

# Covert Action

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Special Issue on Domestic Surveillance



# Editorial

After supplying crack to the ghettos at considerable profit for the *contra* war against Nicaragua, the Reagan administration—now the Bush administration—has fostered new and chilling programs of surveillance and population control in those same ghettos.

As we go to press, one which epitomizes the growth of domestic repression in this country is under way. Armed police units in Chicago are conducting futuristic mass raids, trampling the civil rights of the poor. Public housing units are surrounded, all exits sealed, water and electricity cut off, and all apartments searched, without warrants or probable cause, under the pretext of drug crackdowns. Tenants are selected randomly for retinal scans—a new technological identification process which scans and measures blood vessels at the back of one's eyes—then matched against ID cards issued to

building occupants. Tenants are placed under curfews, all visitors must leave by midnight, persons not on the leases, common-law spouses for example, are all summarily evicted.

This is just an indication of the incredibly high state of domestic repression and surveillance which the Reagan years have inculcated, one which compels us to present another issue of *CAIB* focusing on these home-grown abuses.

In this issue a number of experts analyze different aspects of this Reagan era repression, on the federal, state, and local levels, with both internal and international repercussions. We must bear in mind the ominous implications of a regime where an FBI man heads the CIA and a CIA man heads the government. We hope this material will spur our readers on to ever more vigilance and activism in the Bush years to come. ●

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**Cover photo:** Government agents filming anti-Nazi demonstration at the Federal Plaza in Chicago—Summer 1978.  
**Credit:** Chip Berlet.

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## Anticommunism in the U.S.:

# The Hunt for Red Menace

by Chip Berlet\*

Documentation of widespread FBI surveillance of political groups engaged in protected free speech activity during the Reagan administration has resulted in media coverage, congressional hearings and lawsuits. In late July 1988 more controversy arose when the FBI confirmed that an undisclosed source had provided the FBI's Washington Field Office with the confidential notes of a journalist investigating U.S. government intelligence abuses.

The largest known recent FBI probe targetted an anti-interventionist group, the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES). The CISPES investigation involved almost every FBI Field Office and eventually involved the creation of file indices on 200 other organizations.

FBI spying is frequently based on political theories involving a broadly defined view of "national security," "subversion," and "terrorism," and their relationship to peaceful dissent.

During the FBI's Counterintelligence Program (COINTELPRO) operations from the 1950s through the early 1970s, the stated goal of the FBI was to "disrupt" or "neutralize" the activities of dissidents.

Today, however, the FBI has attorneys who have read the applicable case law, and now all FBI investigations at least start out tied to a possible violation of a specific federal criminal statute. The FBI's legal justifications, however, merely serve as the current public rationalization for a decades-long policy of targetting alleged "subversives" with extra-legal tactics in an effort to derail movements for social change. It is therefore important to study the political ideology behind the current use of the terms "national security," "subversion," and "terrorism."

### The Rubric of Terrorism

Certainly no foreign agent or actual terrorist has the protection of the Constitution for his or her activities. The FBI uses this obvious fact in a rhetorical sleight of hand to construct a seemingly plausible reason for surveillance and infiltration of groups that the FBI readily admits are ostensibly engaged in protected speech and associational activity.

According to the FBI theory, lawful groups are used as covers or fronts for activities of enemy agents and terrorists. This rationale was, in fact, put forward to an FBI oversight committee, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, February 23, 1988 by Oliver B. "Buck" Revell, Executive Assistant Director of the FBI. Revell had been summoned to ex-

plain the FBI's CISPES investigation.<sup>1</sup>

The FBI investigation of CISPES was not an error by a handful of wayward FBI agents, as claimed by FBI Director William Sessions, but the logical outcome of consciously implemented institutional policies based on a faulty understanding of how social justice and peace organizations function in our society, and erroneous assumptions regarding the acceptable limits of political discourse in a pluralistic democracy.

What happened can be summarized as follows:

- The underlying theories which prompted the FBI investigation of CISPES were developed at the start of the Cold War, and reflect the same discredited view of subversion that the American public finally rejected to end the Truman-McCarthy period.
- Individuals and groups who hold this discredited view of subversion played influential roles in shaping the policies of the Reagan administration in this area, and then in some cases moved on to become consultants and staff members in administration and congressional posts.
- These same groups and individuals then set out to institutionalize a private countersubversion network among conservative and rightist groups with the goal of assisting the government, and specifically the FBI, in investigating "subversion."
- Young conservatives from colleges and universities were recruited and trained to participate in monitoring and analyzing the activities of alleged subversive groups through a network of interlocking conservative institutions based in Washington, D.C.
- Information and documents collected by private right-wing groups were provided to government law enforcement agencies that would otherwise be prevented from obtaining the information by constitutional and legislative restrictions. This biased and unverified information was then used to justify criminal investigations of dissidents.

### Nativism as Precursor

The modern witch-hunters are part of a current authoritarian trend in the U.S. which has its roots in the Nativist anti-progressive movement. At the turn of the century, this movement fought the growth of labor unions and the arrival of ethnically diverse immigrants. It coalesced during

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1. See Ann-Marie Buitrago, this issue; also materials submitted to Congress at hearing by FBI in justification of CISPES probe.

the turmoil of the Bolshevik revolution and World War I. This movement became a fixture on the American political scene and took on a metaphysical nature. According to Frank Donner, author of *Age of Surveillance*:<sup>2</sup>

The root anti-subversive impulse was fed by the Menace. Its power strengthened with the passage of time, by the late twenties its influence had become more pervasive and folkish. Bolshevism came to be identified over wide areas of the country by God-fearing Americans as the Antichrist come to do eschatological battle with the children of light. A slightly secularized version, widely shared in rural and small-town America, postulated a doomsday conflict between decent upright folk and radicalism — alien, satanic, immorality incarnate.

Rightwing ideologues see communist subversion behind every international movement for national liberation and every domestic movement for peace and social justice. This type of simple-minded conspiracy mentality was discussed by Professor Richard Hofstadter who traced its historic influence in American nativist and rightwing movements in a classic book, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics*.<sup>3</sup>

According to Hofstadter, paranoid movements rise and fall periodically, and appeal to people fearful about the world political and economic situation, and longing for simple solutions to complex problems.

#### The Cold War and Constitutional Rights

Since the end of World War II, a hyperbolic and frequently paranoid form of anticommunism has been the stimulus for covert action abroad, and has led to obsessive governmental secrecy, surveillance and repression at home. One consequence of this is that sectors of the U.S. government have forged alliances with reactionary, anti-democratic political groups and movements, both domestic and foreign, which not only help carry out attacks on progressive forces, but have shaped an overwhelming public consensus for trading real civil liberties for illusory national security safeguards.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation is a prime example of this thesis. The Bureau has a long history of collaborating with rightwing groups to attack movements for peace and social justice, in much the same way as Oliver North relied on rightwing groups both to raise funds for the *contras*, and to serve as a public lightning rod to hide his own CIA-backed operation. In fact, some of the same players North orchestrated in the off-the-shelf private foreign policy drama were also involved in the off-the-shelf private domestic intelligence network — a network which conducts surveillance of progressive groups, and then feeds the information to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and other public law enforcement and intelligence agencies.

