They have organized the National Association of Atomic Veterans, founded by Orville Kelly, an atomic veteran who witnessed 20 nuclear weapons tests and died of cancer in 1981 at the age of 48. Wanda Kelly is its Executive Director. John Smitherman, the man whose military commanders ordered him to clean up after Test Baker, is its president.

D.C. 20002. Phone (202) 543-7711. Or write Arjun Makhijani in care of this magazine.

Footnotes:

- 1) Quoted in Martin Sherwin, A World Destroyed: The Atomic Bomb and the Grand Alliance, Vintage Books, New York, 1977, pp. 162-163.
- 2) George M. Lyon, Memorandum to Admiral Parsons, Subject: "Ensign Coffin," 5/5/47.
- 3) Ashley Halsey III, "After Watching A-Bombs, His Life was Never the Same," Philadelphia Inquirer, 5/24/83.
- 4) See Konrad Ege and Arjun Makhijani, "U.S. Nuclear Threats: A Documentary History," Counterspy, vol. 6, no. 4, July-August 1982.
- 5) William H. Taft IV, quoted in Ashley Halsey, "Files: Navy Ignored Nuclear Risks," Philadelphia Inquirer, 5/24/83.
- 6) "U.S. Irradiated Humans for Nuclear War Data," Counterspy, vol. 7, no. 1, Sept.-Nov. 1982.
- 7) Ibid.

For more information write to: The National Association of Atomic Veterans, 236 Massachusetts Ave., N.E., Suite 606, Washington,

The Warren Papers (Excerpts)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

5 May 1947

MEMORANDUM FOR ADMIRAL PARSONS:
Subject: Ensign Coffin.

13. BuMed representatives appear to have failed in not getting safety instructions to Lt. Comdr. Conard promptly. This should be checked with him. Beyond this, BuMed representatives Lt. Maurer with reasonable promptness began reporting infractions of safety practices. As stated previously, these practices were the same in all essential respects as the safety regulations in effect during the period that Commander Harris was RadSafe and when Lt. Comdr. Conard was RadSafe as they are in the present regulations. The enforcement of such regulations is a function of command. Men boarding ships without authority, men living in contaminated target vessels (those not having final radiological clearance), men looting ships and removing materials potentially contaminated with radioactive substances, men eating on ships, men failing to use protective devices such as gas masks or RBA in accordance with the safety regulations (always required after 15 August 1946) and failure to have proper supervision of such men and ships is a failure of primary responsibility command and not staff or technical. Monitors, whether representing BuShips or Medical RadSafes are staff and technical personnel and not the enforcing agency which is command.

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(h) An individual who has had Ensign Coffin's background in this field, who has a certain amount of appreciation but still has not had a broad experience and lacks balance in this particular field is still relatively in the status of an individual who, having a little knowledge in this field is dangerous and can present more serious problems than the person with no knowledge. This is a phenomenon of human behavior frequently encountered in the practice of medicine and in dealing with non-medical people in medical matters. Such an individual, who has had a not-extensive working experience in radiological safety, could bring into the open many borderline and controversial issues to make a "mountain out of a mole hill". In controversial matters, half-truths are often as damaging as whole truths because they are so difficult to adequately disprove. Such a person could even probably find experts to back up his points. Such a situation could be very difficult from many angles and should certainly be avoided if reasonably possible.

(b) Due to the novel aspects and the new problems presented in a new and hazardous technologic field and in view of the near-rightness of so many of Ensign Coffin's points, I would recommend that he be given a letter of reprimand, or admonition, and that he be given a serious talking to by someone who knows the problem well from the technical and scientific angle.

George K. Lyon,
Captain, MC, USMR,
Safety Advisor.

COSTA RICA, from page 13

a mere 20 counterrevolutionaries in their numerous raids.⁵

Increasingly, the allegiance of the Costa Rican internal police forces is being purchased by U.S. military aid. In 1983, the Pentagon funneled \$2 million in military aid to Costa Rica with the acclaimed priority of training a strong national police force. The Civil Guard northern command will benefit this year from the addition of 16 officers trained in border patrol in Panama.⁶ Another 70 Costa Rican civil and rural guardsmen are being trained at the U.S. Army School of the Americas in Panama.

Costa Rica officially abolished its army in 1948, but the internal police forces are taking up much of the slack. In November 1982, President Luis Alberto Monge created, by executive decree, the Organization for National Emergencies (OPEN), a "citizens" army which now numbers more than 10,000. Rightwing groupings such as Costa Rica Libre are vocal participants in and active recruiters for OPEN.

It is no coincidence that public attention has systematically been drawn away from both the

Costa Rican contra activity and the northwest border militarization project. If the U.S. is training and arming the contras solely for the purpose of interdicting the arms flow to El Salvador from Cuba and Nicaragua, as the Reagan administration claims, military support for bands on the far northwestern border of Costa Rica cannot be justified. Cut off from the body of Costa Rica by mountains on the southwest and swampland on the east, with little proximity to Cuba and El Salvador, the area is isolated from all but Nicaragua. The Israel- and U.S.-backed militarization on the northwest frontier, in tandem with the increasingly bellicose maneuvers of contras on the Honduran border, spells out clearly that the objective of "harassment" on Nicaragua's border has never meant anything less than the overthrow of the Sandinistas.

by Joy Hackel

Footnotes:

- 1) Washington Post, 2/14/83.
- 2) Los Angeles Times, 3/23/83.
- 3) Defense Latin America, Vol. 6, No. 4, August 1983.
- 4) Pittsburgh Press, 3/1/83.
- 5) The Tico Times, 3/18/83.
- 6) The Tico Times, 3/18/83.

The Reagan Naval Buildup

Preparing for War in the Pacific

by Walden Bello,
Peter Hayes
and Lyuba Zarsky



Walden Bello is an associate of the Southeast Asia Resource Center and a member of the advisory board of Counterspy. Peter Hayes and Lyuba Zarsky are members of Nautilus Research. This article is a shortened version of sections of the newly-finished study, "Pacific Command: The Structure and Strategy of the U.S. Military." Prepublication copies of the study can be obtained by sending \$10 (including postage) to Nautilus Research, P.O. Box 228, Leverett, MA 01054, tel. 413-549-1709. Complete references will be available in the published edition.

Once again, the specter of war casts its long shadow over the "ocean of peace." The thin line between provocative maneuvers and armed conflict is at present hardly noticed in the U.S. where the eyes of the peace movement are, for the most part, trained on Western Europe — the site of a dramatic confrontation between a Pentagon determined to deploy cruise and Pershing II missiles and anti-nuclear forces equally determined to prevent it.

That pattern is not new. For the last 40 years, the movement has often focused on Europe, only to be jolted when the hammer blows of the U.S. military landed on the Asia-Pacific region. While the lines between "East" and "West" stayed in place in Europe, the U.S. propelled two bloody overt wars — Korea and Vietnam — and engineered a number of dirty covert wars in the Pacific.

Feint in the West, strike in the East. Is the same scenario about to unfold today?

There are two likely flashpoints in the Asia-Pacific region: Northeast Asia and the Indian Ocean. In both places the U.S. has engaged in rapid military buildup and provocative maneuvers. In both, the U.S. strategy is to deploy its one military arm which still enjoys clearcut superiority — the Navy — against the weakest link in the Soviet defense system, the Soviet fleet.

Maritime Superiority

The U.S. Navy considers the Pacific its preserve. Perhaps the most reactionary of the armed services, it has always opposed any attempts to reduce American military presence in the area. Before World War II, it opposed granting independence to the Philippines with the rationale that the defense of the United States begins "3000 miles west of San Francisco." Immediately after the war, the Navy, led by Admiral Chester Nimitz, the "architect of the Pacific victory," wanted to annex Micronesia outright, opposing the liberals' plan to control it as a "strategic trusteeship" from the United Nations.

With its destruction of the Imperial Japanese Navy during the battle of Leyte Gulf in October 1944, the U.S. Navy achieved the maritime supremacy to which its foremost strategic thinker, Alfred Mahan, had directed it. But the years since Leyte Gulf have been years of discontent in the Navy. First it had to fight off the Air Force's drive to relegate it into a minor

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service in a post-war strategic situation dominated by nuclear bombs, long-range bombers, and missiles. Then, along with all the other services, it had to bear the weight of the defeat in Vietnam and the disdain of a public swayed by anti-military sentiment. "The Navy's share of the cost of the Vietnam war," asserts one admiral, "was the loss of a generation of new ships."

But unlike the Army command, which is less reluctant to admit its responsibility for the Vietnam debacle, the Navy continues to cling to the myth that the defeat in Indochina and other failures of U.S. policy in the Pacific stem from one thing: the liberal politicians' lack of nerve to employ the full range of U.S. military might. This view was expressed most forcefully by Admiral Ulysses Grant Sharp, Chief of the U.S. Pacific Command, during the war:

We could have achieved victory with relative ease. All that we had to do to win was to use our existing air power — properly. We had tremendous air power within easy striking range of North Vietnam — on aircraft carriers in the Gulf of Tonkin and South Vietnam. Yet never in the entire course of the war have we used our airpower to its full advantage."

Navy distrust of "liberal appeasers" was deepened in post-Vietnam years when succeeding administrations whittled down the numerical strength of the Navy from over 1,000 ships in the mid-70s to 400 in 1979. For the admirals, the fact that the newer ships were swifter, more

defense to "forward defense" or sea control — that is, the U.S. admirals claim, to a strategic stance much like the U.S. Navy's.

Geopolitical Approach

The lean years, however, were not only spent issuing Cassandra-like pronouncements. The argument for a more powerful Navy was placed on more sophisticated ground by a new generation of naval theorists. In this effort, the admirals and the "maritime school" of American defense thinking drew inspiration not only from Mahan but also from Halford MacKinder, the English thinker credited with pioneering the "geopolitical approach" in strategic planning.

In MacKinder's view, there are two fundamental geopolitical realities in conflict — the "world island," (that is, the great Eurasian land mass) and the "world ocean." Dominance of the world island inevitably gravitates to great central land powers like Germany and the Soviet Union. The only effective counterweight to this tendency is control over the world's oceans.

Great Britain effectively used control of the seas to nullify various land powers throughout the 18th and 19th centuries. Today, say the maritimists, the task falls to the United States which serves as a "bastion" in the world's oceans. At a time of strategic nuclear parity and Soviet equality in land forces, maritime superiority enables the U.S. to project, relatively unimpeded, immense power to points of its choosing along the area of contention, the rim of the world's islands. The effective deployment of this offensive power from the sea requires a navy composed principally of fast carrier battle groups with great air-sea striking power. These geopolitical realities, argues Admiral Thomas Moorer, former chief of U.S. forces in the Pacific, dictate "the future primacy of a naval policy in U.S. strategy."

The Reagan Navy, asserts Lehman, "will be visibly offensive in orientation . . . We must blank out the Russian Navy . . . We must make the Soviet Union an isolated island."

powerful and more versatile than anything they had ever had could not compensate for the decline in numbers. They fought back bitterly, claiming that they were being saddled with a "one-and-a-half navy" to fight a "three-ocean-war." But above all, they invoked the specter of the "great Soviet naval buildup." Admiral Gorshkov, they warned, had not only created a Soviet "blue water fleet," but he had also transformed the strategic views of the Soviet Navy from mere coastal

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The Reagan-Lehman Doctrine

In the post-Vietnam context of anti-militarism and budgetary constraints, the Navy's alarms did not evoke much public resonance. The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in early 1979, however, provided the rightwing and the military the occasion to whip up a new round of anti-Soviet hysteria. With its assumption of power in early 1981, the Reagan administration unleashed all the pent-up frustrations and bellicose propensities of the U.S. Navy. Key to this process was the appointment of John Lehman, a man inspired by Mahan's imperial imperative and MacKinder's strategic thinking. The fundamental axiom of what has become known as the "Lehman Doctrine" is the Navy's achievement of "outright maritime superiority

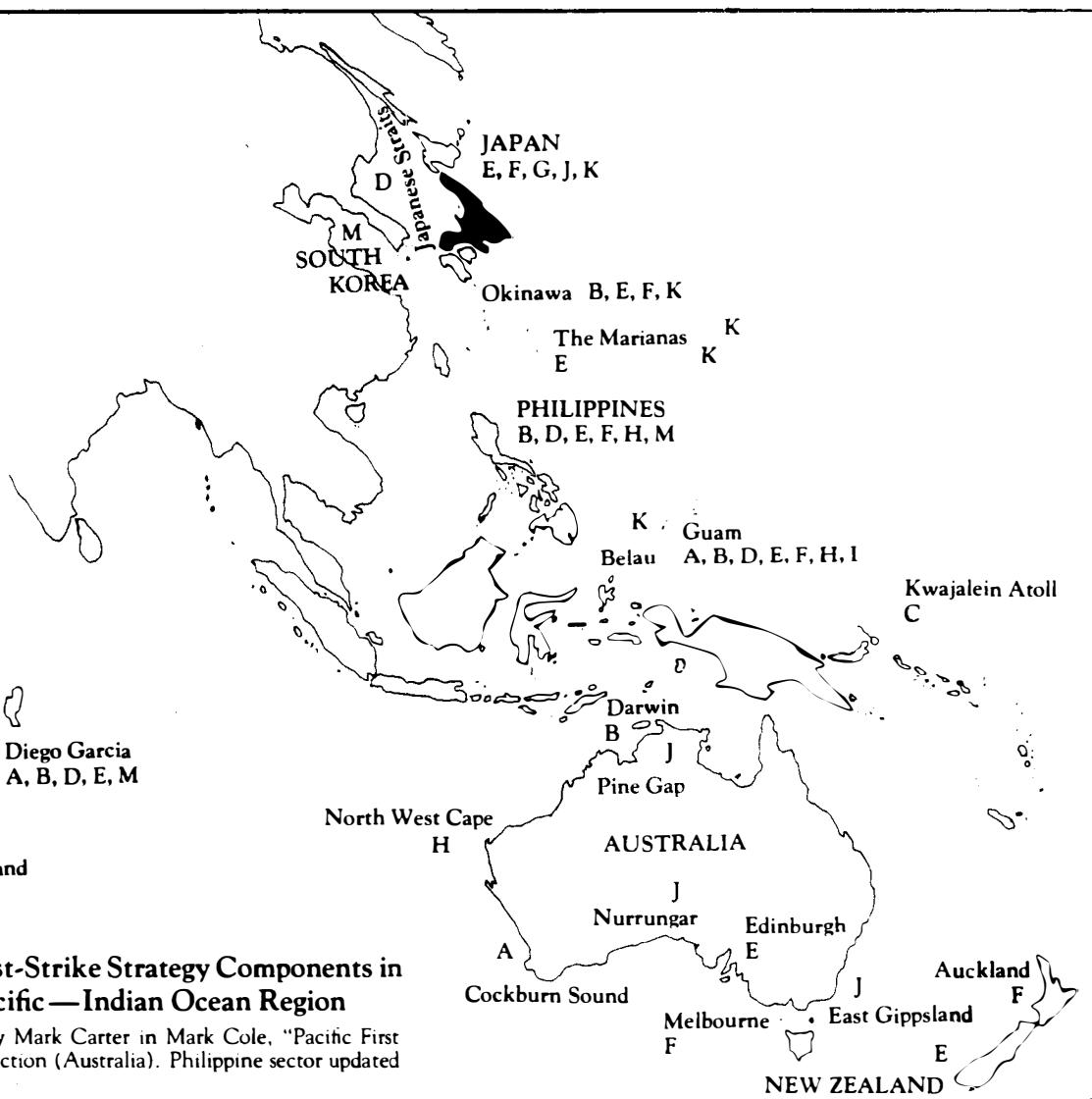
- A—Ballistic Missile Submarine (SLBM) Bases
- B—B-52 Bases/Access
- C—Missile & Defense Sensor Testing Range
- D—ASW (Anti-Submarine Warfare) Sonar Arrays
- E—ASW Orion P-3 Bases
- F—ASW Attack Submarine Bases/Access
- G—ASW Aircraft Carrier Bases
- H—C³I (Command, Control, Communications, Intelligence) Bases
- I—C³I Tacamos Base
- J—C³I Omega Bases
- K—C³I Loran C Systems
- L—Targeting Stations
- M—Anti-Satellite (ASAT) Surveillance

Diego Garcia
A, B, D, E, M

Reunion Island
J

US Nuclear First-Strike Strategy Components in the Western Pacific—Indian Ocean Region

Adapted from map by Mark Carter in Mark Cole, "Pacific First Strike," in *Chain Reaction* (Australia). Philippine sector updated by Walden Bello.



Southeast Asia Chronicle

over any power or powers which might attempt to prevent our use of the seas and the maintenance of our vital interests worldwide." The Reagan Navy, asserts Lehman, "will be visibly offensive in orientation and that offensive power will be distributed more widely throughout the fleet." In short, "if challenged, we will be capable of sending any opponent to the bottom." Lehman sets forth the Navy's strategic goal in classic MacKinderian fashion: "We must blank out the Russian Navy.... We must make the Soviet Union an isolated island."

Upgrading the Navy has meant a forced march. In barely two years, 1981 to 1983, the deployable battle force rose from 479 to 506 ships. By 1988, the fleet will number 610 ships — the minimum which the admirals claim will assure maritime superiority. The mainstays of the upgraded Navy will be 15 aircraft carriers which, asserts a former high Pentagon aide during the Carter administration, do not primarily fulfill the traditional naval role of sea control. "With their complement of F-14 and F-18 fighters and

fighter-bombers and their accompanying Aegis cruisers for antibomber missile projection, they are designed primarily for offensive force projection against Soviet land targets — among other things to cripple the Soviet Navy at its home bases."

Strengthening the Pacific Command

Fortifying the Pacific Command (PACOM) — the only unified command in which the Navy has undisputed hegemony — is a top Navy priority. Servicemen stationed in the Western Pacific increased from 140,000 in 1980 to 147,500 by late 1982. With the addition of the cruise missile-carrying battleship New Jersey and with the newest nuclear-powered aircraft carrier Carl Vinson about to join its three current carriers, the formidable Seventh Fleet, which patrols the Western Pacific and Indian Ocean, is at its aggressive best in years. Adding the ships of the Third Fleet, which covers the Eastern Pacific, PACOM now encompasses almost half of U.S.

peacetime naval forces.

The focus of the Pacific Command's "contingency planning" has now shifted from Indian Ocean operations — the great concern of the late 1970s — to Northeast Asia. This was triggered by the official naval assessment, expressed by the commander of the Seventh Fleet, that while "we have an edge in the Indian Ocean...and in the South China Sea, in the Northwest Pacific, where the Soviets can bring the full range of land-based aviation, submarines, short- and long-range aircraft to bear in an area they hold dear, the balance has clearly begun to shift...."

Many members of the U.S. defense establishment disagree. Perhaps the most authoritative of these is former Defense Secretary Harold Brown. In a recent assessment of the balance of forces in the region, Brown asserted that the U.S.-Japan-China alliance "must truly be a nightmare to the Soviets, and the modest cooperative steps of 1975-80...tilted the politico-military balance against the Soviets to a degree that significantly exceeds the advantages accruing to them from their substantial military buildup in the region during the late 1960s and 1970s."

Even on purely military grounds, the U.S. enjoys superiority. Part of the advantage stems from geography: the homewaters of the Soviet Pacific fleet is the almost landlocked Sea of Japan. By building up its forces in the Northwest Pacific the U.S. Navy hopes to "cramp" the Soviets in their prime base of operations, thus depriving them of the maneuvering space provided by the high seas. As the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff put it in their recent annual "Defense Posture," a major U.S. advantage "is the ability of American forces — including those in Japan and Korea — to bottle up the Soviets' Pacific Fleet at Vladivostok." Faced with constantly escalating U.S. forces, the Soviets, so the thinking

goes, would be dissuaded from sending substantial task forces elsewhere, thus allowing the U.S. Navy unchallenged control of the rest of the Pacific and the Indian Ocean.