2. Frank J. Donner, *The Age of Surveillance: The Aims and Methods of America's Political Intelligence System* (New York: Vintage/Random House, 1981), pp. 47-48.

3. Richard Hofstadter, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics, and Other Essays* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965), see especially discussion of antecedents to 60s far-right anticommunist movement, pp. 24-29.

This loosely-knit cooperative network passes information both formally and informally. The network survives through different presidential administrations, working inside and outside of government agencies and congressional committees, and pursues its goals in the public and private sectors with little regard for legislative or constitutional safeguards. It sees itself as composed of latter-day knights on a patriotic crusade and sees all dissenters as infidels.

One primary role this rightwing network of zealots plays in American society is to disseminate propaganda on what author Frank Donner calls the fear-centered twin myths of "an all-powerful internal subversive enemy and a permanently endangered national security."

#### Anticommunism Put Into Practice

The Cold War hysteria of the 1950s is perhaps the best example of how powerful a force anticommunism can be. As the political climate in the U.S. shifted to the far-right, the Cold War consensus was forged through a coalition of three disparate groups:

- Liberals, such as those in the State Department and analysis section of the CIA.
- Conservatives and reactionaries, such as those in Congress and the operational section of CIA.
- Nativist xenophobes, such as Sen. Joseph McCarthy and supporters of the secretive John Birch Society.

There was certainly contention among these groups. The liberals distrusted the reactionaries as anti-intellectual and militarist. The conservatives distrusted the liberals as naive dupes who flirted with socialism. The nativists distrusted the conservatives as a rich elite and distrusted the liberals as "one-world-government" communist agents.

Remember that McCarthy, the quintessential nativist was seeking out communists and "fellow travellers" in the State Department, which at the time was already actively fighting communism. But nativists were isolationist, and thought every attempt to involve the United States in global politics was part of an internationalist plot, even attempts to involve the country in fighting global communism.

Still, there was agreement among the three main political tendencies that the spread of communism had to be stopped if their unique (often contradictory) vision of western civilization was to survive.

Ronald Reagan managed the unique task of blending nativism with elitist reactionary conservatism, all packaged in a friendly "just folks" style. The Reagan agenda shifted the American political scene far to the right. Yet the Reagan coalition still was able to unite with mainstream liberalism around anticommunism, often under the banner of "bipartisanship." The anticommunist theory underlying Cold War ideology serves to feed both militarism and interventionism abroad, and surveillance and repression at home.

#### You Can't Trust the Communists

Premised on an obsessive paranoid phobia, the anticommunist countersubversive movement in the U.S. has pursued through public and private channels the increased reliance on

covert action as a major pillar of U.S. foreign policy, and secrecy and antisubversive witch-hunts as a significant factor in domestic policy.

Since this movement assumes the inevitability of an ultimate war with nations that are communist (or are perceived as communist), it sees a need to maintain a high level of defense spending for military preparedness, and the need for constant domestic surveillance against internal subversion. Civil liberties are seen as always secondary to national security. Achieving "Law and Order" is seen as requiring the use of state power to force conformity. It is appropriate to refer to this movement as sharing an ideology that is "neo-authoritarian" and manifesting itself most concretely in terms of reactionary anticommunism.

A seminal work for neo-authoritarians is former CIA officer William R. Kintner's book, *The Front is Everywhere*<sup>4</sup> in which Kintner lays out his analysis of the communist style of subversion through a "Communist Fifth Column" involved in otherwise legal "political activity."

The Communist plan, as fashioned by Lenin, is always to "carry on work that is possible," work that will finally end in "commencing and carrying out the national armed insurrection."<sup>5</sup>

According to Kintner, since the ultimate goal of communist subversion is armed revolution, it is necessary to ferret out the presence of communists in organizations involved in non-criminal political activity.

If American Communists wore the uniform of the Red Army, steps would be taken to safeguard the national security by preventing the operation of the Communist party's intelligence net and its fifth-column activity in behalf of a foreign power.<sup>6</sup>

How can they be stopped? Are additional laws needed?...Is the American judicial system flexible enough to convict the professional revolutionaries of a quasi-military party, whose mode of operation is designed to make convictions on the accepted rules of evidence next to impossible?<sup>7</sup>

The passage of a law outlawing Communist conspiratorial practices would only be the first step....A law-enforcing problem to overcome would be the procurement and training of a sufficient number of agents to infiltrate into every corner of the Communist conspiracy.<sup>8</sup>

#### The Political Mission of the FBI

Even before there was an FBI the Justice Department

4. William R. Kintner, *The Front is Everywhere: Militant Communism in Action* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1950).

5. *Ibid.*, p. 225.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 246.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 246.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 250.

relied on private rightwing groups to help smash dissent and ferret out subversion. "Beginning in 1918, private intelligence forces emerged to combat radicalism, labor unionism, and opposition to the war," wrote Donner.<sup>9</sup>

There is a symbiotic relationship between the hard-liners at the FBI and the private and congressional radical hunters. The FBI has long relied on the political rightwing to fight the menacing subversive beast.

When the smear tactics of Joseph McCarthy were finally discredited, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover simply took the red menace campaign underground and re-institutionalized



Credit: Associated Press

**William R. Kintner, former CIA officer and Cold War theorist.**

attacks on dissenters with a massive program of illegal spying and harassment dubbed COINTELPRO – the FBI's Counterintelligence Program.

The late J. Edgar Hoover was certainly obsessed with a conspiracy view of history. He was convinced the civil rights movement was the result of communist subversives agitating normally docile Blacks into protesting segregation. Hoover even demanded his agents find out who was behind the women's movement, apparently assuming he could eradicate the global feminist awakening by ferreting out a small cabal of malcontents.

Inside the FBI there developed a core group of agents with authoritarian tendencies who adopted the theories, and sometimes the practices, of the paranoid rightwing. This view was institutionalized while Hoover was director, and a self-perpetuating network carries on the tradition today.

During COINTELPRO, the FBI shared information with a nationwide network of city police "Red Squads." Reports and publications from far-right organizations repeatedly turned up in government surveillance files reviewed during lawsuits against illegal surveillance. In New York, a legislative study commission found information from John Rees's right-wing spy newsletter *Information Digest* cited in police reports as coming from a "confidential source."<sup>10</sup> Several antiwar ac-

9. Donner, *op. cit.* n. 2, p. 414. See also: Leo Huberman, *The Labor Spy Racket* (New York: Modern Age Books, 1937).



tivists who eventually obtained their FBI files under the FOIA/Privacy Act also found excerpts from *Information Digest*.

The daisy chain can get elaborate. One 1976 FBI memo reports that the Chicago Police Intelligence Unit had sent the FBI a copy of a report from *Information Digest* as well as a copy of the *Congressional Record* where the late Rep. Larry McDonald revealed information concerning a Cuban conference on Puerto Rican independence. Data from the private rightwing groups and federal agencies also flowed in and out of the private Law Enforcement Intelligence Unit, an association of local law enforcement intelligence and investigative



Credit: Twin Lens

**John Rees, spymaster of the Right, and Linda Güell, director of Western Goals, with Nancy Reagan.**

squads set up to compete with the sometimes less-than-cooperative FBI.