High Confrontation Strategy

This strategy of high confrontation is, of course, accompanied by war plans to insure preparedness if an "incident" occurs. Under U.S. naval doctrine, it is far preferable to outmaneuver the enemy and overwhelm him in one location than to fight him all across the high seas. In the event of conflict in the Northwest Pacific, the U.S. and Japan could easily mine all of the five straits — the widest of which is 100 miles across — through which Soviet ships must pass to get to the open Pacific. The "bottled up" Russian warships would then be blasted by fighter bombers operating from bases in South Korea and Japan and from Seventh Fleet carriers operating in the open Pacific.

To prepare for the possibility of such a swift knock-out punch in the Sea of Japan, a massive deployment of forces is currently taking place in the area. One element of this strategic reorientation has been the upgrading of the other arms of the Pacific Command. The Pacific tactical air forces, for instance, have been qualitatively fortified with the assignment of 36 modern F-16 fighter bombers to Korea, and the upcoming deployment of 48 more to Japan.

A second element is the periodic deployment of multiple aircraft carrier task forces in the Northwest Pacific where only one task force used to operate. A recent example is the deployment of the Enterprise and the Midway to the South Korean coast during the massive "Operation Peace Spirit" exercise. A third development in the U.S. strategy is to directly challenge the Soviet fleet in its prime base of operations through the regular deployment of an aircraft



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carrier in the Sea of Japan and the holding of periodic naval exercises there and in the Sea of Okhostk off the Soviet coast.

Fourth, Japanese and U.S. forces have initiated 24-hour patrols in at least three of the five straits leading out of the Sea of Japan, with Japan committed to blockade or mine the straits in the event of a confrontation. Finally, the Pentagon is moving to integrate China into its war plans. The People's Republic of China, asserts the Joint Chiefs of Staff's Military Postures for 1984, "indirectly contributes to U.S. global and regional security as a counterweight to Soviet land power in Asia." The 1985-89 Defense Guidance, recently leaked to the press, is even more specific. Aside from urging a "continuing program of military-to-military contacts and prudent assistance in defensive weaponry," it also advises that the U.S. provide "logistical support" for "Chinese military maneuvers to tie down the Soviet Pacific Fleet, tactical air squadrons, and its approximately 15 army divisions on the Sino-Soviet border in the event of war."

The Soviet Nightmare

In a battle in or over the Sea of Japan and the nearby Sea of Okhostk, the U.S. can field four carrier battle groups from the Seventh Fleet and can count on three other carriers from the Third Fleet in the Eastern Pacific. The Soviets have only one helicopter carrier deployed in the area, forcing them to rely on cruise-missile-firing surface ships and land-based aircraft.

The Seventh Fleet and air force and marine air units based in Japan and South Korea can bring a total of close to 440 offensive aircraft — a great many of them nuclear-capable — to bear against the Soviets. With reinforcement from the Thirteenth Air Force based in the Philippines, the number of immediately deployable aircraft rises to 490; and with support from the Third Fleet, the total number of planes that can be committed to battle comes to 780.

While the Soviets have a slight numerical advantage in the number of aircraft, their planes are generally regarded as inferior. A U.S. admiral, for instance, is confident that the backbone of the Soviet offensive Air Force, the "Bear" heavy bombers, "would not be able to get to [within] 1000 miles" of a U.S. battle group in a war situation. The Soviet fighter and fighter bomber complement is nothing to match the enfant terrible of the U.S. Air Force — the nuclear weapons capable F-16.

Adding the U.S.-equipped air forces of Japan and South Korea further tilts the balance seriously against the Soviets. In contrast, the air force of their one possible ally, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (which

would have to take China's reaction into account in making its move) draws the following comment from the Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Fifth Air Force based in Japan: "The North Korean aircraft are fairly old and have limited range....We think we can negate them pretty quickly."

Soviet inferiority, however, goes beyond numbers and quality of ships. The Soviets are restricted by a defensive orientation compounded by the fact that their air force in the area is geared primarily to support ground troops in the event of war. It is doubtful that their aircraft would be able to maintain an offensive force projection or sustain prolonged combat over the Sea of Japan. In short, it is unlikely that the Soviet Pacific Fleet can expect much help from the air, and airpower is a decisive factor in naval conflict.

Towards Another Leyte Gulf

This naval buildup in the Northwest Pacific has been accompanied by U.S. saber-rattling. Current Pacific command chief Admiral Robert Long, for instance, told an astonished Japanese correspondent, "This region [the Pacific], I believe, is most probably where we shall witness a confrontation with the Soviet Union."

The worry of many is that all this is not mere saber-rattling but the frustration of men who would launch a preemptive attack if they can get away with it. A Pearl Harbor in reverse is indeed tempting, or as Secretary Lehman puts it, "he who gets the signal to fire first will enjoy a tremendous tactical advantage." The dangers of preemptive attack are made even greater by the administration's apparent belief that a theatre war — even a theatre nuclear war — may be possible without escalation to general strategic nuclear war. "I can see a situation," President Reagan has stated, "where you can have a nuclear exchange without it necessarily turning into a bigger war."

But just as Leyte Gulf is etched into the memory of the U.S. Navy, the Soviet fleet is aware of the lesson of the battle of Tsushima, when the Russian Czar's Baltic Fleet was destroyed by the rising Japanese Navy in one of the straits in the Sea of Japan. It is this volatile mixture of present provocation and the memory of the last lesson which makes it unlikely that any naval conflict in Northeast Asia could remain "contained." ☐

Caution, Yellow Rainmakers at Work

by Martha Wenger

The Reagan administration's "yellow rain" story — its charge that Laos, Vietnam and the Soviet Union are killing thousands in Southeast Asia and Afghanistan with a new chemical warfare agent labelled "yellow rain" — is being shot full of holes. Some of the most devastating salvos have come from respected scientists. A new study by Australian sociologist Grant Evans, The Yellow Rainmakers: Are Chemical Weapons Being Used in S.E. Asia?, further discredits the government's case.

Doubts in the scientific community about "yellow rain" are best represented by the findings of Australian Department of Defense organic chemist H.D. Crone and U.S. chemical warfare expert Dr. Matthew S. Meselson. Crone analyzed four "yellow rain" samples (yellow spots on leaves and stones) provided by the U.S. government in 1982. His findings are startlingly blunt: "The samples are obvious fakes." Why they were fabricated, he writes, "can only be guessed at: monetary gain, desire to ingratiate oneself with authority, or as a disinformation campaign." (See document.)

Dr. Meselson of Harvard University fired a second salvo in May when he publicized his hypothesis that "yellow rain" spots are actually "bee excrement." Meselson, backed by four other scientists, demonstrated that bee hairs and pollen grains found in "yellow rain" samples allegedly collected in Laos and Thailand are similar to those found in bee droppings.

The State Department immediately tried to dismiss Meselson's theory as the "great bee caper." The government's hurriedly-prepared rebuttal was, in the view of Nature magazine (June 9, 1983), "shabby." It argued, for example, that "the level of toxin causing immediate, and often fatal, effects in humans is certainly enough to kill a bee....a bee could not survive to excrete the toxin." That argument was entirely off base. Meselson had suggested that toxin would have been introduced into the bee feces only after they had been excreted, perhaps naturally by a poison-producing fungus which is found throughout the world. (See "General Haig's Yellow Rain," Counterspy, vol. 6, no. 2)

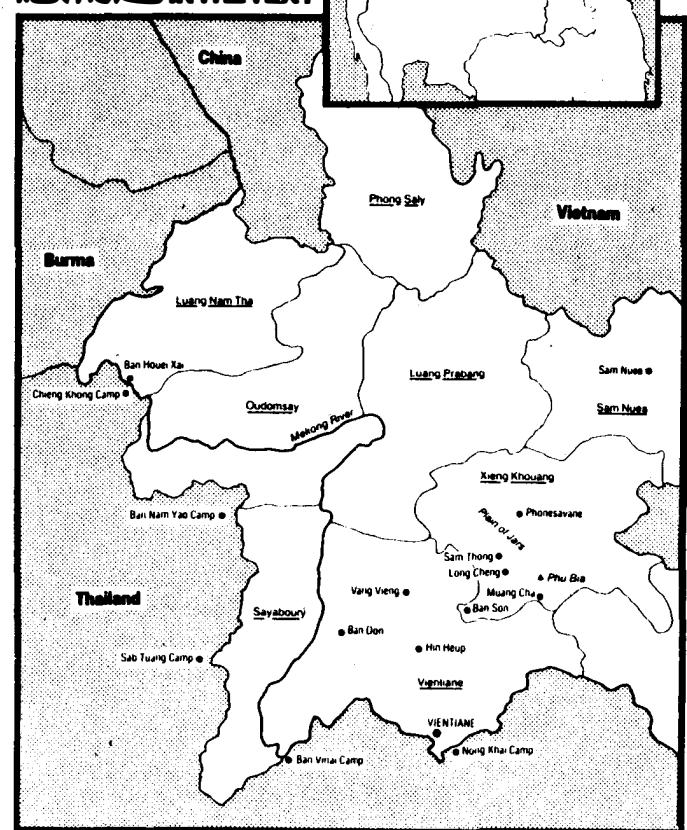
Dr. Meselson, a long-time consultant to the U.S. government, demands that his hypothesis be tested, not simply dismissed, but, he says, "as yet I do not detect in the U.S. government any serious interest in conducting a proper scientific study of just what is going on." The government's data, he says, has been "extremely inadequate."

(Boston Globe, July 4, 1983). Nature magazine agrees: it editorialized that Meselson had "challenged the State Department to substitute reason for faith in its contention that yellow rain is a toxin weapon" but that "the State Department apparently chose faith."

Backed into this scientific corner, the State Department adopted a new line: the government's "conclusive evidence" of chemical warfare is based not only on the (discredited) "scientific" data, it said, but on "eyewitness" accounts and on classified intelligence reports. The State Department has not explained why it expects people to accept its secret "intelligence reports" on faith after physical samples were discovered by an Australian Department of

Map from "The Yellow Rainmakers"

MAP OF THE NORTHERN PROVINCES OF LAOS SHOWING PLACES MENTIONED IN THE TEXT



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Defense scientist to have been faked. Furthermore, as Grant Evans argues in his Yellow Rainmakers (NY, Shocken Books, 1983), the refugee reports collected by the U.S. government provide no credible evidence either.

Evans travelled to Laos and Thailand to interview some of the refugees who had given "yellow rain" reports, and sifted through the written record of U.S.-collected testimonies to crosscheck them for accuracy. A professor at La Trobe University in Melbourne and author of a previous book on Indochina since the U.S. withdrawal, Evans limited his research to Southeast Asia, but some of the questions he raises apply equally to chemical warfare reports from Afghanistan.

The largest body of alleged "chemical warfare" reports comes from a single ethnic group in Laos, the Hmong, and in particular from two Hmong refugee camps in Thailand. This is significant, for in the 1960s and early 1970s, as many as 20,000 Hmong were recruited by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency into a Secret Army to act as a counterinsurgency unit against the Pathet Lao forces who govern Laos today. During that period, an estimated 130,000 Hmong, displaced by the war, and particularly by intense U.S. bombing of the Plain of Jars, settled near the CIA base at Long Cheng, where they were entirely dependent upon American air-drops of food for survival. (The CIA's Air America planes also flew out the Hmong's opium harvest which later turned up in the form of heroin on the streets of U.S. cities.) When the CIA operation in Laos was ended, the artificially-created economy around the CIA base collapsed, and in 1975 many of these Hmong left for Thailand.

In May 1979, two U.S. government investigators visited all the refugee camps in Thailand in which Hmong had settled to collect "yellow rain" testimonies. Significantly, they turned up reports only in Nong Khai, the "main camp for the defeated lowland anti-communist elite," and in Ban Vinai, in which the ex-CIA Secret Army officials hold "complete sway." In the northern refugee camps, which are not controlled by any single ethnic or political group, no reports could be found.

As Evans discovered when he visited Ban Vinai, the camp leadership there "approves" all interviews by outsiders with camp residents. The man in charge of this approval, former CIA Secret Army Lieutenant Choumoulee, explained: "All the people who have got the gas have to report to me, and I report them to the American embassy in Bangkok. And all the people who want to speak to the people who have got the gas have to come to me first." Most eyewitness accounts, then, are controlled by an ex-CIA agent who admits to continued direct collaboration with the U.S. Embassy in Thailand.



Samples of "yellow rain" spots on leaves, and specimens of Southeast Asian bees, in Meselson's lab.

The most striking account Evans cites is that of Ger Pao Pha, a refugee who gave a remarkably detailed "chemical warfare" account to U.S. officials which was later presented to the U.S. Congress. Ger has become something of a star witness, having told his story some 13 times. His account can thus be crosschecked over time.

In the official U.S. government testimony from May 1979, Ger describes an alleged attack in Laos by two planes: the first sprayed a yellow-and-green powder, and a rocket from the second exploded and released a red smoke/gas. Ger and his son fled to a nearby cave and there got very sick from the "gas" which he said killed some 230 out of 250 villagers and all the animals. Several hours after the attack, Ger said, Pathet Lao soldiers, wearing cloth masks over nose and mouth, entered the village, carried the survivors to the center of the village and gave each an injection in the arm. Next morning, the soldiers carried them to a hospital where they were kept for five days; some died, Ger and his son survived.

In September 1981, Ger repeated his story to a Guardian (London) journalist: he arrived for the interview with his little "daughter," his only surviving child, he said. In this version only 40 people (not 230) died in the attack.

By the time journalist Jane Hamilton-Merritt interviewed Ger for the Bangkok Post in early 1982, his child was once again a boy, but other variations had been introduced: "I saved my boy," he told her, "by putting a rag soaked with opium over my face and over my son's face who was under my arm." (Evans notes that "during 1980 and 1981 it had become more common for press reports to mention that Hmong carried opium-soaked rags as primitive gas masks...") This time it was a day (not a few hours) later when the soldiers came, and the Pathet Lao soldiers had



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TECHNICAL REPORT

THE EXAMINATION OF "YELLOW RAIN" SPECIMENS
RECEIVED AT MRL IN APRIL 1982

by
H.D. CROHE

Since the samples are obvious fakes, they convey no information at all as to the veracity or otherwise of the reports of chemical attacks. The reasons for their fabrication can only be guessed at; monetary gain, desire to ingratiate oneself with authority, or as a disinformation campaign.

We have discounted any idea that the yellow spots arose from a natural phenomenon. One suggestion was that a sticky exudate from a tree had dropped on the specimens, over which pollen was then blown by the wind. Pollen would be retained on the sticky spots. The argument against this is that for a viscous exudate to fall, it has to be a large drop, much larger than those seen. Viscous liquids will not separate and fall under gravity as small drops. The conclusion is therefore that the yellow spots were deliberately applied, either by brush or by a spraying process. There is no evidence as to which was used, save that no fragments of brush hairs could be found, which may slightly discount a brush application. Certainly the samples did not come from a single spraying episode; that is they were not recovered from two different localities after one aeroplane had made a spraying run.

At MRL we do not have the facilities to do mycotoxin assays at low levels. However, such analyses would not be helpful as extensive fungal contamination was present (including *Fusarium*). Therefore trichothecene mycotoxins at very low concentrations were quite likely present as products of this mould. What is important is whether the concentration could have any military meaning. In this case the answer is quite definitely no. These are fakes; the presence of mycotoxins in parts per million levels is an irrelevant consideration.

In conclusion, I reiterate the statement that the examination of these fake specimens sheds no light at all on the main question as to whether mycotoxins have been used as warfare agents in Laos or Kampuchea.

become "Vietnamese" who did not have cloth masks as before, but who were "chewing the corners of their collars." When asked why they would do that, Ger said without hesitation, "they have medicine to protect themselves from the gas sewn into their clothes." The account of injections and the hospital stay had vanished altogether from his testimony.

When Evans interviewed Ger in March 1982, he got similar variations on the story, but first, Evans deliberately questioned Ger about his personal history. He learned that already in 1950 Ger had joined a French commando group and, like many of its members, went on to become part of the original contingent of the CIA's Secret Army, in which he rose to the rank of lieutenant.

Not only are refugee accounts concentrated in the camps controlled by the lowland rightwing or ex-CIA leaders, many of those giving testimony are, like Ger, former CIA agents themselves. As Evans points out, Ban Vinai is "no ordinary refugee camp." Although it was set up in late 1975, it had a "semi-secret" status until 1978. Camp residents have been used "for intelligence missions inside Laos by both the Thais and Americans," and, along with Nong Khai camp, now closed, Ban Vinai became the "centre of the elusive 'Lao resistance' in the aftermath of the communist victory." While the ex-CIA Hmong leadership may not have hatched the "yellow rain" story "cynically," Evans suggests, "they ran with it, nurtured it and propagated it because it was in their interests to do so."

The "yellow rain" campaign has also been "fuelled by Western journalists, aid workers and politicians." Perhaps the most cynical among these, writes Evans, were two CIA officers, Edward M. Collin and Bruce B. Clarke. A Congressional subcommittee in February 1980 asked the two "whether their information on chemical warfare was more than mere hearsay. Collin replied that there was no confirmation. When Republican Congressman Robert J. Lagomarsino commented that repeated news reports on this issue led people to believe it was actually happening, Clarke replied: 'I see nothing wrong in circulating such reports.'"

The political climate in which the U.S. collected "eyewitness" reports and the internal contradictions within those stories are an important part of Evans' argument. But he also asks some very basic questions about the coherence of the "yellow rain" theory, questions which the U.S. government certainly has not asked of its own evidence:

- If the Lao government were conducting a genocidal campaign against the Hmong people, why would it allow "aid workers to travel extensively and to establish projects in areas allegedly being drenched with chemical weapons"?

- Why would the Lao, the Vietnamese or the

Soviets use a mycotoxin agent as a chemical weapon when, says University of Sussex chemist Julian Perry Robinson, "as poisons go, the trichothecenes [mycotoxins] are relatively weak." Dr. Daniel Cullen, a U.S. mycotoxin expert, concurs: "Even if pure trichothecenes were used and appropriate formulations for their dispersal were developed, hundreds of pounds would be required to produce lethal effects within an area with a hundred-yard radius."

- If such large quantities of poison would be required, why then has the U.S. government been unable to produce conclusive physical evidence? Dr. Cullen testified before a Congressional Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs in March 1982 that the U.S. government "physical evidence presented thus far is based upon laboratory analyses of five extremely small 'yellow rain' samples and nine blood samples from survivors of chemical attacks." Furthermore, the "precise identity of the sample collectors remains obscure." He points out that the primary "toxin" identified by Professor J. Rosen of Rutgers University in one such yellow rain sample was zearalenone which "possesses acute toxicity properties comparable to table salt. Why would a technologically advanced country, such as the Soviet Union, resort to an apparently ineffective weapon?" he asks.

The "yellow rain" story has proliferated in the U.S. media because many journalists have never bothered to ask these fundamental questions. Some writers, supportive of the Reagan administration's anti-Soviet and anti-Vietnam propaganda campaigns, have been happy to repeat the stories in spite of the lack of evidence offered by the Reagan administration. Sensational reports about Soviet use of chemical weapons also provide a convenient, if spurious, justification for Reagan administration plans to greatly enlarge the U.S. chemical arsenal.

These "yellow rain-makers" no doubt will continue to grind out their propaganda. Evidence or no evidence, they apparently hope, if you repeat the story often enough, something will stick.

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Looking for "Yellow Rain" in Laos

Roger Rumpf and Jacqui Chagnon are among the few Westerners to have actually visited the areas in Laos where the U.S. government alleges the Lao government is waging "chemical warfare" and conducting a genocidal campaign against the ethnic Hmong people. They spent six weeks in January and February 1983 inside Laos, investigating the "yellow rain" allegations. Between 1978 and 1981, Rumpf and Chagnon served as field directors in Laos for the American Friends Service Committee, a private voluntary agency. During those years they travelled frequently in the Lao countryside and learned to speak the Lao language. *Counterspy* spoke with Rumpf in Washington D.C. in June 1983 about what their investigation had uncovered.