Break-ins and thefts were numerous during the COINTELPRO period. When a judge allowed plaintiffs in one lawsuit against government spying access to the Chicago Police Red Squad files, lawyers found original membership lists stolen from radical groups such as the Medical Committee for Human Rights and Students for a Democratic Society. Former staff members from the groups remembered the lists vanishing after mysterious office break-ins where office equipment was left untouched.

In some cases break-ins and assaults were carried out by rightwing paramilitary groups coordinating their efforts with FBI informants, military intelligence agents, and local police investigative units. Chicago's Legion of Justice not only assaulted activists, but stole files and distributed photocopies to government agencies. Detroit's Operation Breakthrough

10. "State Police Surveillance: Report of the New York State Assembly Special Task Force on State Police Non-criminal Files," Mark Alan Siegel, Chair, September 1977. "Confidential Memorandum re: Sources of State Police Information," Office of Legislative Oversight and Analysis, The Assembly, State of New York, February 20, 1976, by William F. Haddad and Thomas M. Burton.

See also written defense of Rees by Herbert Romerstein presented as statement to task force hearing, November 15, 1977 (on file at Political Research Associates).

harassed activists while it was essentially controlled by police agents who sometimes outnumbered non-informant members.<sup>11</sup>

The FBI relationship to the far-right reached a violent climax in San Diego, where an FBI informant testified the FBI provided him with \$10,000 worth of weapons, including explosives used in a bombing by the Secret Army Organization (SAO), a rightwing group which harassed activists protesting the Vietnam war. The FBI even hid a gun used in an SAO assassination attempt against a leftist professor until an ACLU-sponsored lawsuit by a woman wounded in the assault forced the FBI to reveal the weapon's existence.<sup>12</sup>

### Reform and Rehabilitation

When the abuses of the COINTELPRO period were exposed in post-Watergate congressional hearings and media accounts, some restrictions and reforms were attempted. President Carter issued an Executive Order mandating stricter investigative guidelines to protect the right to dissent.

Immediately, the rightwing wailed that America's security was being crippled. Committees were established, headlines screamed, newsletters warned of dire consequences. Agents moved into the private sector in disgust and wrote memoirs. They joined the other "true believers" who had kept the flame of McCarthyism alive.

One of the first documented instances of a post-Watergate private rightwing domestic intelligence operation was in 1977. That was the year neo-fascist Lyndon LaRouche's "intelligence" staff (an oxymoron if there ever was one) compiled allegations from Rees's *Information Digest*, along with their own paranoid fantasies, and convinced New Hampshire State Police investigators that an anti-nuclear demonstration planned at the Seabrook nuclear power plant construction site was really a cover for a terrorist attack.

The mood of both the paranoid rightwing and the intelligence community changed dramatically with the rise of the New Right and the election of Ronald Reagan. In writing recommendations for the Reagan transition team in "Mandate for Leadership," Sam Francis at the conservative Heritage Foundation recommended that the intelligence agencies be unshackled. With words that are essentially the modern translation of Kintner, Francis wrote:<sup>13</sup>

11. For Legion of Justice, see numerous articles in *Chicago Sun-Times*, *Chicago Daily News*, *Chicago Tribune*, especially circa July 1970 when first grand jury indictments were handed down, and July-August 1975 when sworn testimony firmly tied members of police unit to Legion. Noteworthy are the articles by Larry Green in the *Chicago Daily News*, July 29 and 30, August 1, 1975.

For Operation Breakthrough, conclusions arrived at after review of material produced in the ACLU-sponsored lawsuit, *Benkert v. Michigan State Police*, and related case files.

12. See generally *San Diego Door* coverage of SAO, especially investigation by reporters Doug Porter, Larry Remer and Bill Ritter. For summary, "The FBI's Secret Soldiers," Peter Biskind, *New Times*, January 9, 1976. For hiding of gun, see Donner, *op. cit.*, n. 2, pp. 444-445.

13. "Mandate for Leadership: Policy Management in a Conservative Administration," Charles L. Heatherly, ed. (Washington, D.C., Heritage Foundation, 1980). See section entitled "The Intelligence Community," Samuel T. Francis, ed., pp. 903-953. See especially: list of potential security threats, p. 935; call for constant surveillance/comprehensive files, p. 940.

Many of the current restrictions on internal security functions arose from legitimate but often poorly informed concern for civil liberties of the citizen and the responsibility of the government. While these are legitimate concerns, it is axiomatic that individual liberties are secondary to the requirements of national security and internal civil order: without the latter, the former can never be secure. Moreover, much of the current legislation and administrative measures was adopted with little appreciation of the threat or the *Modus Operandi* of extremist, subversive, and violent groups.

**"The passage of a law outlawing Communist conspiratorial practices would be only the first step...A law-enforcing problem to overcome would be the procurement and training of a sufficient number of agents to infiltrate into every corner of the Communist Conspiracy."**

Francis also urged that federal intelligence agencies be allowed to contract with private groups for the collection of vital information. Someone in the Reagan administration apparently heeded the advice.

In early 1981, in a clear message to the intelligence community, Reagan pardoned two FBI agents convicted in 1980 of criminal burglaries of activists' homes and offices. Reagan, who has openly criticized those who brought down Joseph McCarthy, then unleashed the FBI. In December 1981, Reagan issued Executive Order 12333 which authorized the FBI to use intrusive investigatory techniques, such as mail openings, wiretaps and burglaries, when there was probable cause to suspect a "terrorist" threat.

Reagan also authorized the FBI to contract with and rely on private sources of information in national security investigations. Public sections of the mostly-secret "Attorney General Guidelines for Foreign Intelligence Collection" require the FBI not to question "individuals acting on their own initiative" how they obtained information. Thus rightwing zealots could conduct their own intelligence operations and thefts and provide the fruits of their mission to the FBI without fear of reprisal.

Reagan himself joined the Red Menace alert in 1982. That was the year Reagan charged the nuclear freeze campaign was "inspired by not the sincere, honest people who want peace, but by some people who want the weakening of America and so are manipulating honest and sincere people." Reagan saw freeze activists as dupes or traitors. When asked for proof, reporters were told much of the information was secret, but that one public source was a *Reader's Digest* article by John Barron. Barron had based the allegation in part on an article by John Rees. Rees had based his article on red-baiting allegations made during McCarthy period hearings.<sup>14</sup>

On March 7, 1983 Attorney General William French Smith finished erasing any civil liberties gains made in the post-Watergate era when he released "Guidelines on General

14. For an excellent discussion of the information daisy chain see "The Spy Who Came Down on the Freeze: Rees, Reagan, and the Digest Smear," by Seth Rosenfeld, in the *Village Voice*, August 16, 1983.

Crimes, Racketeering Enterprise and Domestic Security/Terrorism Investigations." According to Mitchell Rubin, a law clerk who authored a lengthy analysis of the Smith guidelines for *Police Misconduct and Civil Rights Law Report*,<sup>15</sup> "Three authorizations granted to the FBI

under the Smith guidelines...[included] the FBI's right to conduct surveillance of peaceful public demonstrations, to use informants and infiltrators, and to investigate persons or groups advocating unlawful activities." These were three areas where the FBI had systematically abused constitutional rights in the past, and had been restrained under the guidelines issued in 1978 by President Carter's Attorney General, Edward Levi.

The conservative and far-right also began to reconstruct the countersubversive apparatus soon after Reagan took office. The newly formed Senate Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism (SST), chaired by ultra-conservative Sen. Jeremiah Denton (Rep.-Ala.), quickly began rekindling the congressional witch-hunt. One notable SST staff member was Sam Francis, the author of the Heritage Foundation recommendations on security. Francis told *Human Events* that John Rees was "authoritative" on the subject of internal subversion.

Luckily the Committee's hallucinatory hearings on the "Red Menace" soon discredited that forum, at least among mainstream journalists. An attempt to restart the old House Committee on Un-American Activities failed. Despite these setbacks, the views of the paranoid rightwing had made serious inroads at the White House.

A State Department charge that the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom was a "communist front" was retracted when traced to a Rees report published by the Western Goals Foundation.

### Rightwing Intelligence Networks

Within the rightwing conspiracy-mongering milieu are a handful of organizations which specialize in monitoring the activities of progressive activists.

Frank Donner has written of the links between Nativism and the private intelligence networks:<sup>16</sup>

A pattern of support and collaboration between government and private intelligence forces dominates the history of radical-hunting in this country. The values and priorities of American Nativism have decisively influenced both official and private intelligence activities. As a vital ideological resource of American capitalism,

15. "The FBI and Dissidents: A First Amendment Analysis of Attorney General Smith's 1983 FBI Guidelines on Domestic Security Investigations." Mitchell S. Rubin, *Police Misconduct and Civil Rights*, New York. Two parts: Vol. 1, No. 14, March-April 1986 and Vol.1 No. 15, May-June 1986. (edited under the auspices of the National Lawyers Guild Civil Liberties Committee).

16. Donner, *op. cit.*, n. 2, p. 414.

nativism has kept the countersubversive tradition burning by continuing and enlarging its own private intelligence activities.

At a time when established governmental systems for monitoring subversion have been cut back, these private

## John Rees and *Information Digest*

John Rees is a rightwing spymaster who has published *Information Digest*, a gossip newsletter, for over twenty years. John Rees and his wife Sheila Louise Rees spent several years in the late 1960s and early 1970s infiltrating progressive organizations and reporting their results to the John Birch Society and the FBI. Sheila continues to assist John in publishing *Information Digest* out of a house in Baltimore where they are assisted by Martha who prefers to keep her last name a mystery.

For a short period, S. Louise Rees, using the name Sheila O'Connor, was the staff secretary for the Washington, D.C. chapter of the National Lawyers Guild (NLG). Both she and John Rees attended the 1973 national convention of the NLG and the information they gathered ended up in reports for the rightwing Church League of America, as well as state and federal government intelligence agency files. Rees has also supplied intelligence data on leftists to the John Birch Society, the FBI, the now-defunct House Internal Security Committee, local police units, the Western Goals Foundation, and the Church League of America.

John Rees spent the early years of the Reagan administration as the spymaster for the rightwing Western Goals Foundation. The Foundation was the brainchild of the late Rep. Larry McDonald, former leader of the John Birch Society. Western Goals published several small books warning of the growing domestic Red Menace, and solicited funds to create a computer database on American subversives. The Foundation was sued by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) when it was caught attempting to computerize references to "subversive" files pilfered from the disbanded Los Angeles Police Department "Red Squad."

Western Goals fell short after the death of Larry McDonald in September of 1983. John Rees left shortly after McDonald's death. Western Goals discontinued its domestic dossier and intelligence operation shortly after the departure of Rees. A contentious battle over control of Western Goals and the alienation of key funders left the Foundation essentially a shell which was taken over by a conservative fundraiser Carl Russell "Spitz" Channell who turned it into a conduit for *contra* fundraising efforts linked to North and the Iran/*contra* affair.

countersubversive operations acquire special importance; they must continue the data collection and storage practices formerly shared with government agencies, intensify their propaganda efforts, and—a new mission—promote renewed official involvement in surveillance and related activities directed against dissent.

Donner's analysis was published at the beginning of the Reagan administration. Since then, evidence shows, there has not only been a "renewed official involvement" in spying on dissent, but the continued development of a parallel private rightwing intelligence-gathering apparatus which feeds information to government agencies.

The main rightwing intelligence-gathering networks are the John Rees *Information Digest* network, and the Council for Inter-American Security network of L. (Lynn) Francis Bouche. The other two main domestic intelligence operations are the networks run by two cults, the neo-fascist Lyndon LaRouche, and the theocratic authoritarian Rev. Sun Myung Moon. Dozens of smaller groups also exist.

Some rightwing snooper groups have fallen on hard times. The two largest rightwing dossier compilers from the 1950s—the Church League of America and the American Security Council—are no longer key players.

The Church League, which once claimed the National Council of Churches was a communist front, was disbanded due to an internal schism. The bad news is that their 7 million index cards and 200 file cabinets full of files on "subversives" were shipped to the library at Rev. Jerry Falwell's Liberty University. The American Security Council still has its files but apparently seldom uses them. ASC now is focused on throwing ideological icebergs at the thawing Cold War and lobbying for increased aid to the military. Researcher Wes McCune quips that the ASC is the personification of the Military-Industrial Complex.

## The Return of the Thought Police

The most recent manifestation of the paranoid countersubversive syndrome surfaced in 1984 when widespread FBI harassment of Latin America support and anti-interventionist groups was reported nationwide. Other intelligence agencies, and rightwing groups began stepping up their campaigns warning of communist or terrorist subversion, which also smeared exile, emigré, sanctuary, and other groups with an international focus.

Reported incidents included:

- FBI agents visited the employer, friends and co-workers of an activist, asking: "Did you know that your friend works with communists and KGB agents?"
- FBI agents appeared in the evening at the home of an activist, and said: "We know you are sincere, just tell us the names of the KGB agents."
- FBI agents attempted to interview activists about the "lawbreakers" involved in the sanctuary movement.
- FBI agents threatened exposure of an undocumented activist to Immigration officials unless the activist talked.



- FBI agents threatened activists with jail unless they revealed their "plans" for "terrorist" attacks on the 1984 summer Olympics and political conventions.

Military intelligence agents, starting in the mid-1980s, began appearing at reserve weekends to interview co-workers of activists saying "tell us about your friend at work who hangs out with Soviet spies."<sup>17</sup>

At the same time, a campaign by the conservative Right to portray dissidents as traitors was well under way. Starting in the late 1970s, this campaign circulated millions of direct mail letters and tens of thousands of magazines and newsletters warning of a leftist plot to take over America and pave the way for a Soviet takeover.<sup>18</sup>

The mood afflicted the paramilitary rightwing as well. Some activists in the mid-1980s received written threats of violence signed by far-right anticommunist groups such as the anti-Jewish white supremacist Posse Comitatus or neo-Nazi National Socialist Liberation Front.

The heavy-footed presence of federal gumshoes became so obvious and irritating in 1983 that a loose coalition of civil liberties groups, including the National Lawyers Guild (NLG), Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR), National Committee Against Repressive Legislation (NCARL), American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) and the Fund for Open Information and Accountability (FOIA, Inc.), began distributing pamphlets and conducting workshops to advise activists how to "Just Say No" when the feds dropped by to ask for an interview about life in Managua.