"We found no evidence inside Laos to confirm the U.S. government charge about chemicals being dropped from planes or about genocide," Rumpf said. "In fact we would challenge it severely in those areas we visited" (Ban Done and Meuang Hom). Some of the reasons Rumpf gave for that conclusion are these:

- U.S. government charges and sensational press reports give the impression that there is major fighting involving "yellow rain" attacks going on in areas such as Ban Done. But Rumpf and Chagnon "talked to officials and non-officials in Ban Done and no one talked about any fighting in the area."

- A United Nations scientist works with Hmong people on a cattle-raising project in Ban Done, right in the area where chemical warfare is allegedly raging. Yet, says Rumpf, "as far as I know, nobody from the U.S. government or the U.N. has ever gone to interview this expert." Rumpf and Chagnon spoke with him. "His point was that a lot of people in the area have diseases ranging from malaria to all kinds of parasites in the body," Rumpf said. "At times, because of their weakened condition, lack of food or sanitation, attacks come on and people become severely ill or die. And in remote areas, if you find a medic, you're lucky. So he's saying there are a lot of diseases, but as far as 'yellow rain' he had not seen anything or even heard stories that would give any evidence of chemical warfare going on."

- One of the most astounding

facts that Rumpf and Chagnon uncovered is that the U.S. Embassy in Laos "has no first-hand accounts of 'yellow rain' from inside the country which would provide confirming or crosschecked evidence. We talked to them several times, in 1981 and again in 1983," Rumpf said. "The officials said no. All of these allegations are coming from the refugee camps in Thailand." As far as Rumpf was able to discover, no U.S. government officials have ever even asked to go inside the country to check out the reports.

- As a result of his investigation inside Laos, Rumpf says, he can totally refute the allegation that the Lao government has a policy of genocide against the ethnic Hmong people. In the province of Xieng Khouang, where many of the Hmong people live, "practically a majority of the officials at the provincial level are Hmong. If there were in fact genocide against the Hmong," Rumpf asks, "why would the Lao government be putting Hmong officials in these positions, resettling Hmong people, asking the United Nations to give aid to cattle-raising projects for the Hmong? That case just doesn't hold up at all."

Rumpf and Chagnon also travelled to the refugee camps in

As a result of his investigation inside Laos, Rumpf says, he can totally refute the allegation that the Lao government has a policy of genocide against the ethnic Hmong people.

Thailand where most of the "yellow rain" reports have been collected. They discovered that these refugee stories must be approached with healthy skepticism. In Ban Vinai, where "a large percentage of the refugees were once associated with the CIA-backed Vang Pao forces," said Rumpf, "practically everybody has a yellow rain story by now. Generally the leadership sets up the interviews and they pick out the 'best' interviewees. Most journalists automatically start out with the question 'when did you see yellow rain?'"

Rumpf and Chagnon took a different tack. Since they could speak the language, they were able to bypass the camp leadership altogether, interviewing people wherever they lived. Before ever asking about yellow rain, they got a detailed personal and medical history. They found that many people contradicted themselves, or in one case when they interviewed a married couple separately, contradicted each other: "The woman said she'd seen yellow substances one time, but nobody got sick. We asked her husband and he said, oh yes, he'd seen it many times. When we asked him what had happened, he pointed to a sore and said, Oh, see this sore on my hand? That started from yellow rain. We investigated and found out that the medicine the doctor had given him was for ringworm. That was typical."

Significantly, in Ban Nam Yao refugee camp further north in Thailand where 10,000 people live, one-third of them Hmong, Rumpf and Chagnon found "no stories of yellow rain... not a one. It's very interesting because the politics of the two camps are quite distinct. The [ex-CIA Secret Army] Vang Pao people control Ban Vinai camp very tightly and directly. In Ban Nam Yao, it's a mixture of ethnic groups and there's no tight Hmong control over the camp. Nor is there any [counterrevolutionary] resistance that works out of the camp, whereas in Ban Vinai there are resistance people who go back into Laos to fight, even today."

The best way to respond to the U.S. government's allegations, suggests Rumpf, is for an international scientific delegation of mycologists, chemical and biological warfare experts, sociologists and anthropologists to travel to Laos and do research on the spot, as he did. Rumpf says that Lao government officials told them, as they have told at least one diplomat and a number of interested scientists, that if such a delegation were impartial and non-political, they would welcome its investigation.

A fuller report of Roger Rumpf's and Jacqui Chagnon's findings will appear in the August 1983 issue of *Southeast Asia Chronicle* (PO Box 4000D, Berkeley, CA 94704).

Growing Supergrass

The New British Strategy for Northern Ireland

by Kathleen O'Neal

The longest running and most expensive legal trial in Irish history ended in Belfast Crown Court on July 7, 1983. Thirty-eight defendants, including a 70-year-old grandmother, now await the judge's decision on a total of 182 charges ranging from murder to attempted murder to membership in the Irish Republican Army (IRA). The case against all 38 rests almost exclusively on testimony by alleged accomplice and "supergrass" (Irish parlance for informer) Christopher Black. Defense attorney James McSparren charged in court that Black's testimony was "reeking with invention and falsehood." The trial thus far has taken 117 days. Estimates place its cost to the British government at over 1 million pounds sterling.

The Black trial is the latest in a series of supergrass trials which began in 1981. Supergrasses are offered immunity, a new identity and, according to Sinn Fein (the political wing of the IRA), cash payments as high as 75,000 pounds in exchange for testimony against former comrades. (The Royal Ulster Constabulary, the northern Ireland police force, denies offering informers money.) The informer's testimony is then presented in non-jury courts with little or no corroborating evidence.

The length, expense and extraordinary legal procedures involved in the Black trial raise the question: Why is the British government pursuing such a laborious course to jail Irish republicans? Several theories which have been proposed offer insight into the state of insurgency and counterinsurgency in northern Ireland.

According to Belfast's Sunday News (June 26, 1983), the supergrass system was the brainchild of the late Sir Maurice Oldfield, a high ranking MI6 (British intelligence) officer. After his retirement from MI6, Oldfield was appointed security coordinator for northern Ireland. He was reportedly horrified by the ineptness of British Army and Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) Special Branch Intelligence Operations. According to the Sunday News, the problem centered on the unwillingness of the two rival intelligence groups to share information. This lack of cooperation allegedly paralyzed both operations. The supergrass system was therefore devised to circumvent the incompatible spy organizations.

Oldfield suggested the supergrass system to British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher who ordered its deployment in 1981. To date, 30 people have been convicted by supergrasses, and several other trials with multiple defendants are now proceeding. The Sunday News, which praises the system as the "most potent force ever to bring terrorists to justice in Ulster" boasts that the trials have shattered entire units of the IRA.

The IRA, however, asserts that the number of convictions in supergrass trials has been too low to have a significant impact on its operations. They believe the system was designed not so much to cripple their opposition but rather as a PSY-OPS (psychological warfare operation) assault against the nationalist community. In the March 1983 issue of IRIS, the IRA charged:

Undoubtedly the most important component of the PSY-OPS strategy has been the use of informers to create a sense of fear and demoralization among the nationalist community and to create an illusion that the resistance struggle is riddled with informers — although in overall terms the numbers involved are small.

The IRA believes the supergrass system was designed to produce a crisis in confidence in the community in order to diminish community support and aid to IRA volunteers. Such aid is essential to the success and survival of any armed movement whose members live and operate in occupied urban areas.

The introduction of the supergrass system can also be interpreted as a response to the failure of two previous systems designed to jail Irish Republican activists and guerrillas. The first, introduced in 1971, was the internment without charge of thousands of members of the nationalist community. This system was devised as much to "cool off" the community as to build a reservoir of intelligence via the interrogation of internees.

The spectre of hundreds of Irish men and women staring out from barbed wire concentration camps as well as the publicity given to reports of torture during interrogation compelled Britain to introduce a new system which sported a modicum of judicial procedure. The Diplock Court System, which critics deride

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as the "Diplock conveyor belt system of judicial injustice," was installed with the passage of the Emergency Provisions Act (1973) and the Prevention of Terrorism Act (1974). Under the Diplock system suspects could be held for up to seven days during which time they were "induced" to sign confessions.

In time, the Diplock system was attacked by human rights groups including Amnesty International which found evidence of torture in its 1978 report. Aside from this nagging public relations problem, IRA claims that the system was also becoming increasingly ineffective because they were successfully training the IRA volunteers in methods to resist brutal torture.

In 1981, therefore, a new system was clearly warranted and the supergrass system was introduced. It obviates the controversial and allegedly ineffective interrogation methods by allowing the admissibility into court of a lower form of evidence, i.e., the uncorroborated testimony of an alleged accomplice.

Yet another factor contributing to the explanation of the supergrass system is that it was introduced during the period when the IRA was completing a major overhaul of its internal security. Prior to 1981, internees who broke under interrogation were sometimes recruited by the RUC as informers and ordered to report back to their IRA units. By mid-1981, the IRA claims it had become far less vulnerable to this sort of infiltration.

Commenting on supergrass Christopher Black's highly publicized decision to inform against IRA comrades in court, the IRA wrote in a January 1982 issue of An Phoblacht/Republican News:

Although Black's effect was dramatic in terms of the numbers of nationalists he was prepared

to testify against, a year or two earlier he would have been told to "report back" to the IRA and subsequently to pass on information over a long period...that might eventually have caused considerably more damage.

By now it is apparent that the supergrass system is fraught with problems. If its goal was to expeditiously jail large numbers of Irish republicans, the length and expense of the recent Black trial indicates that it is failing. If its goal was to paralyze IRA operations, the several successful IRA strikes against British army units in July 1983 indicate little success. Finally, if its goal was to demoralize and pacify the nationalist community, it has failed utterly. U.S. observers report that the nationalist communities of Derry and Belfast appear to be in tight solidarity with the republican movement. This solidarity was expressed when Sinn Fein launched its first major election campaign during the June 1983 elections to the British Parliament. Sinn Fein Vice President Gerry Adams was elected as Member of Parliament for West Belfast and the party made substantial inroads into the reformist nationalist Social Democrat's and Labour Party's constituencies. Later in June, Sinn Fein candidate Alex Maskey won more votes than all other candidates combined during a Belfast City Council by-election, making Maskey the first Sinn Fein representative on that loyalist-dominated body.

Undoubtedly, the British government will be examining the expense and apparent ineffectiveness of the supergrass system. Undoubtedly, its response will be to introduce yet another twisted judicial system designed to oppress, intimidate and pacify the nationalist community of northern Ireland. And, undoubtedly, the community will continue to resist. ☐

British Intelligence Manipulates the News

by Morris Riley

The British government's handling of the Falklands/Malvinas war through censorship and disinformation¹ was not an isolated incident. For decades, British government agencies have coordinated propaganda operations which overshadow "any comparable CIA propaganda activities so far revealed."²

The involvement of British intelligence in hidden news manipulation goes back to 1938 when Daily Mirror journalist Leslie Sheridan joined the government's "Section D" ("D" for destruction) to

carry out sabotage and propaganda operations against Nazi Germany.³ The government closed Section D after three years, but opened up a "clone" in the Special Operations Executive (SOE). Sheridan transferred to the SOE and became the personal assistant of its head, Sir Charles Hambro.

Sheridan built up a network of agents in Istanbul, New York, Lisbon and Stockholm by using old Fleet Street (newspaper industry) Morris Riley is a long-time contributor to Counterspy.

contacts who were "given cover by British newspapers and accredited to... bogus news agencies."⁴ The first such government-funded agency was Britanova Ltd. which in 1943 created the Arab News Agency (ANA) to cover Middle Eastern and North African affairs.

When World War II ended, the government terminated SOE, but not the Arab News Agency and the British-funded Sharq al-Adna, one of the most powerful radio stations in the Middle East. It also kept future options open by maintaining a "skeleton" of agents "in the cupboard in every country."⁵ These "skeletons" were handed over to British intelligence. Within a few years, British intelligence had developed a worldwide propaganda network of up to 250 people. For 15 years, the Arab News Agency acted as the sole agent for Reuters News Service in the Middle East.⁶ British newspapers, of course, inevitably used some of the ANA material supplied to them through Reuters.

In this way a propaganda operation financed by the British government served to influence politicians in Britain itself. Says journalist Ray Alen: "[The ANA stories in British newspapers] led [Members of Parliament] to propose or support policies on the strength of 'facts' fed them by propagandists posing as newsmen. Further, many newsmen were persuaded to write along approved lines for the BBC world service and Arabic service."⁷

Keep it Dark

To coordinate propaganda operations, Prime Minister Clement Attlee founded the Information and Research Department (IRD) in 1947. The project was conceived by Parliamentary Under-Secretary Christopher Mayhew. Attlee told him, "go ahead, with my blessing, but keep it dark."⁸ Utilizing propaganda techniques perfected during World War II, the IRD covertly conducted media operations for the next thirty years (it was closed down in 1977 and its functions were in part taken over by the smaller Overseas Information Department). IRD recruited its own writers, including emigres from Eastern Europe, and used at least 100 journalists in Britain and many more abroad. They were supervised by Foreign Office personnel, and produced books, pamphlets and an array of background material for distribution abroad. The origin of these anti-Communist news stories was kept hidden from the readers, and in some cases from the journalists and papers involved.

The Information and Research Department's internal files are still considered "to be extremely sensitive on security and intelligence grounds" and are kept locked away in the Foreign Office (FO).⁹ However, FO indices in the Public Records Office provide some information about IRD

operations using phony news agencies. The indices show that IRD composed hundreds of cartoons, comic strips and articles to be "placed" in overseas journals with enticing titles such as "I was Mao's Lady Secretary" and "Communising the Law."¹⁰

In the 1950s, IRD's propaganda concentrated on the Middle East to convince Arabs that communism was "anti-Islamic." A government committee, formed in 1954 to report on Britain's international propaganda requirements, "saw a need for intensive political and propaganda efforts during the period of decolonialization in order to establish good relations with new Commonwealth countries; to counteract the danger of communist penetration of newly independent countries."¹¹ One such "danger" was considered to be Egypt's President Nasser. Sharq al-Adna was renamed the Near East Arab Broadcasting Station and became "a leading instrument of anti-Nasser propaganda"¹² in the months prior to the Suez war in 1956.

Another focus of Information and Research Department — as well as CIA — disinformation has been "Russian designs" in Africa. The IRD

For decades, the British government agencies have coordinated propaganda operations which overshadow "any comparable CIA propaganda activities so far revealed."

"dripped" information into the media in carefully planned campaigns. For example, in 1974, Britain and the United States became concerned about a Soviet naval buildup in the northwest corner of the Indian Ocean and the construction of a Soviet naval base in Somalia. In March of that year IRD briefings prompted two articles about Soviet strength in the region; one by Brian Crozier in the Times, and another by David Floyd in the Daily Telegraph.¹³

Much of the information the IRD disseminated in other articles and briefings on the issue was from intelligence sources. The U.S. State Department also released satellite photos of naval facilities in Somalia. All in all, the U.S. and British governments were out to create the

impression that Somalia was a "Soviet puppet." Had the Somalian government indeed been a close Soviet ally, it would never have shown interest when Saudi Arabia offered "a substantial amount of money in return for the expulsion of the Russians."¹⁴ In fact, Somalia in 1976 offered the U.S. basing facilities, but the deal was vetoed by Secretary of State Henry Kissinger who reasoned that the Soviet presence in Somalia provided a convenient rationale for the expansion of U.S. forces in the region. It was not until 1982 that the British media admitted that prior to 1978, "Western military analysts had stirred up much adrenalin with exaggerated accounts of how the Russians were building up the northern Somali port of Berbera to rule the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean."¹⁵

Journalist Agents

The journalists who have served as conduits for Information and Research Department material fall into two "categories:" those who in fact were or had been British intelligence agents; and those who have assisted British intelligence while remaining "legitimate" journalists in exchange for some form of "reward" — usually exclusive intelligence-generated material. The following journalists fall into the first category:

- Brian Crozier in 1968 was accused by Izvestia of providing agents "with short-term cover for foreign operations" and "periodically [supplying] intelligence information" while working as chairperson of Forum World Features (FWF) in London. Crozier refuted the charge as "completely untrue."¹⁶ However, FWF was subsequently exposed in the U.S. media as a CIA operation, and a confidential West German intelligence document calls Crozier "a long time CIA operative."¹⁷

- Kenneth Benton is an ex-Information and Research Department officer¹⁸ who also served in the Foreign Office "you can guess which part"¹⁹ — meaning British intelligence, external. When he left IRD he joined the CIA's Forum World Features and subsequently went to the Institute for the Study of Conflict (ISC), set up by Crozier. He traveled to Africa and the Middle East for the ISC to investigate "terrorist" and other threats to oil shipments. His oil study contains a detailed breakdown of alleged Soviet intelligence personnel in Africa.²⁰

- Lynn Price is another Foreign Office veteran and also a former Army intelligence officer. After serving in the Information and Research Department, he joined Forum World Features in 1969,²¹ and then the ISC in 1970. The British Defense Ministry arranged for him to visit Oman, the Sultan of Oman helped pay for it, and Price completed his investigation on insurgency in Oman in close collaboration with

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British and Omani security officials. The delighted Omanis bought several hundred copies of his study.

One of the "legitimate" journalists who allowed himself to be used by IRD is Captain Colin Legum. He was the Observer's Africa and Commonwealth correspondent for more than 30 years. He has stated that at the height of the cold war "the favorite official line was to discredit any militant anti-colonial leader as a communist. We were fed confidential [British intelligence] reports proving the Moscow links with all these colonial 'agitators.'" Ironically, when Legum wrote a profile of Lee Kuan-Yew, the Prime Minister of Singapore, suggesting that he was not a communist, Legum was given a "stiff rebuke" by the Colonial Office.²² By the 1970s he had learned the error of his ways, and was producing acceptable Crozier-type articles.²³

The use of journalists from a liberal paper such as the Observer is not surprising. Sir Percy Sillitoe, former head of the British intelligence agency D15 himself suggested that "journalists would make excellent agents, especially those working on liberal papers, because they came into contact with all kinds of people of whom the State had a potential interest."²⁴

And the British government has been willing to pay for these services. A Fleet Street joke says that much of the foreign operations of British newspapers is paid for by the Secret Vote, i.e. by the money the government appropriates for intelligence purposes.²⁵

Footnotes:

- 1) See M. Richard Shaw, "Falklands/Malvinas Disinformation," Counterspy, Vol. 7, No. 1, pp. 33-35.
- 2) Richard Fletcher, "How the Secret Service Shaped the News," The Guardian (London), 12/18/81.
- 3) See Andrew Boyle, The Climate of Treason, Coronet Books, London, 1980, pp. 202-204.
- 4) Tony Smart and Richard Fletcher, "The News Manipulators," Africa Now, March 1982, p. 70.
- 5) Ibid.
- 6) Cf. supra, #2.
- 7) Information to the author from Ray Alen.
- 8) Cf. supra, #3, p. 346.
- 9) David Leigh, "Secret Cold War Files Are Scrapped by Foreign Office," The Observer, London, 2/28/82.
- 10) Ibid.
- 11) Report of the Review Committee on Overseas Representation (The Duncan Report), (Cmnd. 4107 of 1969).
- 12) Cf. supra, #2.
- 13) "The Ministry of Truth," The Leveller (London), No. 13, 1978, p. 13.
- 14) Fred Halliday, Soviet Policy in the Age of Crisis, Institute for Policy Studies, Washington, D.C., 1981, p. 102.
- 15) Richard Hall, "U.S. Tells Somalis to Stay out of Ogaden," The Observer (London), 4/11/82.
- 16) Kyril Tidmarsh, "Russia Accuses Fleet Street," The Times (London), 12/21/68.

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U.S. Plans for "Limited" Nuclear War

General Gert Bastian is convinced that the U.S. government is preparing to fight a "limited" nuclear war in Europe. That belief prompted him to resign his post as a tank commander in the West German army in January 1980, and shortly thereafter to join the anti-nuclear Green Party. Today, Bastian is a Member of Parliament and a prominent opponent of the plan to station Pershing II and cruise missiles in West Germany. Bastian has participated in civil disobedience and has been arrested in nonviolent blockades of U.S. military installations in West Germany.