The National Lawyers Guild Civil Liberties Committee began a project to re-educate activists about political repression. A few months later the NLG project was subsumed by the Movement Support Network (MSN), an information service run by the Center for Constitutional Rights with cooperation from the NLG.

More than 100 reports of mysterious break-ins of activists' offices have been compiled by the Movement Support Network since 1984. In Boston, where numerous unexplained break-ins of movement offices have been reported, a symposium on surveillance and dissent in 1986 drew more than 300 participants. At that meeting, *Police Misconduct Manual* co-author Michael Avery and long-time civil liberties activist Frank Wilkinson of NCARL both explained how the term "terrorism" had replaced the "communism" label as a justification for intrusive government surveillance and predicted the term would be the excuse the FBI used to justify spying on activists.

17. All of the incidents of visits by FBI agents and Military Intelligence agents are based on interviews by the author with activists during 1983-1984. See "FBI Harrassment: Vaguely Reminiscent of the 60's," *The Mobilizer*, Mobilization for Survival Newsletter, Summer 1984, by the author; For general FBI return to surveillance and disruption, see "Harassment Monitored: Big Brother Returns," *Public Eye Magazine*, Summer 1984, pp. 7-8.

18. Numerous examples of this type of rhetorical direct mail are on file at Political Research Associates in Cambridge, MA. One early 1980s classic was from the Council on Inter-American Security which contained a questionnaire asking "In your opinion, should we crack down harder on revolutionary groups already inside our borders? Yes/No/Undecided."

## Reform of the FBI Charter is Long Overdue

The FBI is now authorized to conduct break-ins under Reagan's guidelines, but few activists think "authorized" burglaries and infiltration could account for all the break-ins, assaults, kidnappings and other incidents against progressive activists chronicled by the Movement Support Network.

Activists on both sides of the ideological fence speculate that at least some of the break-ins are being conducted by shadowy strata composed of authoritarian FBI agents, ideological local police, and a loose consortium of right-wingers such as militant anticommunist ideologues, former police and agents from deposed foreign dictatorships, even U.S.-based members of Latin American death squads. Given the historical record, such speculations are hardly outrageous.

But the bottom line here is not about mysterious break-ins or rightwing red-baiters. The private rightwing spies are generally protected by the First Amendment, and the break-ins and attacks, though odious, may remain forever unsolved. But the FBI has been caught, so to speak, "red-handed."

With the CISPES probe the FBI once again has been shown to be engaging in a political witch-hunt. The FBI promises us it was all a mistake. A few overzealous agents. Trust us. Like a chronic drunk driver caught in a fourth offense, the FBI says there may have been some abuses in the CISPES investigation, but it won't happen again. Why should we believe them?

The FBI's license to spy on dissenters must be revoked. Congress has the constitutional authority to make the FBI obey the Bill of Rights by legislatively countermanning Reagan Executive Order 12333 and the Smith Guidelines on FBI surveillance techniques. Congress can accomplish this by rewriting the FBI Charter.

The standard for FBI investigations must be the same as the standard for any criminal investigation: that reasonable suspicion or probable cause exists to assume a criminal act is about to be committed or has been committed. But further, there must be a mechanism to ensure that the FBI does not hide its time-worn paranoid countersubversive theories in a smog of legal justifications.

The National Committee Against Repressive Legislation is launching a campaign calling on Congress to rewrite the FBI Charter. The NCARL draft offers many valuable checks and balances, but a much weaker concept is being pragmatically compromised through the well-intentioned but disastrous efforts of the D.C. legislative office of the American Civil Liberties Union and the Center for National Security Studies. In recent years the ACLU and CNSS have compromised with the Reagan administration on the intelligence identities act and on FOIA exemptions.

The key to stopping further erosions of our constitutional rights is to organize and educate against intelligence abuses. Absent any mass public sentiment calling for a serious reign-in of the intelligence agencies, elected representatives will choose to ignore or compromise on the issue.

In any case the problem with intelligence abuse is not only that there are rogue elephants in the intelligence community, but that there are timid mice in Congress, and toothless cats in the civil liberties community. ●

## Thank You!

**T**wo months ago we sent a fund raising appeal to all our subscribers asking for help in paying the printing costs from the last issue of *CovertAction Information Bulletin*. The response was terrific and once again we want to thank all of you who contributed to *CAIB*. As you probably know, publishing a small magazine like *CAIB* is not easy or inexpensive. Your contribution showed us that you think we're important and that you want us to stick around. Whenever we do an appeal like this, we are always delighted to see the level of support we have from our subscribers. Thanks again.

However, our funding appeal didn't reach all our supporters. Many people buy *CAIB* from newsstands or bookstores and therefore did not receive the letter we sent to our subscribers. We know that many of you also think *CAIB* is an important asset in the struggle against U.S. government abuses like illegal covert activities by the CIA. For those of you who don't subscribe to *CAIB* but buy it off the newsstand, we need your help too. While we have a small staff, working in a very small office, our expenses continue to rise, primarily due to increases in postage and printing costs.

Please consider giving a contribution to *CAIB*. The contributions from our subscribers were a tremendous help but we still face a difficult budget crunch. There are not many magazines which devote themselves to writing about abuses of the entire U.S. intelligence community, especially the CIA, and with George Bush now in office, we're needed more than ever. Send your contribution today.

**CovertAction Information Bulletin  
Post Office Box 50272  
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# The "New" FBI

by Ross Gelbspan\*

In a return to the days of J. Edgar Hoover, the "Red Squads," and COINTELPRO, the FBI wire-tapped, opened mail, and actively violated the civil liberties of hundreds of groups and thousands of individuals whose only crime was to peacefully oppose U.S. intervention in Central America.

Between 1981 and 1988, the FBI—in particular the Bureau's Global Counter-Terrorism Unit and its Foreign Counterintelligence Division:

- Mounted a massive political spying campaign, involving 52 of the FBI's 59 field offices, to infiltrate and watch members of the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador, as well as 138 other labor, educational, religious and political groups, who had mobilized against U.S. policies in Central America.<sup>1</sup>
- Interviewed and, according to numerous subjects, intimidated more than 100 U.S. citizens who traveled to Nicaragua and ordered documents and private papers seized from scores of citizens re-entering the U.S. after visiting Central America.
- Compiled a "Terrorist Album" whose hundreds of pages include entries on U.S. Senators, Congressmen, diplomats and clergy.
- Enlisted the aid of a range of private, rightwing extremist groups, including the Rev. Sun Myung Moon's organization; a private, intelligence-gathering network of U.S.-based rightwing Salvadorans; John Rees, a rightwing journalist who has provided information to the Bureau which he received from his own network of police and police informants; and a group of rightwing ideologues, including J. Michael Waller and Michael Boos, whose spying operations have been sponsored by a number of rightwing patrons and, in some cases, financed by the U.S. government.<sup>2</sup>
- Collaborated in the surveillance, imprisonment and possible deaths of Salvadoran refugees who have been deported back to El Salvador where they were met by Salvadoran authorities who had been alerted to their arrival by the FBI.
- Ignored more than 85 reported break-ins and thefts of files at the offices and homes of Central America activists around the country. While the FBI maintains it

did not commit the break-ins, many victims suspect the Bureau has received data gathered by burglars. In addition, the FBI has declined to investigate the break-ins, contending that since it has no evidence of government involvement, it has no jurisdiction to investigate.

As a result of the FBI's operations, tens of thousands of names have been added to the Bureau's terrorism files—names of people whose only offense has been to write a letter in support of the Nuclear Freeze movement (which the FBI obtained by virtue of a mail cover on the post office box of Freeze organizers) or to attend a meeting of CISPES or other groups (where the FBI recorded and traced license plates and other information in order to identify activists).<sup>3</sup>

Nevertheless, the FBI's five-year, nationwide investigation did not result in the arrest of a single activist for criminal or terrorist activities.

In retrospect, it should have been apparent from the beginning that civil liberties, freedom of speech and the refinement of democracy through the free play of ideas was not a priority of the Reagan administration.

Even before he took office, President-elect Reagan signalled a major change in foreign policy goals. Human rights was out and counter-terrorism was in. That was the message to the nation's law enforcement and intelligence communities. It was also the message that Ret. Maj. Gen. John Singlaub and Daniel O. Graham, former head of the Defense Intelligence Agency, brought to Central America in 1980. After meeting with Singlaub and Graham the leaders of Guatemala's fanatic rightwing were delighted because they were given the distinct impression that, "Mr. Reagan recognized that a good deal of dirty work has to be done."<sup>4</sup>

While the administration trumpeted its anti-terrorism policies to justify its alliance with repressive Central American governments, it buried under the deepest kind of cover its campaign against hundreds of thousands of law abiding dissenters inside the U.S.

### Heritage Recommendations

According to a 1980 Heritage Foundation report, compiled by an anonymous group within the intelligence community, "extremist political groups [should] be kept under surveillance, at first by reading and filing publicly available information...The more serious surveillance can be carried out by the

\*Ross Gelbspan covers civil liberties issues for the *Boston Globe*.

1. According to 1,200 pages of FBI CISPES files released in response to a Freedom of Information suit brought by the Center for Constitutional Rights; *Boston Globe*, January 27, 1988.

2. *Boston Globe*, March 15, 1988; April 20, 1988; May 17, 1988. Interview with J. Michael Waller, March 1988; Report produced KRON-TV, San Francisco, November 10, 1987.

3. Documents from FBI CISPES files. Nuclear Freeze mail cover cited by Frank Varelli, *Boston Globe*, January 31, 1988.

4. Scott and Jon Lee Anderson, *Inside the League* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1986), p. 175.

## An FBI Dissenter

by Jack Ryan\*

As I leafed through my mail that Monday morning, I came across a memo, dated November 20, 1986, from Bobby Grooms, an agent in Springfield, and a good friend, directed to "All Agents." It referred to, and had attached, a teletype from Chicago Division. The memo was captioned "Jean Gump, Et Al: Domestic Security/Terrorism Sabotage." All the memo said was for each receiving agent to "conduct logical investigation" to determine if anything occurred in that agent's particular area (meaning geographic area of work) similar to whatever was described in the attached teletype.

As I read the ten page teletype attached I froze. "Here it is," I told myself. The teletype, dated October 31, 1986 described how somebody had poured some kind of molten metal product into the front door locks of eleven military recruiting offices in the Chicago area, at the same time affixing statements to the doors about "Veterans Fast for Life," and condemning the U.S. policy in Central America. A license number picked up by a security guard, presumably of someone involved in the matter, checked to Jean and Joe Gump of Suburban Chicago.

Chicago FBI records showed Jean Gump and three others were arrested inside a Minuteman Missile Silo site in Missouri earlier that year where they were charged with destruction of Government Property. A "60 Minutes" television crew and reporter Mike Wallace followed them and filmed the incident. They called themselves "Silo Plowshares" in reference to the biblical image of beating weapons into plowshares.

Chicago Division, along with trying to further identify "Plowshares" and "Veterans Fast for Life," was requesting that FBI Headquarters authorize a code name for this case of "LOCKOUT." I had read about "Veterans Fast for Life" in the newspaper, and had seen them on network

\*Jack Ryan is a former FBI agent who now speaks against FBI abuses.

television news.

I knew the "Veteran's Fast" was not an organization; it was four U.S. veterans on the steps of the Capitol in Washington, D.C. well into a hunger strike, protesting U.S. intervention in Central America. I knew none of the veterans but I did know Larry Morlan, an activist in "Silo Plowshares," who is now serving an eighteen year sentence in Marion Federal Prison for the protest.

Larry had been among a group from Rock Island, IL that "occupied" St. Mary's Cathedral in Peoria in 1983, trying to urge Peoria's Catholic Bishop to go along with the U.S. Bishops' Peace Pastoral Letter. One of the "occupiers" was a school friend of mine and I went to the cathedral to see him, and also to show my support for the group. I was introduced and spoke briefly to Larry Morlan. I was totally convinced of his sincerity and his non-violent orientation. Seeing his name gave the teletype an eerie personal note. During this time there were rumors, innuendos and outright accusations being made from many quarters that the FBI was again investigating "peace groups".

There were also denials. Referring to an editorial in the *St. Louis Post Dispatch* which made such an accusation, FBI Director William H. Webster personally wrote a letter which appeared in the September 28, 1988 issue of the *Post Dispatch* emphatically denying that the FBI was investigating legitimate dissenters.

I honestly believed Director Webster. Nothing I saw or heard inside the FBI gave me any reason to suspect otherwise. One thing I knew for certain was that in the past, whether the FBI had been involved in any illegal or unsavory investigations or not, several other federal as well as state and local agencies were similarly involved, but the FBI seemed to be getting all of the blame. This, I felt certain, was happening again. I wanted to believe this and I honestly did.

use of such intelligence techniques as wiretapping, mail covers, informants and, at least occasionally, surreptitious entries."<sup>5</sup>

The report noted that terrorist groups may be difficult to detect, since "clergymen, students, businessmen, entertainers, labor officials, journalists and government workers may engage in subversive activities without being fully aware of the extent, purpose or control of their activities."<sup>6</sup>

Lamenting the weakening of law enforcement capabilities in the wake of revelations by the Church and Pike Committees in the mid 1970s, the report recommended "contracting with one or several of the many private groups that have spe-

cialized in providing and disseminating relevant information with legal complications."<sup>7</sup>

The group recommended scrapping the 1976 FBI guidelines instituted by then Attorney General Edward Levi. It suggested exempting the FBI from the Freedom of Information Act. And it called for the appointment of an Attorney General and FBI director who "understand the nature of the threat and the professional tradecraft of internal security work."<sup>8</sup>

Most of those recommendations found expression in an executive order (EO 12333) which Reagan signed in December 1981. That order permitted the FBI, among other things, to contract with private groups for intelligence gathering and to

5. *Mandate for Leadership—Policy Management in a Conservative Administration*, The Heritage Foundation, 1980, Washington, D.C.

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Ibid.*

8. *Ibid.*

That was until I saw the memo regarding Jean Gump and "Plowshares." I knew that memo represented a clear reversion to an FBI I honestly believed had died with J. Edgar Hoover. The FBI was again investigating "peace groups" and using this investigation not as a means of developing a case to be prosecuted but as an end in itself, a way of intimidating. And I know well how intimidating it can be to be investigated by the FBI.