Some of Bastian's former army colleagues denounce him as a "traitor." They say that a soldier's task is to carry out orders and not to make political statements. Bastian disagrees. "As a German soldier, with Germany's past, I cannot go along with the idea that it is not a soldier's business to question decisions made by the government."

Gert Bastian wrote his letter of resignation immediately after the December 1979 NATO decision to station Pershing II missiles in West Germany and cruise missiles in a number of European NATO countries. NATO doesn't need these weapons for its defense, Bastian believes; they are offensive weapons. "In case of war, they give the United States the option to strike first. They are the first land-based weapons in Europe that can reach the Soviet Union. Their flight time — less than ten minutes. Once again, an attack can be launched on the Soviet Union from Germany." For Bastian, the highly accurate Pershing IIs are "weapons to be used for decapitation, that is, for destroying the command centers, the nerve centers of the other side."

The Pershing IIs and the cruise missiles, says Bastian, do not represent a "response" to the Soviet SS20 medium-range missiles, as the Reagan administration and the West German government claim. The retired general says that he would like to see the SS20s dismantled — just as he would like to see all nuclear weapons in Europe eliminated. But the SS20 provides no "justification" for the Pershing buildup. "There is no need for NATO to make up for a deficiency of nuclear weapons in Europe." On the contrary, NATO already has "a Eurostrategic potential equal in numbers and decisively superior in quality to the Eurostrategic arsenal of the Soviet Union." The "Eurostrategic weapons" in the NATO arsenal include hundreds of U.S. submarine-based nuclear missiles, bombers equipped with nuclear weapons,

and the land- and sea-based arsenals of the British and French governments. "With the on-going enlargement of the British and French arsenals, NATO is creating even a clear quantitative superiority."

Claiming that the Pershing IIs and the cruise missiles are a "response" to the SS20s is also misleading, Bastian says, because the Pershing IIs and cruise missiles have a quality that cannot be matched by the Soviet Union. "The SS20 can neither reach the territory of the Western Superpower nor decisively impair its ability to conduct war nor even drastically reduce the retaliation potential of the West." The situation in Western Europe, should the Pershing IIs and the cruise missiles be deployed, "must be judged quite differently.... These systems provide the U.S.A. with the potential to hit the Soviet Union in her most sensitive region and thereby substantially reduce the ability of the [Soviet Union] to wage war."

Nor does Bastian agree with the Reagan administration's statements that new nuclear missiles are needed in Europe to make up for a

For Bastian, the highly accurate Pershing IIs are "weapons to be used for decapitation, that is, for destroying the command centers, the nerve centers of the other side."

NATO "inferiority" in conventional weapons. Bastian, who commanded 20,000 soldiers in a tank division in Central Germany, says his experience with the West German army and other NATO forces made clear to him that NATO is perfectly capable of defending Western Europe with conventional weapons. He stresses that even though the Warsaw Pact might have numerical advantages in some areas, in no area does it have

an advantage which would allow it to invade Western Europe. To carry out a successful offensive, Bastian stresses, an attacking nation requires a numerical advantage of at least three to one. First, the Warsaw Pact doesn't have that advantage in Europe, and second, "Central Europe's geography with its mountains and rivers gives the defensive force a great advantage."

The Pershing IIs, in Bastian's view, are not "just" first strike nuclear weapons. "The missile deployment facilitates the 'Europeanization' of nuclear war." The Pershing IIs are weapons to be used to fight a nuclear war and to "limit" it to Europe. Before these missiles were developed, the United States was not capable of "defeating" the Soviet Union except by launching U.S.-based nuclear weapons, thereby triggering an all-out Soviet response and a worldwide nuclear holocaust.

The Pershing IIs raise new possibilities in the minds of U.S. war planners. It might be possible, they believe, to "win" a nuclear war against the Soviet Union without significant damage to the United States by using only Europe-based nuclear weapons. The Pershing II missiles would "decapitate" the Soviet Union by hitting its command centers. Such plans are "wishful thinking" for some NATO generals, but, says Bastian, "for the people in Europe they would mean certain death and destruction."

General Bastian predicts that there will be mass protests in the fall of 1983 throughout West Germany by people trying to stop the December deployment of the Pershing II and cruise missiles. The Green Party and other organizations are also urging that a national plebiscite be held on the deployment issue. If such a vote did take place, there is little question that the missiles would be rejected. A secret 1982 study by the West German government — later leaked to the public — showed that some 60 percent of the population opposes these new nuclear weapons.

The Christian Democratic government of West Germany is already gearing up to counter the demonstrations. An extensive propaganda campaign is to portray the anti-missile protesters as "criminals," and new laws the government wants to enact would make it very easy for the police to break up peaceful demonstrations. Even the West German police union and many judges are opposing these new laws because they fear a flood of arrests and trials which they could not handle.

(Quotations are from a July 1983 interview with Gert Bastian by Konrad Ege; Gert Bastian, Frieden Schaffen, Kindler, Munich, 1983; and Gert Bastian, Reden und Schriften: Atomtod oder Europaeische Sicherheitsgemeinschaft, Pahl Rugenstein Verlag, Cologne, 1982.)

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Secret Documents on South Africa

Intimate Embraces: The IMF and South Africa

by John Kelly

On November 3, 1982, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) scored a major political victory for most of the country's 16 million Blacks the South African apartheid by approving a massive \$1.1 billion in loans to that country's government. Due to the highly secretive nature of the IMF, few people learned that the loan was approved by only eight of the Fund's 22 executive directors. These eight, representing most of the world's industrial nations, control 52 percent of the Fund's votes, led by the United States with 19.64 percent. They were thus able to approve the South African loan despite objections and opposition by executive directors representing 68 countries mostly in the developing world.

U.S. executive director to the IMF, Richard Erb, applauded the institution's loan to South Africa, saying that U.S. support was based solely on the "judgement that the requests met the economic and financial criteria that the Fund applied to all member countries' requests to use its resources." At the same time, he asserted that "U.S. support for the loan indicated no change in the opposition of the United States to apartheid and to the use of force to resolve political differences in Southern Africa."¹

Counterspy has obtained the highly confidential IMF documents written by IMF officials as background to the loan. They contradict Erb's assertions and offer rare insights into one of the world's most undemocratic, yet powerful institutions. The documents also reveal much of the economic reality of South Africa and indicate two devastating conclusions:

- On economic grounds, in accordance with IMF criteria for loans, South Africa did not warrant an IMF loan. Hence, the votes which approved the loan were political and served to buttress the international stature of apartheid.
- South Africa's economic need for skilled

In 1976, when South Africa received an IMF loan which was not economically justifiable, the British IMF representative said that the loan "would give the [South African] authorities some

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additional room for manoeuvre and some feeling of international support, which they deserved."²

Deserved or not, this is the meaning of the latest IMF loan to South Africa. As the pro-government Afrikaans newspaper Beeld baldly remarked, "actually we could get along without

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the loan, but the interest rate is so attractive....It's a feather in our cap, since the granting of such a loan means our house is in order."³

Western support for the loan, particularly that of the U.S., should also be viewed in the context of certain economic facts. In 1978, the United States surpassed England as the biggest market for South African exports, with the U.S. buying 18.6 percent of South Africa's exports (excluding gold). By 1980, the U.S. was purchasing some \$2.2 billion in South African exports. The U.S. also holds the largest share of South Africa's imports; 19.1 percent (\$2.6 billion) in 1980.⁴ Some 350 U.S. firms have invested in South Africa, including a mining operation whose shareholders include CIA Director William Casey.

Non-existent Economic Need

South Africa went to the IMF in 1982 to request two loans: \$689 million under the Fund's Compensatory Financing Facility (CFF) and a \$394 million Standby Arrangement. The so-called Compensatory Financing Facility (\$689 million) is a loan for balance of payments deficits caused by a temporary decline or shortfall in export earnings due to decline in commodity prices. Specifically, South Africa's CFF application was "made with respect to a shortfall in export earnings for the 12 months ended June 1982 ..."⁵ related to the drop in gold prices. In supporting this loan, the IMF wrote that: "The staff considers that the balance of payment needs of South Africa justifies the proposed purchase [loan] under the compensatory financing decision."⁶

Another IMF report showed otherwise. It said that South Africa's exports shortfall was only temporary and that South Africa could pull out of its balance of payments problems on its own. This report found that for the period to be covered by the CFF, 1983, South Africa's external current account would improve; the volume of merchandise exports would increase by two percent; and the volume of merchandise imports would fall. The anticipated result: a \$1.6 billion trade surplus.⁷

In short, South Africa had no pressing need for the \$689 million CFF — the largest such loan ever granted by the IMF. This was particularly true because the positive projections for 1983 were based on the assumption of an extremely low price of gold (\$315 per fine ounce), South Africa's chief source of export earnings. Since the price of gold had increased sharply by mid-1982 and was fully expected to remain well above the \$315 level throughout 1983, South Africa was going to be in an even stronger position to finance its balance of payments deficit without IMF assistance.

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Other economic indicators had also improved in fiscal year 1981/82: government revenue increased by 7.4 percent, income tax revenue increased by 6 percent (instead of an estimated 3 percent decline) and collections of customs and excise duties increased by more than 35 percent instead of the budgeted 4.7 percent.⁸

In all, FY 1981/82 was hardly a financially devastating year and FY 1982/83 was expected to be a year of rapid recovery. While the IMF all but conceded that South Africa had no need for the CFF loan on the basis of trade deficits, it still argued for granting the loan because "official reserves would remain relatively low in relation to imports."⁹

Upon closer inspection of the IMF's own data, even this assertion was questionable. The level of official reserves is affected by the price of gold. The IMF was saying that official reserves would be "relatively low" on the basis of a \$315 price of gold. As noted, the price of gold for 1982 and 1983 was expected to be well above \$315. Thus, official reserves would not be relatively low, and there was no justification for the CFF on the basis of the level of official reserves.

Commercial Loans

One of the usual IMF-applied criteria for whether a country is in dire enough straits for an IMF rescue is its inability to obtain foreign commercial loans. When India approached the IMF for a loan, for example, the U.S. told it to first try to obtain the money from foreign commercial banks. South Africa had demonstrated its capacity to obtain foreign commercial loans by borrowing R1.8 billion (R1=US\$.87 as of August 1982) in short-term loans in 1981-82 to finance its external deficits.¹⁰

At the IMF executive board meeting to vote for the loan, Libyan IMF executive director Mohamed Finaish, who represents 15 Arab nations, said that South Africa "had the capacity to borrow further from the private capital markets — on both a short and long term basis — without straining its economy, as its credit rating was favorable, its debt service burden remained very small, its reserve position was relatively strong, and its per capita income was relatively high." Thus, "financing could easily be made available to deal with the present short term problem."¹¹ Iranian IMF executive director Ghassen Salehkhou agreed: "South Africa's creditworthiness, low debt service ratio, and large reserves did not place it in the category of needy member countries."¹²

While the IMF report supporting the loan found the debt service ratio "low" and projected to fall from 7.9 percent in 1982 to 7.0 percent in 1983, it claimed that South Africa's "potential for

No Postponement

At the November 3, 1982 IMF Executive Board meeting to consider South Africa's loan application, nine executive directors asked for a postponement of the discussion. IMF practice allows a single executive director to ask for and obtain a brief postponement if the request does not prevent the Executive Board from fulfilling its duty.

IMF executive director for the U.S., Richard Erb, opposed the postponement arguing that "unless the economic circumstances bearing on South Africa's case had changed enough to influence significantly the discussion and judgement on the economic merits of the case, a postponement would not be warranted."

The meeting took place. A few weeks later, after South Africa's loans had been approved, the U.S. Consulate General in Johannesburg issued a report bearing directly on South Africa's economic qualifications for an IMF loan. Among other things, the report showed that the education and training of Blacks, a major concern of the IMF, had deteriorated greatly.

further short term borrowing...was seen to be very limited."¹³ U.S. IMF executive director Erb took this unsubstantiated claim as gospel in voting for the loan, but Finaish and others dismissed it as implausible. A.S. Jayawardena, alternate IMF executive director for India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Bhutan charged further that South Africa was "preempting resources that were meant for more disadvantaged and deserving countries."¹⁴

Even the Wall Street Journal said at the time that South Africa could and should approach foreign commercial banks, and that it was not appropriate for U.S. taxpayers to support South Africa through the IMF since it could borrow on the private market. Finaish accurately summed up the situation: "...the immediate prospects of the South African economy underscored the temporary nature of the present difficulties and cast serious doubt on South Africa's need for financing by the Fund, especially in the light of the assumption concerning the price of gold on which the present projections were based."¹⁵

Overnight Recovery

The proof of the pudding came as early as December 1982 when South Africa stopped collecting loan disbursements, leaving a \$43 million allocation untouched. In March 1983, after receiving \$862 million, South Africa asked the IMF to halt further disbursements.¹⁶ South Africa, it seemed, did not need the money any more.

In June 1983, Finance Minister Owen Harwood reported that South Africa had a balance of payments surplus of \$1.92 billion. South Africa's representative to the IMF, D.T.Brand, then announced that because of the surplus, South Africa would begin repaying its IMF loan immediately, some four years ahead of schedule.¹⁷

The events of March and June, coming so soon after South Africa received the loans, prove that the country had never had a bona fide need for the loans. Such was the expressed opinion of E.I.M. Mtei, an alternate IMF executive director from Tanzania, who represents that country and sixteen other African nations on the IMF's board, and Bilenga Tshishimbi, an alternate IMF executive director from Zaire who represents 22 other sub-Saharan African countries.¹⁸

At the November 3, 1982 meeting of the executive board that approved the loans Richard Erb hinted that he expected the subsequent turn of events. He remarked then that "if South Africa's external position improved more rapidly than was now anticipated, South Africa should be expected to effect an early repurchase [repayment]."¹⁹ Reportedly, Erb was one of those set to press South Africa on early repayment. The conclusion is hard to avoid: the U.S. voted for the loans while knowing full well that South Africa did not have a genuine economic need for them.

Standby Arrangement

The second loan sought and received by South Africa was the \$394 million standby arrangement for a period extending to the end of 1983. Ordinarily, such loans come with austerity measures or what the IMF calls conditionalities. The country must agree to an economic adjustment program of fiscal and monetary policy changes to receive the standby arrangement.

Fiscal adjustment. Usually the key IMF fiscal requirement is a scheduled reduction in the government's budget deficit during the period covered by the standby. South Africa's proposed adjustment program did not schedule such a budget deficit reduction (measured as the ratio of the budget deficit to the Gross Domestic Product). The projected governmental budget deficit for 1982/83 (the adjustment period) was 2.8 percent, the same as it was for 1981/82 and much higher than it was in 1980/81 (0.4 percent).²⁰

South Africa scheduled no decline in its budget deficit, and no questions were asked by the IMF even though this omission was mentioned by Finaish at the meeting to approve the loan. Saudi executive director, Yusuf A. Nimatallah, added that he "failed to see where the adjustment was to be made. . . . Hence, it seemed incorrect to

conclude that the proposed program called for adjustment on the fiscal front."²¹ None of the other executive directors rebutted Nimatallah's assertion, and South Africa presented no explanation.

Tight Money. A tight monetary policy is usually the major monetary requirement of an IMF-required adjustment program. This can be accomplished by imposing quantitative controls on bank lending such as ceilings on loan amounts. In 1980, South Africa had abolished quantitative controls on bank lending and stimulated the growth in bank credit. According to the government itself, there was a "swelling" or tremendous expansion in the availability of liquid cash.²²

Other typical measures are to increase interest rates and to raise the amount of money which a bank or lending institution has to place in reserve before it can provide loans. South Africa's proposed adjustment program did not include quantitative controls on bank lending.²³ Interest rates had recently declined and South Africa's Reserve Bank had lowered its cash reserve requirements at the end of March 1982.²⁴

Again, no questions were asked even though these deficiencies were pointed out at the loan-approving meeting. Nimatallah said that the monetary policy was a "cause for concern" and "raised doubts about the effectiveness of South Africa's adjustment program."²⁵ A.S. Jayawardena criticized South Africa's "extraordinarily accommodating monetary policy" and charged that "the additional liquidity created by lowering the [cash reserve] requirement could be considerable."²⁶

Inflation. At least a planned attempt at reducing inflation is another typical IMF adjustment. But not so for South Africa. According to an IMF report: "The Government does not envisage a substantial lowering of the inflation rate during the [adjustment] program period," and there will be a "continued high rate of inflation."²⁷

South Africa was also allowed to get away with a dual exchange rate policy (contrary to IMF precepts) and a 10 percent import surcharge which even the government admitted distorted trade.²⁸ At the loan-approving meeting, Jayawardena criticized the IMF's "benign neglect" of the dual exchange rate and said that the import surcharge was "even more disconcerting." "Import levies greatly distorted prices and trade," he said.²⁹ South Africa bent a little on the import surcharge by scheduling its lowering and eventual abolition. However, South Africa had promised the IMF already in 1976 that it would quickly abolish its import surcharge but maintained it for quite a while afterwards.

Apartheid: Now You See It, Now You Don't

It was all but impossible to pinpoint where South Africa was adjusting its economic policies. Most significant in this regard was that "severe structural imbalances" in the labor market were not even targeted for adjustment or improvement.

Finaish charged that the IMF assessments had "ignored the impact of South Africa's chronic structural constraints resulting from its labor policies," and said there was "no clear evidence that that fundamental issue was being seriously addressed by the South African authorities."³⁰ Jayawardena agreed that "there had clearly been no progress in dealing with the labor market constraints.... The problem is deep-rooted and serious and calls for fundamental corrective measures."³¹

Even Giovanni Lovato, IMF executive director for Italy, Greece, Portugal and Malta who voted for the loan, expressed "strong reservations" about South Africa's "structural rigidity" which had "prevented an efficient functioning of the labor market."³² Britain's IMF executive director, John Anson, who also voted for the loan, noted the "rigidities in the labor market" and said that "a greater effort would have to be made to increase labor mobility, use more of the available labor resources, and enhance the supply of skilled labor through government and government-assisted training programs."³³

"Severe structural imbalances" is the IMF jargon for apartheid. Without using the word apartheid, the IMF blamed "discriminatory practices" for preventing "the best use of labor."³⁴ Moreover, wrote the IMF, "for the past several years, South Africa's labor market has been beset by increasingly severe structural imbalances, with rising shortages of skilled manpower coexisting with a fairly high rate of unemployment of semiskilled and unskilled workers."³⁵

Almost as an afterthought, the South African government expressed a commitment to the IMF "to improve the development and utilization of the country's manpower resources." It pointed out its establishment of eight training centers, "chiefly for black trainees" and "a new scheme, too, to help train the unemployed." The government also set up a Manpower Development Fund that grants low-interest loans to the private sector for training programs.³⁶

In its written commitment to the IMF, South Africa said "the Government will, however, continue to press ahead with infrastructural development and job training programs to reduce the domestic bottlenecks that have constrained growth in the past."³⁷ This governmental commitment "pleased" U.S. IMF director Richard Erb, who said he gave his approval for the loans, in part, because "such programs were not being

cut back ..."³⁸

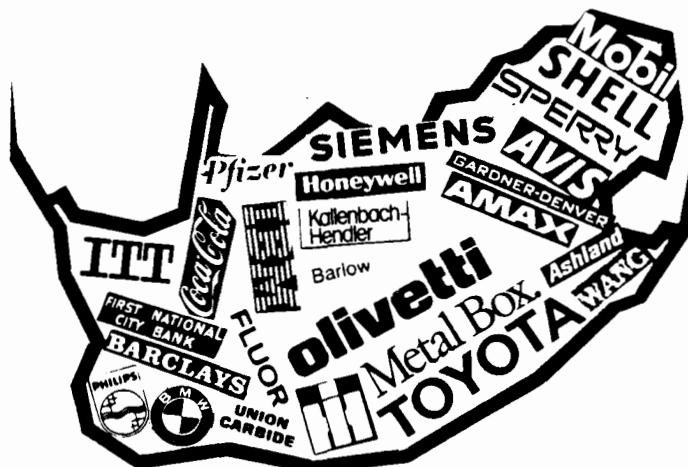
However, as the IMF itself discovered, the actions of the South African government belie this commitment to Black workers. The IMF found that shortly after initiating token training programs, the "Government has sought to generate the interest of the private sector to solve its manpower problems with a view to reducing the Government's involvement in this field. However, the response of the private sector so far as the registration of Black apprentices is concerned has been disappointing."³⁹

Further questioning the government's commitment to its Black workers was the 1980 re-opening of its facilities for recruiting workers from abroad which brought in 18,000 foreign workers in 1980 and more than 80,000 white workers during 1981-82.