On September 8, that year, I confronted Joe Ondrula, the Special Agent in Charge (SAC) in Springfield, IL, with the fact I could conceivably have problems with my work and my personal conscience regarding our country's nuclear arms policy. I was very uneasy and leaned heavily on the Bishop's anti-nuclear Pastoral Letter for support. Ondrula, however, ended the conversation as if it were a routine matter, telling me that should any problem come up, I was to submit a memo.

After Ondrula retired our new SAC, Tom Jones, called me, stating he had received my memo about my opposition to the FBI investigation of peace groups. He said, "I'll tear it up if you want me to." After I told him that I was quite serious, he assumed the stance of the disciplinarian and I was re-ordered to conduct the investigation. My refusal was placed in the form of a signed statement, to which I was allowed to add my reasons for refusing. I stated:

I do not see the activities committed by the "Plowshares" group to be in any way acts of violence...To my understanding, the term "plowshares" is drawn from the Biblical edict: "they shall beat their swords into plowshares," and most pointedly refers to neutralizing military violence. The actions of Jean Gump, et al, are obvious violations of Destruction of Government Property statutes and I would have no problem investigating such matters but I do not believe any of their actions in this case constitute acts of violence bringing them under the scope of Domestic Security Guidelines.

I personally find certain actions and positions presently being taken by our government, in particular relating to Central America, as violent, illegal and immoral. While I do not condone the use of illegal actions by anyone to oppose this position of our government, I realize such acts are often effective and have a longstanding tradition in our country's history, (e.g., the Boston Tea Party, Civil Rights marches in the South, etc.) especially effective because the perpetrators are usually willing to face the consequences of their illegal acts.

For this reason I respect the aims of the "Plowshares" group as being in line with my own personal feelings. I believe that in the past members of our government have used the FBI to quell dissent, sometimes where the dissent was warranted. I also believe that for me as an FBI Agent to cooperate with such an effort places me directly and firmly in complicity with the activity targeted by the dissent. This is the position I refuse to take.

I signed the statement January 20, 1987. A few days later all of my Foreign Counter-Intelligence and Terrorist work was assigned to another agent. Eight months later, SAC Jones handed me a letter telling me I was dismissed for "insubordination." I had been with the FBI for over 20 years and in another 18 months would have been eligible to retire.

It was ironic then, when, in December 1987, FBI Director William Sessions sent a letter to Representative Don Edwards, explaining why the FBI was investigating "Plowshares" and "Veterans Fast for Life" under the domestic security/terrorism category. Sessions maintained that the investigation was "in accordance with our administrative procedures," but that the case "was closed...after the facts and circumstances did not indicate that those involved in the vandalism were furthering political or social goals through activities that involve force or violence in violation of the criminal laws of the United States." ●

conceal the existence of such contracts; to engage in warrantless break-ins under certain circumstances (which remain classified); and to accept any material it received in the course of a counter-terrorism or counterintelligence investigation regardless of how that material was obtained.

What is known today of the administration's assault on the First Amendment is vague, partly because the administration promulgated a series of directives which effectively pulled a blanket of secrecy over the government. But despite the administration's use of random polygraph exams, censorship agreements and legislation (passed with the consent of the ACLU and the approval of Congress) which adds dramatic restrictions to the Freedom of Information Act, some clues exist as to the nature and scope of its campaign to silence dissent.

### The North Connection

Many of those clues are to be found among the 1,200 pages of FBI documents recently released to the Center for Constitutional Rights and in documents released to individuals under their Privacy Act requests.

Other clues come from members of Oliver North's private *contra*-aid network. Philip Mabry, a former CIA contract agent who set up a pro-*contra* educational group in Fort Worth, Texas, said that in late 1984 Oliver North asked him to write to the FBI and request that the Bureau investigate some 40 groups and individuals involved in Central America political work. North also asked him to get other conservative activists to write similar letters to the Bureau because several letters from different groups around the country—all citing the same names—could force an FBI investigation. Mabry



said Fawn Hall gave him the actual lists and provided copies of his letter to William Webster and the apparently pro forma reply from Oliver Revell, the Bureau's assistant executive director.<sup>9</sup> Virtually all the names on the list turn up prominently in the documents won last January by the Center for Constitutional Rights in its FOIA lawsuit.

The North-FBI link grew in 1986, when North asked Revell to investigate the funding of the Christic Institute and the International Center for Development Policy, a Washington-based group investigating the illegal *contra* supply operation. Revell told North the FBI did not do that sort of thing. Nevertheless, North then met with FBI counterintelligence special agent David Beisner and put him in touch with Glenn Robinette, the former CIA wiretap expert whom North used as a private security chief. The object of the Beisner-Robinette meeting was to set up a sting on former mercenary-turned-whistleblower Jack Terrell to get him to reveal the sources of funding for the Center.

### Spying on LaRouche

Several valuable clues have surfaced in the Boston trial of political fringe candidate Lyndon LaRouche, whose organization was clearly the target of a government spying campaign. One individual, Ryan Quade Emerson, who informed on the LaRouche group for the FBI, had been paid \$500 a month for several years by the Bureau as subsidy for his counter-terrorism newsletter.

The LaRouche case also yielded an FBI "DO NOT FILE" file. The Bureau maintains, and has under oath, that it no longer keeps "DO NOT FILE" files—which it used in the 1960s and 1970s to store records of "black bag jobs" until they had been reviewed by supervisors and then destroyed them.

But a 1985 "DO NOT FILE" file from Revell to William Webster, about a request made by Henry Kissinger for a secret meeting with Webster to talk about the LaRouche group, contains the handwritten note, perhaps from Webster, "Do not destroy w/o my permission."<sup>10</sup>

Unfortunately, neither the Senate Intelligence nor the House Judiciary Subcommittee with oversight of the FBI, have seen fit to pursue this avenue of inquiry. When Rep. Don Edwards, chairman of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights, inquired about the "DO NOT FILE" file, FBI director William Sessions wrote him that it was erroneously titled and that such communications should be headed "Informal Advice—Not For Retention."

However, the material in the memo does not contain "informal advice." It refers to a LaRouche press conference of the previous day—and to a request for a meeting from Kissinger with no paper trail. As attorneys for the LaRouche organization pointed out, the "DO NOT FILE" communication contained substantive material which was nowhere duplicated in any other file on the group.

9. *Boston Globe*, February 29, 1988.

10. *Boston Globe*, June 29, 1988. "DO NOT FILE" file in author's possession.

## "Mr Reagan recognized that a good deal of dirty work has to be done..."

Finally an invaluable amount of information has come to us from a naturalized Salvadoran named Frank Varelli, who for four years, was one of the two men coordinat-

ing the FBI's nationwide investigation into CISPES and other groups opposing administration policies.

If Frank Varelli had never been born, he would have nevertheless existed as a figment of Bill Casey's imagination. According to Bob Woodward's book, *Veil*, "Casey decided that El Salvador was, symbolically, the most important place in the world. If the U.S. could not handle a threat in its backyard, Reagan's credibility would be at risk in the rest of the world..."<sup>11</sup>

### The FBI Informant

Varelli, a born-again Evangelical Christian, was raised with a profound hatred of communism and of those liberal elements in the United States who, either deliberately or unwittingly, helped undermine the strength of anti-communist forces everywhere.