South Africa's unstable work force also constrains economic growth. The government's policy of apartheid and its actions belie its written commitment "to reduce the domestic bottlenecks" of labor. The government's record has become increasingly worse on this account. In 1979, there were 192 strikes and work stoppages with a loss of nearly 508,000 worker-days. In the first half of 1981 alone, there were 829,000 lost worker-days due to strikes.⁴⁰ Clearly, apartheid was behind this instability, because white workers have not been involved in any strikes or stoppages since mid-1980.

Worsening Black Plight

The IMF reported that "on the whole, the rate of increase in real remuneration (1980-81) of white workers accelerated, while that of non-whites decelerated." By 1982, "with the slowdown in the growth of real wages of non-white workers, progress toward narrowing the differential between their income and that of white workers was halted."⁴¹ And making matters worse for Black wage earners was the "sharp rise in food



prices"⁴² which strikes hardest at low income groups. Clearly, the government's policy is to worsen the plight of Black workers, and the government's commitments to the IMF are self-evident lies.

In an IMF report prepared with the government, it is patently clear there would be no improvement in apartheid labor conditions and certainly not during South Africa's economic adjustment period. The report shows that the government's own Economic Development Plan (EDP) found a qualitative and quantitative increase in Black education and training "essential" to improving Black working conditions - the "severe structural imbalances." Yet in its commitment to the IMF, South Africa only promised not to cut its training programs — which were already inadequate. There was no commitment for a qualitative or quantitative improvement in training for Blacks.

The Ninth Economic Development Plan (EDP) for 1978-87 was revised in 1981. The revised EDP estimates that an average real GDP growth of 5 percent in 1981-87 is needed to keep unemployment from rising. With the expectation of little growth in 1982 and 1983 [South Africa's adjustment period], growth between 1984 and 1987 would have to be significantly higher than the 5 percent postulated in the revised EDP. Unemployment is ... likely to remain a problem. The continued high level of unemployment among blacks, and particularly the fact that 43.5 percent of those unemployed at the beginning of 1981 were in the 20-29 year age group, makes it one of the most urgent socio-economic problems. Accordingly, the revised EDP indicates that an increase in the quantity and quality of education and training of all population groups is essential for the realization of the forecast rate of growth.⁴³

In short, apartheid is severely restricting economic growth through high unemployment and oppressive working conditions. As recently as July 16, 1982, the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) said as much when it reported that "unrest among black workers continues and has resulted in serious violence [by the government] at several mines as well as costly production delays."

How has the South African government responded to the "unrest"? "Thus far," says the DIA, "the authorities do not seem prepared to respond to [the workers'] demands through any means other than force." While the IMF left this part unsaid, the government's de facto commitment to force contradicts its de jure commitment to better the Black labor situation. U.S. Executive Director Erb undoubtedly failed to inform his fellow IMF board members of the DIA's findings even though they were directly relevant to the loan vote.

At the time of an earlier request to the
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IMF in 1976, South Africa, without using the word, admitted that apartheid was a severe constraint on its economic growth. According to South Africa's Finance Minister, as quoted by then-IMF executive director M. Antoine de Yameogo (representing Upper Volta and 17 other African countries), "it is obvious that this acquisition of skills by blacks will have to continue at an accelerated pace if the economic growth rate in South Africa is to be maintained. It is estimated that by 1980 South Africa will need 3.7 million skilled workers. At most, only 1.7 million could be recruited from among whites, and this would involve the entire active white population. The non-white population must therefore, of necessity, supply at least 2 million skilled workers, the vast majority of these will have to be Africans. As a result of the need for Black workers, there will have to be a radical change in the policies of education and training of Africans, and industry will have to be freed from the many restrictions that handicap the efficient and maximum use of African labourers...."⁴⁴

Six years later, Finance Minister Owen Harwood had to tell the IMF that "high capacity utilization and shortages of skilled labor contributed to an acceleration of inflation"⁴⁵ and were still holding back economic growth. Despite recognition of this major economic problem and years of tremendous increases in government revenues, the government had done next to nothing to address these labor bottlenecks.

Yet, the government was back at the IMF trough in 1982 promising "to press ahead with infrastructural development and training programs to reduce the domestic bottlenecks that

have constrained growth in the past."⁴⁶ And the IMF staff was, in turn, parroting those pledges: "The authorities will ensure that critical training and infrastructural programs - designed to ease medium-term constraints on growth - are not made to bear the brunt of the budget cuts."⁴⁷

The IMF also indicated that South Africa had to increase labor mobility in order to sustain economic growth. But what was the government doing in 1982? It was pushing through a new bill entitled "Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons," which even the conservative Economist (London) magazine said would further restrict labor mobility. And in the mining sector, an IMF report said, "the movement of blacks into skilled positions has met with resistance by skilled trades' unions."⁴⁸

When granting the loan, the IMF had no assurances whatsoever that South Africa would address these serious handicaps to economic growth. Indeed, all indications were otherwise.

Money To Burn.

The government's record prior to the IMF staff's assertion about its commitment to "critical training" exposes the charade of the government's statements that it seeks improvement in the Black labor market. If ever South Africa was in a position to improve Black working conditions, it was during the boom years of 1977-80. During this period, according to government statistics, working profits from the mines rose dramatically from 16.1 (in rands per metric ton milled) in 1977 to 85.0 in 1980.⁴⁹ Total gross operating surplus (mainly profits) in manufacturing increased by 45 percent in 1980.⁵⁰ Tax and lease payments by gold mines to the government rose from R370 million in 1977 to R3 billion in 1980.⁵¹

At the same time, government spending on community, social, and personal services fell an average of 4.2 percent during 1972-78; 2.9 percent in 1979, and another 5.6 percent in 1980.⁵² If the government would not finance the improvement of the Black labor situation during its boom years, what assurance was there that it would do so in 1982-83?

Apartheid curtailed Black employment during 1977-80 despite astonishingly high volumes of unfilled manufacturing orders. During 1972-78, an average 73.4 percent of orders were not filled; in 1979, 67.8 percent, and in 1980, 64.3 percent.⁵³ These orders were not filled because there were not enough workers to service them. As the IMF noted: "During past high-growth periods, such as 1980-81, infrastructural inadequacies and, even more importantly, skilled labor shortages have proved to be serious supply constraints."⁵⁴

In recent history, then, the government has been willing to shoot itself in the foot

Garnering Endorsements

The IMF loans must be viewed in the context of South Africa's well-known campaign to garner international endorsements by any means. An example of this manipulation was evident in a secret U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) report of July 23, 1982: "South African Chief of Naval Operations RADM Andries Putter recently indicated that Western warships would soon not be able to use the facilities at the Simonstown Naval Base during an emergency." According to the DIA, "The South African media interpreted RADM Putter's statement as a warning to the West to revise its policies before Simonstown is allowed to deteriorate. Press reactions should be viewed in the context of continuing efforts by South Africa to limit its international isolation...."

economically to keep Blacks (whose wages average less than 25 percent of white workers) from getting jobs, a record which affords little guarantee that it will keep its feeble commitment to the IMF. In wooing the IMF in 1982, the South African government paid lip service to the improvement of Black labor conditions, and the IMF granted its loans, fully realizing that the government's word was merely lip service.

Internal Causes of Deficits

The IMF is bound to give compensatory financing loans only for shortfalls in export earnings due to problems out of a country's control, such as poor export prices or bad weather. The IMF claimed that South Africa's balance of payments deficit in 1981 "was largely attributable to factors beyond South Africa's control," in particular "weak world demand and low prices" for its exports.⁵⁵ But, again, this was not the full story. Moreover, as the IMF reports reveal, the Fund knew that the tale it was spreading was, at best, a half-truth.

Rand Appreciation. One internal policy contributing to South Africa's balance of payments problems was appreciation of the rand, South Africa's currency. In an IMF study prepared with the government, it states "that international competitiveness (in the sale of South African exports) was eroded in 1979 and more sharply in 1980 as a result of a 12 percent ... appreciation of the rand in effective terms ... and rising domestic inflation."⁵⁶ This increased the foreign exchange price of South Africa's exports which, in turn, reduced its ability to export to the same markets. Thus, while the "weak world demand" was an external factor, export shortfalls were exacerbated by the internal policy of appreciation of the rand.

Lower Quality Gold Ore. Other internal policies decreasing the value of export sales included the mining of lower quality gold ore and diamond stockpiling. These practices were mentioned by Richard Erb at the IMF meeting considering the loans, so the IMF was fully aware of the implications. Erb also pointed out that the amount of diamond stockpiling was not known because the government refused to provide such data.⁵⁷

Apartheid. The other factor mentioned by the IMF study as hurting international competitiveness, "rising domestic inflation," was due, in part, to "high capacity utilization rates and shortages of skilled labor," according to the government.⁵⁸ These contributors to inflation and balance of payments deficits were due to apartheid, which prevented hundreds of thousands of Blacks from getting certain jobs and denied skills training to Blacks. So, again it was an internal policy, apartheid, which was contributing

to the balance of payments problems.

Military Spending. Perhaps the most significant internal policy culminating in the 1981 deficit was massive military expenditure and overspending. In order to pay for its soaring defense expenditures, the government kept printing more money. During 1979, the money supply expanded by 19 percent, and in 1980 by 21 percent. The government itself reported that one of the "main causes" of the 1981 deficit was the "excess liquidity during the two preceding years (1979, 1980) of balance of payment surplus...."⁵⁹

Even in 1981, when the government perceived the impending deficit, defense overspending continued; the money supply expanded by 20 percent⁶⁰ and inflation reached 15.2 percent.⁶¹ According to the IMF, it was the government's "delay in implementing adjustment policies" to reduce government

The IMF itself . . . recognized and acknowledged that institutionalized white supremacy is detrimental to South Africa's economy.

spending which made the 1981 deficit unavoidable.⁶² Thus, internal policies contributed to the deficits. A recent U.N. report found that South Africa has a long history of inflation-fueling defense spending and that this was what brought it to the IMF in 1976. The same train of events brought South Africa to the IMF in 1982.

These massive budget deficits caused by increased defense expenditures fueled inflation in South Africa because the government was in effect printing money to pay for more weapons. From 1971 through 1975 money and quasi-money... together increased at about 20 percent per year. In turn, this inflation caused balance of payments problems as South Africa tried to peg its exchange rate and to maintain currency value through foreign borrowing, import taxes, and other restrictions on trade...the [1977] IMF study...does report increases in expenditures on defense equipment...as a cause of balance of payments and terms of trade problems in 1976. Defense expenditures leading to budget deficits, budget deficits leading to inflation, inflation leading to balance of payments problems—this is the indirect path by which South Africa arrived at the IMF's door; in addition there was the direct

increment to the balance of payments deficit caused by rising arms imports.⁶³

From 1972 to 1975, South Africa's defense expenditures increased by 97 percent in real terms. At the time of its 1976 IMF request, the government had budgeted another 25 percent increase (in real terms) in defense expenditures.⁶⁴ During 1976-77, the IMF lent South Africa \$467 million, an amount nearly matching the \$450 million increase in South Africa's military budget from fiscal 1975/76 to fiscal year 1976/77.

Still, South Africa continued massive fueling of its military machine at the expense of other programs. As an April 1977 IMF study reported, "with defense expenditures budgeted to rise by 21.3 percent to R1.654 billion (\$1.9 billion), the budget provided for other government expenditures to increase in 1977/78 by only 5.1 percent in nominal terms."⁶⁵ The same IMF study concluded: "Defense expenditure has been a major cause of the rapid increase in total current expenditure." This "rapid increase" again led to record budget deficits of 6.8 percent of gross national product in 1975 and over 7 percent in 1976.⁶⁶

Same Old Story.

As in 1976, the 1981/82 deficit was preceded by two years of gargantuan defense expenditures and overspending. In an IMF report prepared with the South African government, we are told that "restraint on government spending remained the keystone of the 1980/81 budget strategy."⁶⁷

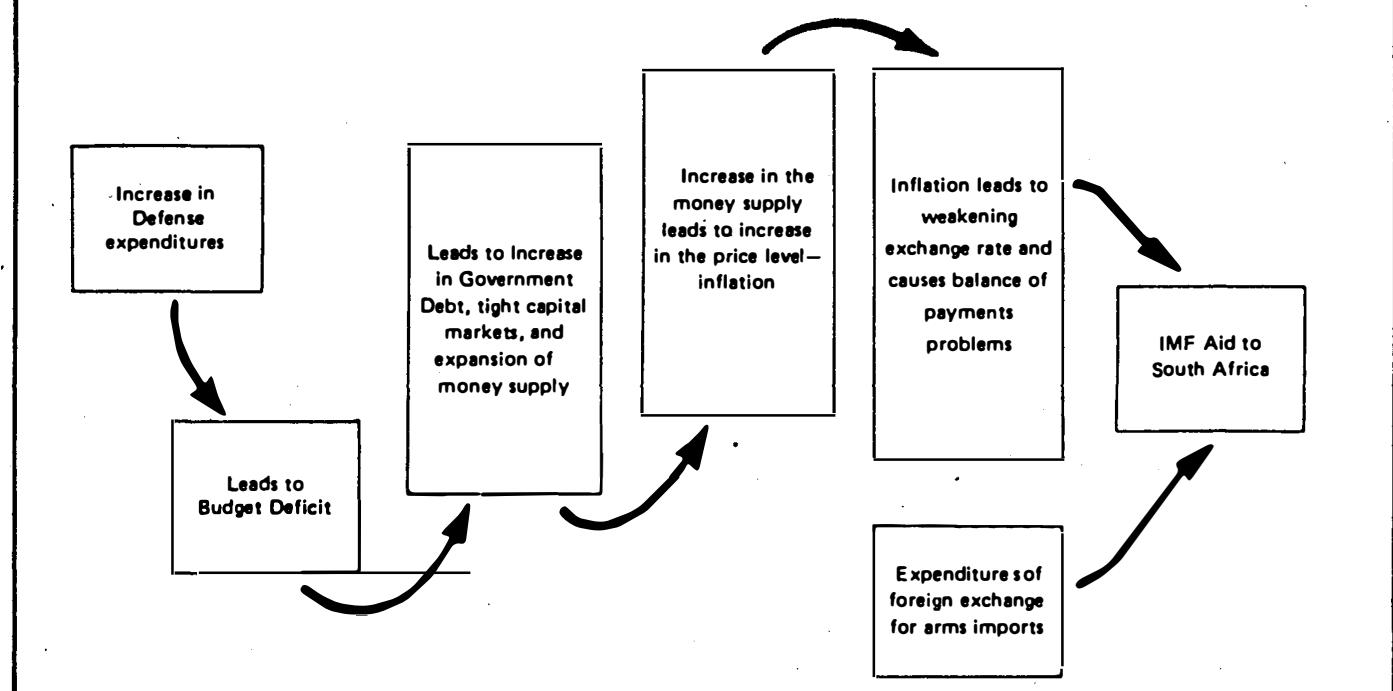
Within this restrained budget, overall military expenditure had been budgeted to rise by 14.1 percent. It rose instead by 22.4 percent which was on top of an increase of 30 percent in 1979/80.⁶⁸

Despite South Africa's continuous history of overspending in its defense budget, the IMF, in calling for the latest loans, justified them on the basis that: "Expenditure [1982/83] was budgeted to decline significantly in real terms, with much of the restraint falling on defense expenditure and investment outlay."⁶⁹ However, as of the first quarter of 1982/83, defense expenditures were already higher than had been budgeted and total overspending for the first quarter of 1982/83 was already R500 million.⁷⁰

Thus a major contributor to South Africa's balance of payments deficit in 1981 was the internal policy of massive military expenditures and overspending. This policy was detailed in the IMF reports but was never mentioned at the meeting to vote for the loans, not even by the executive directors who voted against the loan. No demands were made upon South Africa to curtail its military spending even though IMF money goes into the treasury of the recipient government which may use it for any purpose, including military expenditures.

In 1976, the IMF granted South Africa loans approximately equal to its military costs for that year. The major portion of the 1976 loans were approved at an August meeting only two months after the June 1976 uprisings in Soweto. The government's international prestige was at its

FROM DEFENSE EXPENDITURES AND ARMS IMPORTS TO IMF AID



From: Jim Morrell, "International Institutions and Economic Sanctions on South Africa"
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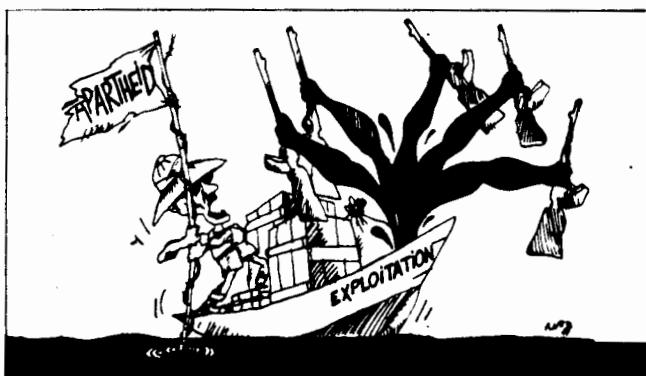
lowest ebb, and its ability to borrow on highly-favorable terms in private international financial markets and to attract foreign investors was in jeopardy. The timing and quick approval of the IMF loans restored investor confidence and credits to South Africa.

The IMF's 1982 loans came after two years of war against Namibia and Angola by South Africa. Indeed, at the time of the IMF's secret staff mission in August 1982, South Africa was carrying out a secret full-scale invasion of Angola, according to the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency. Reportedly, the 1982 loans roughly equaled the cost of the wars against Namibia and Angola. As London's International Institute for Strategic Studies reported: "The costs to South Africa of carrying the war to her neighbors, and particularly her highly aggressive campaign in Angola, were substantial. Her defense budget rose by 30 percent, to a record level of almost \$3 billion for 1981/82."⁷¹

The most recent IMF loans will also serve as a good housekeeping seal of approval and will help maintain the confidence of foreign bankers and investors. The IMF (and the U.S. behind it) have thus placed themselves clearly on the side of the brutal apartheid regime. As with many other IMF decisions, the South African loan was a political move, camouflaged in misleading economic rhetoric. As outrageous as this story sounds, it is not a unique event for the IMF. Loans to the El Salvadoran military machine, to South Korea, and to Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines (among others) have likewise bolstered brutal government apparatuses at the expense of the majority of each country's people. ☺

Footnotes:

- 1) Draft, EBM/82/140-11/3/82 a.m. (Confidential Minutes of IMF Executive Board meeting), p. 10. (Hereinafter EBM/82/140).
- 2) Jim Morrell, "International Institutions and Economic Sanctions on South Africa," International University Exchange Fund, 1980, p. 30.
- 3) Beeld, 10/6/82.
- 4) IMF, "South Africa—Recent Economic Developments," SM/82/89, 5/3/83. Prepared by D. Burton, U. Dell'Anno and J. Wein, p. 58 (Confidential). (Hereinafter SM/82/89).
- 5) IMF, "Use of Fund Resources—Compensatory Financing Facility," EBS/82/174, 10/4/82, Prepared by The Research and European Departments. Approved by William C. Hood and L.A. Whittome, p. 1. (Hereinafter EBS/82/174).
- 6) Ibid., p. 17.
- 7) IMF, "Request For Stand-By Arrangement," EBS/82/173-10/4/82, Prepared by the European Department and the Exchange and Trade Relations Department. Approved by L.A. Whittome and S. Mookerjee, p. 11 (Confidential). (Hereinafter EBS/82/173).
- 8) SM/82/89, p. 74.
- 9) EBS/82/173, p. 12.
- 10) SM/82/89, p. 1.
- 11) EBM/82/140, p. 17.
- 12) Ibid.
- 13) EBS/82/173, p. 5.
- 14) EBM/82/140, p. 51.
- 15) Ibid.
- 16) The Nation, 4/23/83, p. 501.
- 17) Washington Post, 6/23/83, p. C-11, and AID Memo, Center For International Policy (CIP), 6/20/83.
- 18) AJD Memo, CIP, 6/20/83.
- 19) EBM/82/140, p. 13.
- 20) EBS/82/173, p. 19.
- 21) EBM/82/140, p. 14.
- 22) EBS/82/173, p. 33.
- 23) Ibid., p. 22.
- 24) SM/82/89, p. 78.
- 25) EBM/82/140, p. 15.
- 26) Ibid., pp. 42, 46.
- 27) EBS/82/173, p. 11.
- 28) Ibid., p. 36.
- 29) EBM/82/140, p. 46.
- 30) Ibid., p. 34.
- 31) Ibid., p. 48.
- 32) Ibid., pp. 35, 36.
- 33) Ibid., p. 21.
- 34) SM/82/89, p. 13.
- 35) Ibid., p. 12.
- 36) Ibid., p. 12.
- 37) EBS/82/173, p. 33.
- 38) EBM/82/140, p. 12.
- 39) SM/82/89, p. 12, cf. supra #1.
- 40) Ibid., p. 11.
- 41) Ibid., p. 13.
- 42) Ibid.
- 43) Ibid., p. 15.
- 44) "International Institutions and Economic Sanctions on South Africa," p. 28 (as quoted) (see #2).
- 45) EBS/82/173, p. 33.
- 46) Ibid.
- 47) Ibid., p. 15.
- 48) SM/82/89, p. 32.
- 49) Ibid., p. 38.
- 50) Ibid., p. 9.
- 51) Ibid., p. 36.
- 52) Ibid., p. 18.
- 53) Ibid., p. 26.
- 54) EBS/82/173, p. 9.
- 55) EBS/82/174, p. 18.
- 56) SM/82/89, pp. 43-44.
- 57) EBM/82/140, p. 13.
- 58) EBS/82/173, p. 33.
- 59) Ibid., p. 31.
- 60) Ibid., p. 20.
- 61) Ibid., p. 16.
- 62) Ibid., p. 13.
- 63) David Gisselquist, "International Monetary Fund Relations with South Africa," UN General Assembly Report, A/37/568, 10/25/82, p. 14.
- 64) Ibid., p. 13.
- 65) Ibid., p. 14 (as quoted).
- 66) Ibid. (as quoted).
- 67) SM/82/89, p. 67.
- 68) Ibid., p. 68.
- 69) EBS/82/173, p. 4.
- 70) Ibid., p. 8.
- 71) Strategic Survey 1981-1982, London, 1982, p. 112.



Labor Repression Increases in South Africa

A searing self-indictment of Ronald Reagan's "constructive engagement" has come from the pen of his own Consulate General in Johannesburg, South Africa. Constructive engagement is the Reagan administration's policy of closer diplomatic ties with South Africa. It is defended on the basis that it will more effectively and peacefully ease the country away from apartheid.

According to the Consulate General's January 1983 confidential report — "Labor Trends in the Republic of South Africa" — internal changes have occurred during the "constructive engagement" period but these changes have been for the worse. Using extraordinary terms, the report says that Black unemployment, "already a structural problem," is climbing "to frightening levels," and "some observers have spoken of unemployment as an endemic structural problem." In the Ciskei (one of South Africa's "homelands") alone there is a "horrendous" unemployment problem, which even its own officials set at 25 percent. The reality may be even more desperate since government statistics often lie: "Independent estimates vary, but all agree that the government's unemployment figures bear little relationship to reality."

At the same time, tens, if not hundreds of thousands of skilled labor jobs go unfilled because Blacks are not provided with training, and there are almost no white workers left to fill these jobs. Recently, the government initiated training programs through the private sector, but the results have been meager: in 1981 there were only 495 registered Black apprentices out of a total of 33,303. The Consulate General's report also found that the private sector, which it said was "carrying the lion's share of the country's skill training," was prejudiced against Black trainees because the "low educational level of the Black worker makes it seem a losing battle to many managers."

Even if there were enough training programs for Blacks, it would be to no avail because their

schooling ill prepares them to benefit from such programs. As the report put it: "The underlying reasons for the low skill levels among Blacks are to be found in the first instance in the inferior Black educational system, which is getting worse rather than better."

Inferior education for Blacks is deliberate government policy. Government spending on a Black student in 1981 averaged 113 South African Rands (R) as compared to R1,072 for each white student. The report concludes: "The deterioration of the quality of Black education is demonstrated starkly by the Black [high school] pass rate since 1976, which has dropped progressively and is now down 34 percent from that year."

As if to rub salt in the wound, South Africa has been conducting a "vigorous" campaign to recruit skilled workers from abroad and brought in over 80,000 whites during 1981-82. The report found a long-term commitment to this campaign: South African government officials have called the recruitment an "essential shortcut" to maintaining the country's economy. "The Minister of Internal Affairs stated in November [1982] that South Africa would depend on immigration to augment manpower for a number of years."

Even among employed Blacks conditions have worsened during the "constructive engagement" period. The report cites statistics showing "that the average real income of [Black] Soweto wage and salary earners fell by nearly three percentage points between 1975 and 1980." Relatively speaking the "average monthly salaries of those employed (in the formal sector) are even more stark: White R986, Colored R325, Asians R454, Africans R243." Citing another independent study, the report said it "found that the absolute pay gap between Black and White workers was fast widening, and the study concluded that there was little likelihood of it narrowing significantly in the near future." The report noted also a 100 percent

increase in prices between 1975-81, and a projected inflation rate of about 15 percent in 1982—both of which lessened the value of Black wages.

Adding insult to injury, the government has been enacting labor reform legislation as a public relations ploy. As the Consulate's report put it: "On the international scene, South Africa continued to struggle with its image, using the labor reforms as a wedge in hope of gaining some respectability."

Given the increasing unemployment, decreasing wages, and increasing prices and inflation, the labor legislation can only be defined as a paper reform. As if this weren't bad enough, the government, while granting more rights to Black workers on paper, is escalating its brutality. According to the report: "Some contradictions appeared in government policy. A picture of a government ambivalent as to its own labor reform objectives emerged as the Ministry of Manpower on the one hand continued pushing forward its reforms and security police on the other widely used bannings and detentions without trials against emerging [Black] union officials..." "These contradictions have had the effect of destroying much of the spirit, as well as the letter of the reform measures," the report concluded.

Despite the so-called labor reform legislation, the report said that all strikes and work stoppages were by Blacks in 1981 and 1982 and were considered illegal. Moreover, although there is now a labor dispute mechanism, the police were summoned to strikes and work stoppages 163 times in 1981. And, "the most common [response] remains that tactic of simply shipping striking workers en masse back to the homelands. In 1982 police also began to apply the new Intimidation Act against [Black] unionists in the workplace."

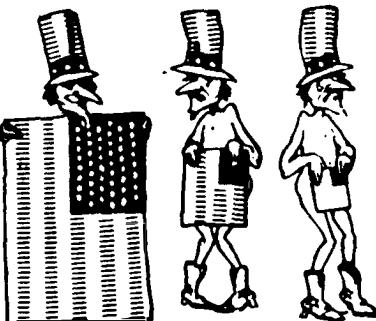
The effects of bannings have actually worsened: "There are many human costs as well. For many, losing their jobs means loss of urban

residence privileges. For their children it means disruption—if not an end-to education." And the situation in the homelands, where over 2 million Blacks have been resettled and "where the unemployed may end up is worse than ever."

On top of all this, the government is pushing through the "Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons" bill which will decrease Black workers' mobility and thus their ability to travel to available jobs. While giving the government the benefit of the doubt, the Consulate General's report summarized that "other government policies — all directly linked to the structure of apartheid — also remained untouched by the labor reforms. They continue to impede workers' mobility and rationalization of the manpower structure." "Lack of training, influx control and homeland policies all have created a vicious circle," the report explains: "While not enough jobs are being created to match the Black birth rate, enough skilled Blacks cannot be found for those that are created."

Reagan's "constructive engagement" policy did not create apartheid; neither has it served to improve life under apartheid. It is high time the administration publicized its own Consulate's findings

about the worsening of internal conditions in South Africa and disavowed "constructive engagement" which only serves to cover up apartheid's horrors.



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Eyewitness Afghanistan

Ed. note: Konrad Ege is one of the few Western journalists to travel inside Afghanistan in recent years without linking up with any of the Pakistan-based rebel groups. In May 1983, he spent two weeks in the capital city of Kabul and surrounding areas. He spoke with many people in the street, as well as government officials, members of the People's Democratic Party, people involved in the women's movement and the youth organization, and a former rebel commander. This unique opportunity afforded new insights on the military situation and the prospects for a political solution to the conflict.

For those unfamiliar with the history of

Afghanistan and the events of the last few years, we include both a chronology and the following explanation of how the present government of Babrak Karmal came to power. This is followed by two reports about Konrad Ege's recent trip: one on the military situation and the prospects for peace, and one on the government's reforms. A final article gives a brief overview of the history of CIA operations in Afghanistan — the present CIA campaign to aid the Pakistan-based rebels certainly rivals the CIA's operations to overthrow the Sandinista government in Nicaragua.

The First Two Years From Revolution to the "Dark Night"

by Konrad Ege

After decades of rule by kings and a few years of dictatorship, a progressive force took power in Afghanistan on April 27, 1978: the People's Democratic Party (PDP). It was a small party at the time and if not for the extraordinary events of that month it probably would never have chosen to stage an uprising at that moment in history.

These are the events that led up to the PDP takeover: On April 18, the repressive government of Mohammed Daoud, working closely with the then-Shah of Iran's secret police, saw to it that a prominent PDP leader, Mir Akbar Khyber, was killed. His funeral turned into a mass demonstration against the government, and Daoud's police responded by arresting all party leaders. Daoud's move forced the party to choose between risking long-term imprisonment or death for its entire leadership, or using party members in the army to stage an insurrection.

The party, which had been organizing since 1965, decided to take power. Party members in the Army captured the important government buildings, including the Presidential Palace. The fighting between the insurrectionists and the forces loyal to Daoud was brief, but Daoud was killed when he refused to surrender. Few people mourned the old regime: when Daoud himself had overthrown King Zahir Shah in 1973, he had promised far-reaching reforms which never materialized and Daoud turned out to be a repressive one-man ruler. Only a few wealthy businessmen and feudal landlords felt the loss. Almost immediately, some of these men moved to Pakistan and called on people to rise up against the new "godless regime." Their calls remained unanswered for months.

From the very beginning, the PDP government led by President Noor Mohammed Taraki and Prime Minister Babrak Karmal was confronted

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with formidable problems. It could not rely on the existing bureaucracy to implement its far-reaching reforms — land reform, promotion of equal rights for men and women, abolition of usury, establishment of trade unions, industrialization of the country, a literacy campaign — and lacked sufficient cadres of its own to run the government offices.

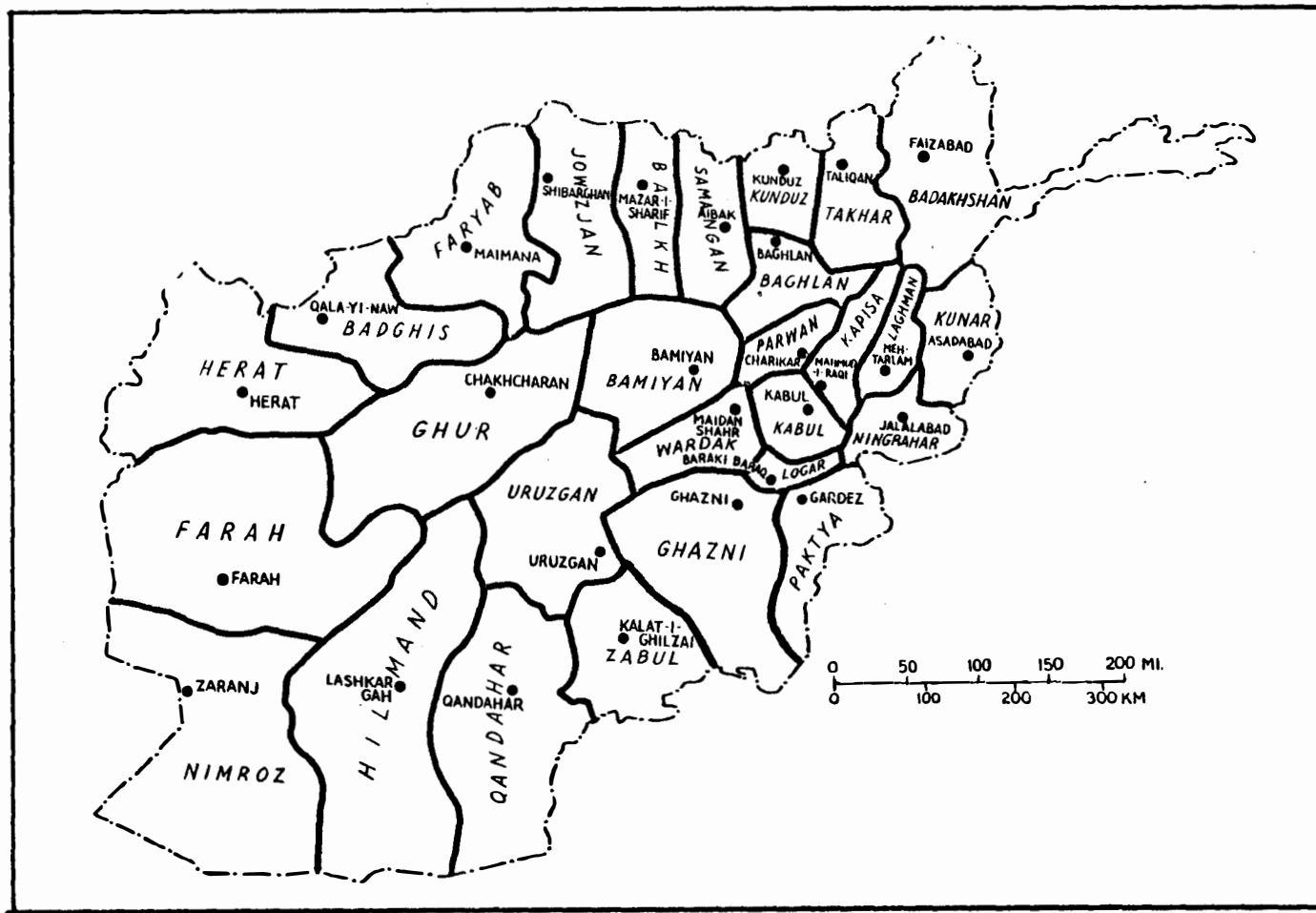
In 1978, Afghanistan was one of the poorest countries on earth. A feudal economic and social structure kept many peasants dependent on a few landlords, and the country had no industry to speak of. Medical care, especially in the countryside, was almost nonexistent, and some 95 percent of the population was illiterate. Some areas of the country had never been "governed" by any central government; tribal leaders there resisted any government intervention.

Lack of unity in the party compounded the problems of the PDP government. A longstanding rift between its factions (Khalq and Parcham) which had been patched over before the April takeover, once again split open. The Khalqis, led by Taraki, advocated a rapid implementation of reforms, apparently believing that a "socialist" state could be created within years. The Parchamis wanted first to establish a national

democratic government under the leadership of the PDP to unite the peasants, workers, artisans, small merchants, clergy and progressive intellectuals. The Parchamis lost out: they were ousted from responsible government positions in the summer of 1978, and the Khalqis under President Taraki and Deputy Prime Minister Hafizullah Amin, took complete control.

Up to this point, the government had enjoyed a degree of popular support, or at least could count on a "wait and see" attitude of many Afghans. Significant resistance came from the former elite, namely the landlords whose holdings were threatened by the land reform. Today, these people, such as Sayed Ahmad Gailani, Burhanuddin Rabbani, Sebagatullah Mujadidi and Gulbuddin Hekmatyar are the leaders of the "mujahidin" ("holy warriors") in Peshawar, Pakistan, who are highly praised in the U.S. media. They are the rebels who have been receiving millions of dollars from the United States and other countries to wage their war.

Soon, however, Taraki's methods of conducting reforms also began to create opposition among the intended beneficiaries of the reforms. Some of these mistakes can be attributed to ignorance: it was a young, inexperienced government. Land



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reform officials, for instance, often were not sufficiently familiar with the local situation and in some cases expropriated land from tribal leaders whom they considered to be wealthy landlords. In reality, these leaders often were not "feudal" landlords. Instead, they enjoyed a prominent position based on other social or religious factors. Taking their land away led to considerable resentment. At times, land was given to peasants without sufficiently taking into account such factors as the availability of seed and water.

The government began to resort to force to push through these reforms, apparently in the belief that once accomplished, the reforms would increase popular support. Yet even after it had become obvious that the strategy was not working, the Khalq government stuck to its tactics. This led to disagreements within the party and to popular resistance — people began to take up arms. At the same time, the

government had been pushed into a corner militarily: the feudal leaders who had gone to Pakistan now attacked government forces in earnest, with the active support of the Pakistani regime, and later China, Egypt and the United States. Under this dual onslaught the Taraki regime began to lose control.

Amin Takes Power

This loss of control made it possible for Hafizullah Amin to stage a coup in September 1979. (Amin, then prime minister, had always played a prominent role within the Khalq faction: he had been the driving force behind the ouster of the Parcham faction from the government and the government's insistence on rapid transformation to a "workers' state.") In September 1979 Amin had President Taraki killed, apparently because Taraki was preparing to move towards reunification of the party, and took over the

Chronology

- 1919: King Amanullah's rule begins. He tries to institute liberal reforms, proclaims full independence and turns to the Soviet Union with a request for aid. In response, the British invade Afghanistan; Afghan troops defeat them and force Britain to sign a truce.
- 1929: Amanullah is forced to abdicate because of reactionary resistance to his reforms.
- 1933: Amanullah's successor is killed; Zahir Shah becomes king.
- 1953: Mohammed Daoud, a relative of the royal family, is appointed prime minister.
- 1955: Afghanistan refuses to join the U.S.-sponsored Baghdad Pact.
- 1963: Daoud resigns.
- 1964: New constitution is drafted, but political parties remain outlawed.
- 1965: The People's Democratic Party (PDP) is formed as an underground organization.
- 1965: First general elections, only, scant participation in the countryside. Both Babrak Karmal (today President) and Anahita Ratebzad (today President of the Democratic Women's Organization and a member of the Revolutionary Council) win seats in the parliament. Student demonstrations in Kabul opposing conservative cabinet. Several students killed and many wounded as army soldiers fire into the demonstration.
- 1966: Noor Mohammed Taraki of the People's Democratic Party begins publishing the newspaper Khalq (Masses); closed down by the government after six issues.
- 1966-68: Student demonstrations and workers' strikes for better pay and working conditions continue.

Brutal government repression. Protest movement develops in the countryside.

- 1967-68: Increased tensions in People's Democratic Party, eventually splits into Khalq and Parcham factions. Parcham advocates establishment of broad united front against feudal rule; Khalq pushes for more rapid transition to socialism. Parcham (Flag) newspaper formed, closed down after several months.
- 1969-73: King Zahir Shah refuses to sign many crucial bills passed by the parliament. Continued student demonstrations.
- 1973: Mohammed Daoud overthrows King Zahir Shah while the king is vacationing in Italy. Daoud appoints himself President and Prime Minister, proclaims Afghanistan a republic, and promises far-reaching reforms. Parcham supports his reforms.
- 1975: Daoud nationalizes all banks and promises land reform.
- 1974-78: Daoud ousts progressive government officials and establishes increasingly close ties with the Shah of Iran. Few reforms are realized.
- 1975: Pakistani-financed "Afghan rebels" infiltrate the country from their training camps in Pakistan to pressure Daoud to make concessions in an Afghanistan-Pakistan border dispute.
- 1977-78: Increasing repression, aided by Iranian secret police.
- April 18, 1978: Police assassinate popular People's Democratic Party leader Mir Akbar Khyber.
- April 20, 1978: Tens of thousands turn Khyber's funeral into an anti-government demonstration.
- April 26, 1978: Daoud has People's Democratic Party leaders arrested.
- April 27, 1978: Uprising by PDP members inside the army. Daoud is overthrown.

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presidency. Amin filled most important government posts with members of his family or others personally loyal to him.

Under Amin, the government turned into a dictatorship, though he continued to claim that he was "implementing reforms." The current Deputy Minister for Tribal Affairs, Shafi, says that Amin fulfilled all the propagandistic claims the old feudal leaders had been making about socialism ever since the 1917 revolution in the Soviet Union. "These feudals had said 'socialism' would mean massacres and torture — Amin acted that way," he says. Government and party officials today say that Amin was never interested in fulfilling the party's program; instead, he sought to enhance his personal power. Errors in the "decision-making process of the party," they say, facilitated Amin's rise to power.

Amin personally controlled the secret police and a sector of the Army. He set out to crush all resistance to his rule within the PDP, and a

wave of repression, carried out by his secret police, swept through the party. More than 1500 party members are said to have been killed on Amin's orders. His attempt to stamp out the rebellion and regain control in the countryside was equally brutal — tens of thousands of people were killed. Two incidents, related to me by party members who witnessed them personally, are illustrative of Amin's ruthlessness.

Amin had installed a new governor in the province of Ghur in central Afghanistan. The governor assembled the residents of one village in the village square; the peasants on one side, the village leaders and landlords on the other side. The governor claimed he was going to destroy the respect the peasants had for the landlords. He therefore told the landlords: "Put your shoes in your mouths" — one of the most degrading things an Afghan could be forced to do. The landlords begged him not to force them. "Our children wouldn't be able to walk the streets

April 30, 1978: Taraki announces new government of unified People's Democratic Party. Taraki is President, Babrak Karmal Prime Minister.

1978: Reforms are announced: Usury banned, many peasants' debts forgiven, equal rights for women made law, bride price abolished, land reform announced. Feudal leaders and members of wealthy families leave for Pakistan.

May-June 1978: First "rebel camps" are set up in Pakistan.

July-August 1978: Internal party conflicts: Parchamis are ousted and Taraki takes over Prime Minister position from Karmal.

1979: Opposition within the country to the way reforms are being carried out and to government repression. Mutinies in sectors of the army. Refugees flee to Pakistan. Foreign-financed, Pakistan-based "rebels" gain strength.

March 1979: Hafizullah Amin takes over from Taraki as Prime Minister. Taraki remains President.

July 1979: Amin takes posts of defense and interior minister. He now effectively controls both government and party.

August 1979: Army mutinies and defections continue; repression in countryside and within the party escalates.

September 1979: Taraki is ousted and killed. Amin takes complete power. Internal resistance to his rule grows; Amin answers with more repression.

Early December 1979: Amin issues call for Soviet troops to protect his regime.

December 24, 1979: Airlift of Soviet troops to Kabul.

December 27, 1979: Amin killed. Babrak Karmal becomes President.

January 1980: New government announced, members mainly Parcham, some Khalq. Program includes:

abolition of usury, land reform, equal rights for women, equal rights for all nationalities, respect for private property and religion. Thousands of prisoners released. Karmal calls for more Soviet troops.

January 1980: Carter administration decides to increase CIA aid to Pakistan-based rebels.

1980: Escalation of foreign support to counter-revolutionaries. Continued resistance in the countryside, some urban protests. Government emphasizes national democratic character of the revolution. Social organizations are formed and strengthened.

December 1980: Karmal calls for establishment of National Fatherland Front.

January 1981: Following Afghanistan government call for bilateral Pakistan-Afghanistan talks, the Pakistani government asks United Nations to assist in such negotiations. They begin later in the year.

June 15, 1981: Founding Congress of the National Fatherland Front.

1980-81: Major Afghan-Soviet military operations against resistance.

March 1982: 841 delegates meet for the First National Conference of the People's Democratic Party.

1982-83: Fighting in countryside decreases. Afghan government negotiates with rebel military commanders inside the country and with tribal leaders. Afghanistan-Pakistan talks continue.

June 1983: Reagan administration "leaks" news that CIA support for rebels has been increased.

July 1983: Secretary of State George Shultz visits Pakistan; tells Afghan "refugee" leaders that "they do not fight alone" and pledges continued U.S. support.

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for years without being referred to as the children whose fathers put their shoes into their mouths." The governor insisted, and most complied. The governor had one of the landlords who did not comply whipped. For a long time, that landlord did not make a sound. Finally, he cried out: "What in the name of God have I done to deserve this?" The governor countered: "Fuck your God." At that, the governor's bodyguard turned against the governor and gunned him down.

The other incident: One night an army patrol was attacked in Wardak province, just west of Kabul; one soldier was killed, two were wounded. The next day Amin's governor in Wardak called together the elders of the region in which the attack had occurred and told them that such a thing would never happen again as long as he was governor. He told the elders that they soon would see what he would do. The men were frightened and decided to go to the mountains for several days to protect themselves. The night after they had left, government soldiers stormed the village in question, looted it, and raped some of the women.

When the men came back, the women told them what had happened. The men then swore on the Koran that they would fight "socialism." Each man whose wife had been raped, killed her and went to the mountains. These men then attacked the governor's mansion. He managed to flee, but his wife and children were captured and cut into pieces.

(Today, I was told, a truce has been established between these men and the Karmal government. I asked how the officials had managed to explain to these men that the present

Under Amin, the government turned into a dictatorship, though he continued to claim that he was "implementing reforms."

government was not the same as the government of Amin, and that what Amin was promoting was not socialism. It was not explaining that did it, I was told, no explaining would have done it: the party members went to the village and kissed the feet of the men.)

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The People Rose Up

By the end of Amin's rule, much of the country was in open rebellion against him. "The people rose up," is the way even some party members now tell the story. The Army crumbled. Amin had to send party members to the front to fight the losing battle. In early December 1979, Amin called on Soviet troops to help; several thousand arrived in mid-December. But Amin's days were over. He was overthrown by members of his own party, the People's Democratic Party, and Babrak Karmal and the Parcham faction took control of the government.

Exactly what happened during the final days of December 1979 remains known to only a few people. "It was a dark night," says Dr. Zahir Thani, deputy editor of the party newspaper Haqiqate-Englabe-Saur (The Truth of the April Revolution). He says that the party had no choice but to call for additional Soviet troops. "We had a revolution," he says — a revolution that had been severely damaged. "We could have aborted the revolution, but we remembered what happened in Indonesia and Chile." The PDP decided to carry on. And for that it needed the protection of Soviet troops.

Understanding these events that led up to Amin's ouster and the mistakes made in the first phase of the revolution, say Afghan government officials, is essential to deciphering what is happening in Afghanistan today. "The first phase of the revolution" is the period from April 27, 1978 to late December 1979 when Hafizullah Amin was ousted and killed. The "second phase" began when Babrak Karmal took over as President.

The situation the new government faced in early 1980 was disastrous. Amin's brutal methods had created hundreds of thousands of internal enemies, and the government was confronted with a foreign-backed counter-revolution in Pakistan. These counterrevolutionary leaders — whose goal is to recreate the pre-1978 feudal structure — seized on the popular resistance to Amin as a means to "legitimize" their own war against the government.

The new government under President Babrak Karmal took immediate steps toward reconciliation. It released thousands of prisoners, and Karmal moved to unify the party. At the same time, he made clear that the government intended to make good on the party's program of establishing a broad national front to promote reforms and defend against the foreign-backed counterrevolutionary groups — a very difficult undertaking given the deep distrust Amin's repression had created. ☐

A Political Solution?

Rebel Defections and Negotiations

"We engaged in highway banditry. We burned government-owned vehicles, and killed the drivers of these vehicles. We killed people just for wearing Western-type clothes.... We terrorized the population," says a young Afghan named Malang. He is describing operations carried out by some 250 men under his command for more than two years: "We forced people to join our group, and then sent them to Pakistan for ideological and military training. We stole money and food."

Malang was then a regional commander for the "Islamic Party" — perhaps the most important rebel organization fighting the Afghan government of Babrak Karmal. Malang joined the "Islamic Party" almost immediately after Soviet troops entered his country in December 1979. "I believed I was fighting an Islamic war against the invaders." Malang has changed since then. Today, he is a lieutenant in the Afghan Army; committed, as he says, "to make up for my crimes."

Over time, Malang had become disenchanted with the "Islamic Party." While commander in Kabul province, close to the Afghan capital, he went to Pakistan several times to pick up arms and get training — from Egyptian and U.S. advisors, Malang says. In Pakistan, he got to know the political leadership of the "Islamic Party," headed by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. He saw that Hekmatyar and his cronies were not interested in fighting any "Islamic" war. They were wealthy, corrupt and greedy for personal profit. "A good part of the money sent to the counterrevolutionaries from abroad goes right into the pockets of these leaders," according to Malang.

At the same time, support for Malang's detachment decreased in Kabul province, and, he says, he began to change his mind about the Afghan government as he saw that it "respects Islam," and that its reforms are beneficial to the people. In late 1982, Malang, with many of his men and arms, surrendered; the government welcomed him, and he joined the armed forces. Malang's decision to defect from the "Islamic Party" and join the government is not an isolated incident. According to government figures, more

than 200 rebel military commanders have surrendered in recent months, bringing with them some 20,000 armed men.

While these precise figures are impossible to verify, there can be no question that such a trend exists. Defections by military commanders in Afghanistan who were affiliated with Pakistan-based rebel organizations are perhaps the single most important factor that is strengthening the military and political position of the government.

The Military Situation

The government of the People's Democratic Party believes that "the backbone of the counter-revolution has been broken." At the same time, officials concede that "the counterrevolution is still able to carry out sporadic attacks in most of the country." But these attacks do not present an immediate military threat. They are largely limited to hit-and-run raids, attacks against economic targets, and assassinations of individual government supporters.

In Kabul City itself there have been no major rebel operations in several months. (After I left the city in late May, I saw U.S. press reports claiming that there had been shooting in the city, and an attack on Bela Hissar fortress less than a mile from downtown Kabul. I have not been able to independently confirm these reports.) The area around Kabul has been fairly quiet as well. Rebel operations such as an attack on a police station several miles east of Kabul during the night of May 25 to May 26, when artillery and machinegun fire could be heard in Kabul throughout the night, have become rare.

But Kabul residents are reminded daily that there is a war going on somewhere in the country: the 10 pm to 4 am curfew is still in effect. During the day, Afghan soldiers patrol the city to check the identity papers of men. Relations between these soldiers and the people on the street are not visibly tense. Army patrols meet friends and stop to talk; uniformed soldiers walk hand in hand with their male friends (as close friends often do). Kabul does not fit the image of a wartime capital as it is portrayed in the U.S. media. The bazaars are full of goods, and

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people seem to voice their political opinions without hesitation.

How things are going in the countryside cannot be determined with certainty from Kabul. Yet there are quite a number of signs which contradict continued rebel claims that they control the countryside:

- While last year the government was forced to send self-defense groups from the Trade Unions and the Democratic Youth Organization to the front to fight, this year it has not been necessary. The Afghan Army, contrary to reports in the Western press, is not continuing to "dwindle" but is apparently at a strength of some 70,000 men.

- The safety of the highways has improved. For instance, unlike last year, this year there have been no problems with the transport of fertilizer from the country's only fertilizer factory in the northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif. Likewise, last winter the supply of firewood to Kabul from the northeast was uninterrupted.

- Government ministers, and President Babrak Karmal himself, have been travelling to many provinces.

- In May 1983, the government felt confident enough to release some 1500 men, described as counterrevolutionaries, from Pole-i-Charki Prison near Kabul. (The several hundred people I saw released were well dressed and appeared healthy. Their families had been brought to the prison in government buses to meet them.)

Government officials readily concede that they do not "control" the entire country. The Deputy Minister for Tribal Affairs, Shafi, for instance, said that no government administrative units are in place in Nuristan, a mountainous region at the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. A similar problem exists in part of Herat province on the border with Iran. But, says Shafi, the government's inability to administer a region such as Nuristan should not be given too much weight: "Even the monarchy, King Zahir Shah, was not able to govern there." Shafi says that the government is at present negotiating with tribal leaders in Nuristan. He expects the government to have an administration functioning in Nuristan by early 1984.

Negotiations

Afghan government officials, such as Deputy Minister Shafi and Col. Farooq from the Interior Ministry, emphasize that a military solution is impossible for Afghanistan. The country's geography alone precludes a complete military victory. Says Col. Farooq: "There is no way we would be able to protect every village, every peasants' cooperative, every bridge and all the

highways." Furthermore, the rebels can always retreat to Pakistan, far beyond the reach of Afghan and Soviet troops.

In order to further strengthen its position, the government is negotiating on two fronts. There

Defections by military commanders in Afghanistan who were affiliated with Pakistan-based rebel organizations are perhaps the single most important factor that is strengthening the military and political position of the government.

are the talks with Pakistan in which the Afghans are demanding that General Zia ul-Haq stop sheltering the counterrevolution and maintaining their training camps. Pakistan wants the Soviet troops to withdraw and demands that the Afghan government allow the hundreds of thousands of refugees to return to Afghanistan. But that, counters a spokesperson in the Afghan Foreign Ministry, is not a problem that was created by Afghanistan. The official points out that some 250,000 refugees have returned, and says that they "have been received with open arms" and given back the land they owned before they left. The Afghan government claims it is Gen. Zia's army and the counterrevolutionaries that are preventing the rebels from coming back, going so far as to shoot at them when they try to cross the border. "The refugees are the best assets of the counterrevolutionaries," says the Foreign Ministry official. "They give them 'legitimacy.'"

While these bilateral talks have made some progress and might well eventually lead to an agreement, the Afghan government does not seem to be overly optimistic. "The problem is with the United States," said one official. "They are arming the counterrevolutionaries [in Pakistan]. They have created the problem, and they are not interested in solving it."

The second negotiating track the Afghan government has pursued — talks with former military commanders and tribal leaders once opposed to the government — is showing much more progress. In May 1983, for instance, the government scored one of its biggest successes to date: Ahmad Shah Massoud, the rebel chief in the Panjsher Valley, agreed to a truce. For the government, this valley, just a few miles north of Kabul is probably the single most strategic region in the country. Until Massoud agreed to a truce, it had been one of the most secure rebel strongholds.

(Before I left the United States for Kabul, I read a number of reports in the U.S. media claiming that the Soviet air force had heavily bombarded the Panjsher Valley area in early May. No one I spoke to in Kabul, including natives of the Valley who were openly anti-government, had heard anything about a recent stream of refugees coming into the city.)

The government of Babrak Karmal makes a sharp distinction between the foreign-backed opposition in Pakistan and the resistance that grew inside Afghanistan as a response to the mistakes and repression primarily under the rule of Hafizullah Amin in 1979. Upon taking power in December 1979, Karmal emphasized that his government was about to move forward with a national democratic revolution. To that end, the People's Democratic Party has established a National Fatherland Front (NFF), described as "a broad spectrum of mass political and social organizations whose backbone is the alliance of workers and peasants."

Today the Front has 600,000 members and 410 councils around the country. Besides the People's Democratic Party, it includes several social and professional organizations such as the Union of Agricultural Cooperatives, the Trade Unions, the Democratic Women's Organization and the Democratic Youth Organization; representatives from the tribes; religious scholars and mullahs; and individual members. According to PDP Central Committee member Baroq Shafi, the Front's task is to explain government policies to the people and to aid in the practical realization of those policies: land reform, water and fertilizer distribution, and construction activities. In areas where there is still fighting, the NFF sets up peace committees to resolve the conflict.

The present government's approach to promoting reforms differs fundamentally from the hasty and often violent measures of 1978 and 1979. Instead of confronting the establishment power structure at every possible opportunity, the current government is attempting to work with it. As many people as possible are drawn into the reforms. In order to broaden its base

and to emphasize the "national democratic character of the revolution" the government also stresses its respect for Islam. Important government meetings begin with prayer, and proclamations are issued "in the name of Allah." The government's extensive program of renovating mosques and constructing new ones is making it difficult for the counterrevolutionaries to claim the government is anti-Islamic. Calls to prayer are aired on the radio; so are daily religious programs. One of the biggest jobs at the Government Printing Office is printing copies of the Koran.

Economic Planning

When the People's Democratic Party took power in 1978, Afghanistan was among the ranks of the poorest countries on earth. Per capita income was around \$100 a year; infant mortality 270 per thousand. Many peasants had no land, or less land than they needed to live. They were absolutely dependent on the large landowners. Industry was practically non-existent, and the monarchy and Mohammed Daoud's regime (1973-78) had done virtually nothing to prepare the nation to utilize its rich natural resources.

Only now is Afghanistan beginning to build essential industrial facilities, and it will have to make up for decades of inaction and neglect. According to the State Planning Committee, the establishment of heavy industry will have to wait. Instead, government planning concentrates on increasing agricultural production hand in hand with the buildup of light industry which is to make use of agricultural improvements. For instance, two textile factories are being completed in Herat and Kandahar which will be able to go into operation because of an increase in cotton production, primarily in the agricultural cooperatives.

The government welcomes private investment. In fact, the State Planning Committee has set up a special commission to aid private business. Over the last five years, the number of major private enterprises has increased from 135 to 235. (According to Babrak Karmal, Afghanistan does not now provide an atmosphere in which "monopoly capital" and "parasitic families could come into being" or in which "big national capital" could link up with multinational corporations to dominate the country. This unique situation, says Karmal, makes it possible, at present, for the "small and middle industrialists and merchants who are interested in the progress of the country" to be part of the national democratic revolution.)

The government's economic planning pays special attention to the transportation problem,

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a weak link in Afghanistan's economy even before the counterrevolutionaries concentrated their attacks on trucks rolling on Afghanistan's few highways. A "Supreme Council on Transportation" is now coordinating the protection of private and government trucks. Attacks on the transport system are said to have decreased during the last year; the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia are donating 2,200 heavy trucks to make up for those which have been destroyed.

The rebels have done considerable economic damage not only in the field of transportation. Official statistics put the damage over the last five years at 28 billion Afghanis — about one-fifth of one year's Gross National Product. This figure apparently represents only direct material damage caused by rebel attacks. Hassan Rashiq,

Deputy President of the Union of Agricultural Cooperatives, says, for instance, that no complete survey has been made of the damage done to the cooperatives. It is very difficult, he says, to compute damage from actions such as the destruction of irrigation systems. Or, asks Trade Union President Satar Purdeli, how does one put a number on the losses incurred by some textile factories in 1981 which did not receive enough cotton because the counterrevolutionaries killed many cotton farmers or threatened retribution if they grew cotton and other industrial crops?

Economic facilities are a favorite rebel target. The destruction of power lines has caused much damage. For instance, says Purdeli, in early 1983 the production at the Gulbahar textile factory in Kapisa province dropped by 72 percent

Who Are the Rebel Leaders?

President Reagan considers the Afghan rebel leaders based in Pakistan "freedom fighters." And in fact, they are fighting for very much the same kind of "freedom" as are Reagan's Somocista "freedom fighters," armed by the CIA to overthrow the government of Nicaragua. Both are fighting to re-establish the status quo before the revolution. The Afghan rebel chiefs are fighting for the "freedom" to regain their feudal landholdings in Afghanistan, the "freedom" to keep women illiterate and oppressed, and the "freedom" to overturn other social reforms brought about by the People's Democratic Party. A glance at the careers of some of these rebel leaders sufficiently illustrates what interests they represent and fight for.

• Probably the most important of these counterrevolutionary leaders is Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, the head of the "Islamic Party." He was convicted of murdering a progressive student at Kabul University in 1972.¹ After serving a short sentence, he went to Pakistan and became commander of a 5000-man, Pakistan-sponsored armed detachment which infiltrated into Afghanistan in 1975 to create trouble for the government of Mohammed Daoud. (See sidebar, "The CIA and The Rebels.")

Today, the "Islamic Party" uses extremely cruel methods. It forcibly recruits young men and collects "taxes" from villages, assassinates people who refuse to aid its cause and makes literacy

campaign teachers a prime target. Journalist Gerard Chaliand, who traveled with the rebels and is generally sympathetic to their fight, writes that Hekmatyar's group consists of people "who have no qualms about torturing or killing anyone who disagrees with them."² "Quite honestly," said Mangal Hussain, a spokesperson of the "Islamic Party," when asked what his organization would do with the current government officials if it took power, "we would kill them."³

• Like Hekmatyar, Burhanuddin Rabbani, the leader of the "Islamic Society of Afghanistan" was involved in the Pakistan-financed campaign in the mid-1970s. He is a former landlord, and an exporter of carpets and karakul pelts.

• Sayed Ahmad Gailani, a relative of the royal family through his wife, portrays himself as a religious figure. He had large landholdings in Afghanistan and also amassed wealth from tribute paid to him by nomads and from the monopoly he held on marketing Peugeot cars in Afghanistan. Gailani's "National Front for the Islamic Revolution of Afghanistan" has close ties to the Saudi royal family and advocates the return of the monarchy to Afghanistan.

• Sebagtullah Mujadidi went to Pakistan only weeks after the 1978 Afghan revolution, where he set up his "National Liberation Front of Afghanistan" with money from Saudi Arabia. He was a feudal landlord in Kabul province. Mujadidi now maintains a U.S. headquarters in

Alexandria, Virginia, which he visits frequently.

These rebel leaders, along with about a dozen other counterrevolutionary chiefs, have set up fiefdoms in Peshawar, Pakistan, from which they launch incursions into Afghanistan. They also run "a highly efficient and well organized 'mafia' which dominates the export of hard drugs from Pakistan... to the West, and with the proceeds [they] are buying arms for the struggle and property inside Pakistan."⁴

The counterrevolutionary leaders have also bought businesses in Pakistan. Hekmatyar, for instance, controls much of the public transportation in Peshawar and has been buying real estate in the area, "causing house prices in Peshawar and Islamabad to rise steeply in the past two years."⁵

For these leaders, the war is just another profit-making enterprise.

Footnotes:

1) For details, see Mohammed Sarkash and Seamus O'Faolain, "Afghanistan: Foreign Intervention and the Prospects for Peace," *Counterspy*, vol.5, no.3.

2) *New Statesman*, 12/26/80.

3) *Washington Post*, 9/2/79.

4) "Afghan Gun-running and Drug-smuggling 'Mafia,'" *The Middle East* (London), May 1983. Also see Konrad Ege, "CIA Rebels Supply U.S. Heroin," *Counterspy*, vol.5, no.1.

5) *The Middle East*, May 1983.

when the rebels cut the power lines from Jalalabad to the factory.

The State Planning Committee's Economic Development Plan for 1982-83 gives ample evidence of the many failures to reach economic goals because of the "special conditions" in the country. Nonetheless, the government in Kabul is confident. Officials point to a "positive trend" over the last years. And in spite of all the internal problems and the subversion from abroad, the social, political and economic reforms of the last few years have brought more progress to Afghanistan than decades under the monarchy. (See "Reforms.")

Bringing an end to the foreign intervention carried out by the United States, Pakistan, China, Egypt and Saudi Arabia is key to peace and further progress in Afghanistan. These countries are standing in the way of a negotiated political settlement to the "Afghan conflict." The Reagan administration, by providing millions of dollars in aid to the counterrevolutionaries, is eager to tie down Soviet troops in Afghanistan and to score points in its anti-Soviet propaganda crusade.

A political settlement is possible in Afghanistan — in fact, dramatic steps have been taken in that direction through the government's negotiations with rebel military commanders and with tribal leaders. An overall political

settlement which would facilitate the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan is being held up by the intransigent posture of the Reagan administration.

The U.S. government, through the CIA and allied regimes in the Middle East and Asia, is waging a "secret" war against Afghanistan, just as it is waging a "secret" war against Nicaragua. Millions of people oppose that CIA operation. The CIA's war against Afghanistan, however, has provoked little organized opposition in the United States. On the contrary, the names of the very Senators who have opposed covert operations against Nicaragua can be found signed onto a resolution calling for increased CIA aid to the Afghan rebels.

The parallels between these two operations are striking, though the countries and their revolutions are very different. In both cases, the CIA is trying to overthrow a government which is committed to rebuilding a country after decades-long dictatorial rule and exploitation. In both cases, the CIA is financing military forces of the extreme right committed to reestablishing the previous system of government. Therefore, if one opposes the CIA's war against Nicaragua — as does the majority of the people in the United States — it is only consistent to oppose the CIA's war against Afghanistan.

The Reforms

Literacy Campaign

Of all the reforms promoted by the Afghan government, the literacy program might hold the key to the government's overall reform strategy. People are taught primarily practical things; e.g. women use books on health care, and peasants learn to read from books on new methods of farming. At the same time, the campaign is used to inform people about the government programs — for many people, this is probably the first time they hear in-depth and first-hand descriptions of what the government stands for.

Before the revolution, Afghanistan had an illiteracy rate of some 95 percent. According to Zafar Zai, the president of the literacy campaign, illiteracy will be wiped out within ten years. One million people have graduated from the nine-month literacy course since 1980; some eight million books have been printed. But these achievements "have not come easy," says Zai,

pointing to a poster in his office with photos of dozens of young literacy teachers who have been murdered by the counterrevolutionaries. "In addition, 60 percent of the premises used by the campaign have been destroyed; the counterrevolutionaries have killed people just for applying for literacy courses."

The literacy workers have changed their approach to promoting the campaign. At the beginning, some teachers and party cadres seemed to believe that they could advance the campaign by forcing people to attend. In some instances women were forced to come — women who might have lived in situations where they couldn't even visit their parents without asking their husbands for permission. To compel these women to attend a literacy course outside the house, and perhaps to be taught by a man was considered an insult. There was also some resistance by rightwing clergy.

Today, the government is taking a new tack: it asks the mullahs (religious leaders) themselves

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to teach courses. It is argued that people should take part in the campaign in order to be able to read the Koran. Some courses are now taught in mosques, and mullahs are given training so they can conduct the classes. Likewise, in areas where it is necessary, women are told they have to get permission from their husbands to attend, and the literacy teachers set up day care centers so the women can come to the courses. Women teachers now wear the same clothes as the local women. The literacy campaign also reaches out to Afghanistan's 2 to 3 million nomads. The teachers travel with the nomads for the duration of the courses.

Land Reform and Agricultural Cooperatives

Before the revolution, according to the U.S. government's Area Handbook on Afghanistan, two percent of Afghanistan's landowners held 40 percent of the land, while two out of five peasants owned no land or less than half a hectare. Afghan government statistics show that some 300,000 peasants so far have benefitted from the land reform program (which had ground to a virtual halt during Amin's rule). At present, the government is proceeding carefully and deliberately with the land reform — too many mistakes have been made, and too many people have been alienated. According to Deputy Minister of Tribal Affairs Shafi, the government has sent investigative teams to a number of provinces to examine the progress and prospects for land reform in these areas.

Of equal importance for the development of Afghanistan's agriculture, says Hassan Rashiq, the Deputy President of the Union of Agricultural Cooperatives, is the establishment of cooperatives. They also serve as "training schools" for future political leaders, he says. 1300 coops were created after the revolution. But "because of the deviations in the first phase, the cooperatives suffered." Today, explains Rashiq, only 236 coops are functioning. The others folded during the purges under Amin, because their leaders were assassinated by the counterrevolutionaries, or simply due to mismanagement. Revitalizing these coops is one of the government's highest priorities.

In addition to these 236 producer cooperatives — i.e., peasants working together to grow crops — there are also consumer cooperatives. These

are aided by the government in jointly buying consumer goods. The government also buys the cooperatives' harvests at a good price. Previously, the peasants were forced to sell their crops, often at low prices, to merchants immediately after harvest for lack of storage facilities.

About 9000 coop members also belong to self-defense groups. Attacks by rebels have been a serious problem for the cooperatives. Says Rashiq: "Because the counterrevolution has received military setbacks, they are resorting increasingly to economic destruction. No cooperative exists that has not suffered from the attacks of the counterrevolutionaries."



Women's Rights

Probably the biggest challenge the revolution has presented to the established power structure, says Jamita Nahid of the Democratic Women's Organization (DWO), is the law guaranteeing equal rights for men and women. Life for millions of Afghan women is harsh; before 1978 there were virtually no laws giving women legal protection. Women at times lived no better than slaves, and could be sold into marriage. Nahid tells of a friend of hers, a medical student, who went to a village near Kabul to see a woman who had fallen sick. The student told the woman's husband, a poor peasant, that she needed a doctor. Said the husband, "my cow is sick,

too. First I need a doctor for the cow, because if it dies, I cannot afford to buy a new one. I depend on it for my living. If my wife dies, I can get a new one."

Women have been doubly oppressed in Afghanistan, says Nahid. First they suffered from

Probably the biggest challenge the revolution has presented to the established power structure . . . is the law guaranteeing equal rights for men and women.

the poverty, the misery and the feudal rule as did the rest of the Afghan population. But in addition, women suffered, and still suffer, from their special oppression as women: often they work long hours in the fields and then return home to do the housework; women were not allowed to participate in the political life; very few girls used to go to school; women bear eight, ten, twelve children; and they often suffer from a reactionary interpretation of Islam which relegates them to the status of second-class human beings.

Under the previous regime, there was virtually no possibility for women to work outside the house or the fields, or to hold professional jobs. The government is now encouraging employers to hire women. In the Government Printing Office in Kabul, for instance, more than 200 out of the 700 workers are women. One 22-year-old woman worker in the bindery said: "Some men still complain that the women take the jobs from the men. But it's getting better." Like many of her unmarried co-workers, she had lived with her parents doing housework after she had finished school, and the bindery, she says, "is much more interesting." A day care center has been established at the factory, but many women are still unable to hold industrial jobs for lack of day care facilities.

In some rural areas, it is very difficult for the DWO to organize women to push for the implementation of the laws guaranteeing equal rights. Often the DWO attracts women through

the literacy campaign. It has also established Women's Clubs where women meet to produce handicrafts and talk about their concerns.

"As long as women do not participate fully in the social and political life of the country, the revolution will not advance very fast," says Nahid. The goal of the DWO is not only to help women liberate themselves, but also to help men see that without equal rights for women, "there will be no real progress." But that, Nahid concedes, "will take a while. The mentality that women are inferior is centuries old," and even "some of the more conscious men have problems putting the principle of women's equality into practice."

Trade Unions

The government of the People's Democratic Party is the first government in Afghanistan to allow workers to form unions and to draft an extensive labor code. Afghan trade unions, according to Satar Purdeli, the President of the Central Council of the Trade Unions, have 163,000 members; 14,000 of them have joined the self-defense groups which are responsible for the physical security of the factories.

About 40 percent of the unionists live in Kabul, but, says Purdeli, every province has its trade union council. Union strongholds are in Nangarhar, Balkh, Baglan, Kandahar and Herat. The trade unions participate in all major factory decisions. They have established health care centers in the factories as well as child care centers. The trade unions are also building recreational facilities for the workers and their families — often in former royal family palaces. The trade union headquarters itself used to belong to a member of the king's family. Workers also receive food coupons which allow them to buy essential items — rice, flour, oil, matches, etc. — at sharply reduced prices; the union also makes an effort to provide subsidized housing for its members. Likewise, the government has hiked the minimum wage to 1410 Afghanis (about \$20) a month, and wages have been increased by 30 to 50 percent over the past three years.

Purdeli concedes that "quantitatively, Afghan workers have not yet developed into a strong working class" since for decades, the monarchy did nothing to develop the country's industrial potential and had not allowed unions. The workers, though, Purdeli goes on, are making great contributions to the revolution, and "it is always a great step forward in a country's history

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when trade unions are established for the first time."

Youth and Education

One of the most crushing legacies left by decades of monarchical rule is the lack of educational facilities. Many children, especially girls, had no chance to attend school; only one out of 20 people could read. There was only one university in the country and it had no consistent curriculum, no program for doctoral degrees, and no textbooks for nine out of ten courses.

A second university has now been opened in Nangarhar province, and even though "Kabul University is still in somewhat bad shape," says its director Asadullah Habib (one of Afghanistan's best known poets) things are improving. Several new faculties and departments have been opened. Others, such as the Polytechnical Institute and the Islamic law department, have been greatly expanded. There are 7000 students, 2400 of them are women; some 3000 come from distant provinces. The university has also opened facilities for people who could not finish their education for lack of money. Several hundred



students are now studying in a "workers' and peasants' faculty" and in Kabul University's night school.

Many children still do not attend school. The reasons are often money-related. Families need the added income their children can earn. In Kabul City, for instance, hundreds of boys sit at street corners selling cigarettes — by the piece, not the pack — or walk around with buckets full of cold water which they sell in cups.

The government's education campaign has also been hindered by the destruction of some 1300 school buildings by the rebels. Disruptions at Kabul University are a thing of the past, but during 1979, there was a political purge of teachers which prevented the university from

functioning normally. Large-scale fighting in the country in 1979 and 1980 also created problems. Says Habib: "How can you expect a student to attend classes and to study when he hears about fighting in his province, and he has no opportunity of finding out what is actually happening there?" According to Habib, psychological warfare is being waged against the university. For example, he says, when Kabul University opened last year, BBC and Voice of America reports claimed that the university was shut down because of unrest. Everybody at the university could see that this was a lie; nonetheless, says Habib, such reports create a tense atmosphere.

Many of the university students are members of the Democratic Youth Organization (DYO) which serves to draw young people into the revolution. According to Hanif, a DYO secretary, more than half of the people who joined the party last year (it has some 100,000 members) had been DYO activists. The DYO itself has 110,000 members, some of whom also serve in the "social order brigades," i.e. armed detachments which function primarily as guards against the rebels. Hanif says some of the members of the "social order brigades" are women; all in all, the DYO has 10,000 women members. In some areas of the country, Hanif says, DYO members are still forced to work underground; in these regions, anyone connected with a revolutionary organization is a likely rebel target.

Many of the DYO members come from Kabul but, says Hanif, considerable progress is being made in the provinces. For instance, in Nangarhar province there are 5000 members, in Jowzjan 5000, in Badakshan 4000, and in Kandahar and Herat more than 3000 each. The DYO now concentrates on organizing in the countryside. Members go to the villages to help farmers and to do guard duty. In addition, the Youth Organization has artistic brigades which travel around the country to show films and talk to the young people. Since the Youth Organization was founded in 1980, its membership has doubled each year. ☐

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- 17) "Victory for Strauss," Counterspy, Vol. 7, No. 2.
- 18) Cf. supra, #13.
- 19) Quoted from a confidential letter from Institute for the Study of Conflict files. Time Out, 8/29-9/4/75, p. 6.
- 20) Ibid.
- 21) Cf. supra, #13.
- 22) Colin Legum, "Reporting on the 'Liquidation' of the Empire," The Observer, (London), 1/24/82.
- 23) Cf. supra, #13.
- 24) Robert Parker, Rough Justice, Fontana Paperbacks, London, 1981, p. 162.
- 25) See Washington Post, 12/22/75.

CIA Aid to the Rebels

CIA support for the Afghan rebels is the largest known CIA paramilitary campaign since the mid-1970s when it aided UNITA forces in Angola in an attempt to stifle that country's revolution. The United States and its allies — China, Egypt, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia — have spent some \$200 million to arm and train the Pakistan-based counterrevolutionaries.¹

The CIA campaign began shortly after the People's Democratic Party took power in April 1978, and escalated after Babrak Karmal became president in December 1979 and Soviet troops entered the country. In early January 1980, the Carter cabinet decided that the CIA, in conjunction with China and Egypt, should make a major commitment to support the Afghan rebels in Pakistan. The operation was to be run by a special committee headed by National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski. Brzezinski coordinated the program with four nations: Egypt (which delivers Soviet-made weapons from its warehouses and supplies military trainers), Pakistan (which permits and protects the Afghan rebel military camps on its soil and allows arms shipments through), China (which ships arms and provides training) and Saudi Arabia (which finances some arms shipments and props up the Pakistani government with economic aid).

President Carter wanted the operation to be deceptive: "The Afghan struggle was an 'Islamic struggle,' President Carter told his aides, and U.S. assistance should not disturb that impression."² The Afghan rebel leaders in Pakistan still work hard to keep up this "indigenous Islamic struggle" facade. They claim all of their arms are either locally produced, were obtained from defecting Afghan soldiers, or were captured from Afghan or Soviet army posts.

Ronald Reagan has taken a more overt approach to aiding the counterrevolutionaries. Already during his electoral campaign, he openly advocated U.S. arms shipments to the rebels ("freedom fighters," in his lexicon). Once

president, he stepped up the CIA program which by now even CIA Director William Casey has admitted exists.³ The weapons supplied by the U.S. and its allies include rocket-propelled grenade launchers capable of piercing Soviet tank armor, plastic-covered land mines, mortars, recoilless rifles, bazookas, and shoulder-fired anti-aircraft guns. These weapons shipments are very likely to continue: On his visit to Pakistan in early July 1983 Secretary of State George Shultz addressed Afghan "refugee" leaders as "fellow fighters for freedom" and assured them that they "do not fight alone." "My message from the United States is simple," said the Secretary, "we are with you."⁴

The CIA's current strategy of stimulating and financing military operations by feudal, and some tribal, leaders against the Afghan government can make use of experience gained on two previous occasions when such a strategy was contemplated or actually carried out. According to Leon Poullada, former U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan, U.S. embassy officials back in the early 1950s considered bringing about the overthrow of the King-appointed Prime Minister Mohammed Daoud, using exactly the same tactics. At the time, many U.S. officials thought Daoud (a cousin of the king) was moving the country closer to the Soviet Union. Then-U.S. ambassador in Kabul, Angus Ward, discussed his opposition to Daoud with Pakistani officials who, "alarmed by Daoud's policies, ...wanted to stir up tribal rebellions to overthrow Daoud." Poullada continues: "The CIA station chief in Kabul had a strong personal influence on [Ambassador] Ward.... With Pakistani colleagues and royal family dissenters he dreamed up plots to 'destabilize' the Daoud regime."⁵

Poullada claims that these plans did not have U.S. government backing, and, in any case, Daoud learned through his intelligence service of the CIA's deliberations. Ambassador Ward and the CIA chief were replaced soon thereafter.

A much more serious attempt to

destabilize Afghanistan was launched in 1973 after the same Daoud had overthrown King Zahir Shah. The Pakistani government was concerned that Daoud would reignite a long-standing border conflict, and in anticipation secretly trained some 5000 Afghan "rebels."⁶ The Nixon administration, thinking that Daoud might be a leftist, reportedly aided that project but then withdrew support when it turned out that Daoud and a U.S. ally, the Shah of Iran, were growing increasingly close. In July 1975, these 5000 "rebels" infiltrated into the Panjsher Valley, where they fought against the Afghan government forces.

After planning to create "tribal rebellions" in the early 1950s and actually setting up the 5000-member force in the early 1970s, it was only a small step for the United States, Pakistan and their allies to support "Islamic rebellion" against the People's Democratic Party from 1978 to the present. ☐

Footnotes:

1) Carl Bernstein ("Arms for Afghanistan," New Republic, 6/18/81) wrote that by mid-1981, more than \$100 million had been spent to aid the rebels. A New York Times article (5/4/83) claimed that \$100 to \$150 million had been given to the rebels from 1980 to 1983; while Aernout van Lynden, a Dutch journalist who traveled with the rebels and is sympathetic to their cause, says that the U.S. is paying \$20 to \$30 million a year to Egypt alone to buy up that country's stockpile of Soviet-made weapons (Washington Post, 12/19/82).

2) ABC News, "20/20," 6/18/81.

3) See Lou Cannon, "Casey, Who Can't Remember, Berates Officials Who Can't Read," Washington Post, 6/27/83.

4) Washington Post, 7/4/83.

5) Leon Poullada, "Afghanistan and the United States: The Crucial Years," Middle East Journal, Spring 1981.

6) Far Eastern Economic Review, 1/30/81.

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