His father, Col. Agustin Martinez Varela, had been, in turn, director of the Salvadoran Military Training Academy director of the Salvadoran National Police, Minister of Interior and the Salvadoran Ambassador to Guatemala. Growing up in a military milieu, Varelli became friendly with members of the Salvadoran military and police.

In April 1980, after being attacked by the FMLN, the Varelli family fled to the U.S. Soon after their arrival in Los Angeles, Varelli was approached by an FBI agent who asked if he would be interested in working with the Bureau on an investigation into Salvadoran terrorism.

After contracting to work as an analyst for the Bureau, Varelli was told that the FBI needed its own source of information in El Salvador. The Bureau did not trust the CIA, he was told, because the Agency's information to the FBI was frequently late, often incomplete and occasionally deliberately misleading. What they needed, they told Varelli, was a direct link to the National Guard.

In the spring of 1981, Varelli traveled secretly to San Salvador, where he met with Eugenio Vides Casanova, head of the National Guard and a former student of his father's in the Military Academy.

Casanova, persuaded that the FBI was a true friend of the Salvadoran right (as opposed to the duplicitous State Department and the unpredictable CIA with its own contorted agenda), agreed to set up a special phone link between Varelli and members of the intelligence unit of the National Guard.

During that visit, Varelli also obtained a database of Salvadoran leftists and suspected sympathizers which had been compiled by ANSESAL, the special presidential police force. The database had been ordered destroyed by the ruling junta, but it had, instead, been preserved and hidden, by Roberto D'Aubuisson, a former ANSESAL member, who later made it available to the National Guard. That was the database that

11. Bob Woodward, *Veil* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), pp. 38 and 39.

Varelli brought back to Dallas that March.

After Varelli became an FBI undercover agent he approached groups saying he was a Salvadoran refugee whose family had been murdered by rightwing death squads.

Under the alias Gilberto Antonio Ayala Mendoza, Varelli began to subscribe to every piece of literature available from every political Central America group he could find. Starting with a handful of groups listed in a 1981 edition of *Mother Jones* magazine, Varelli eventually identified 150 groups which had mobilized in opposition to administration policies in El Salvador, Nicaragua and Guatemala. While some went under the name of CISPES, others, he explained, used other names like CASA, Interreligious Task Force and the Nicaraguan Network.

The information he compiled was communicated to other FBI field offices, to guide them in their surveillance of activists and to share with helpful local police departments.

Varelli and his Bureau colleagues received a regular flow of intelligence and political material from far-right foundations in Washington such as Western Goals, the Council for Inter-American Security, and the Young Americas Foundation.<sup>12</sup> Regardless of the validity of the material, it provided the Bureau with the kind of independent authority it could cite to justify its operations.

For example, in 1981 when the FBI requested authorization from the Justice Department for the CISPES investigation, it submitted, among other material, an article on Salvadoran terrorism. The article was written by John Rees and published in *Review of the News*, the magazine of the John Birch Society.

Varelli was an extremely accomplished and effective undercover agent. Occasionally the CIA consulted him to identify players and clarify factions in El Salvador and elsewhere in Central America.

As "Gilberto Mendoza" he appeared to his fellow CISPES members as an energetic and ingratiating worker and a valuable source of information on developments in El Salvador. That was his daytime self.

In tape recorded calls to CISPES members, "Mendoza" came across as deferential, eager and disarming, with Columbo-like explanations and digressions. He insinuates himself into the confidence of activists, learning the backgrounds of various members, gathering phone numbers and addresses, and getting himself briefed on plans for meetings, demonstrations and political strategies.

While the daytime calls of Gilberto Mendoza were polite and engaging, the nighttime calls of the "Doctor" were chillingly direct. As the "Doctor" Varelli was an invaluable secret link between the FBI and the elite intelligence unit of the Salvadoran National Guard.

Late at night, flanked by piles of notes and documents, Varelli cradled the phone on his shoulder listening to the voice at the other end. The waves of conversation arced high over the Caribbean, overheard only by the silent satellites of the

National Security Agency which had been requested, by the FBI and Varelli, to monitor the calls in case there were ever a question of which master was being served.

For almost four years Varelli was an intelligence source, as well as an operations coordinator for the FBI's investigation into CISPES and a host of other U.S. political groups opposing Administration policies in El Salvador and Nicaragua.

In 1983, the Bureau flew him to Quantico, Virginia, where he addressed a gathering of the country's top counter-terrorism and counterintelligence agents — a briefing in which he



Credit: Rick Reinhard

**Frank Varelli testifying before Congress about FBI surveillance of Central America peace groups.**

was extensively questioned and for which he was enthusiastically congratulated by high Bureau officials.

That same year, Varelli confirmed one source of direction for the FBI's multitude of political investigations: the National Security Council.

In December 1983, Varelli traveled with his "case agent" Daniel Flanagan to Washington. At one point, during a meeting with several FBI agents, as well as two members of the Washington Police Department, Varelli was asked to gain entrance to both the CISPES office and the Institute for Policy Studies. The purpose of the visits, he was told, was to check out the locations of filing cabinets, alarms, exits and fire escapes. The work, he was told by Special Agent Ron Davenport, was authorized by the National Security Council and had the support of the White House. Soon after Varelli's visit, the offices of both CISPES and IPS were mysteriously broken into.

Varelli also became acquainted with a network of private operatives who were used by the Bureau to augment its investigations.

One such group was CARP, the collegiate arm of the Rev. Sun Myung Moon's organization. According to Varelli, the

12. Interviews of author with John Rees, J. Michael Waller, Frank Varelli, as well as testimony by Oliver Revell before the Senate Intelligence Committee, Feb. 23, 1988 reported in the *Boston Globe*, February 24, 1988.

Moonies were on the FBI payroll in Dallas. Flanagan, he said, made periodic visits to the CARP chapter at Southern Methodist University (SMU). They were being paid to disrupt CISPES events on the SMU campus. Whenever CISPES mounted a lecture or demonstration, members of CARP were on hand to throw rocks and start fights. (The involvement of the Moon group in political spying has been documented by other FBI file pages released to Lawrence Zilliox, Jr., of the New York-based Cult Awareness Network.<sup>13</sup>

He also became aware of information being provided to the Bureau by John Rees.<sup>14</sup>

Varelli was also familiar with another group that supplied data to the FBI—an underground network of rightwing Salvadoran spies financed and organized by a handful of wealthy Salvadoran exiles inside the U.S.

Varelli proved to be a major recruiter for the Bureau. In 1983, for instance, he approached a woman in Houston who worked at the office of Taca, the Salvadoran airline. Varelli arranged for the woman to procure passenger manifests for the FBI which, in turn, forwarded the names of deported Salvadorans to the National Guard. The woman subsequently arranged a similar job with Taca for an active FBI agent.<sup>15</sup>

Varelli also said that, through personal contacts, he arranged for FBI agents in Los Angeles to pay an official in the Salvadoran Consulate there for the names and passport information on American activists who were applying for visas to travel to El Salvador.

The previous year, when he was compiling entries for an FBI Terrorist Album, Varelli learned that two members of what he called the "Salvadoran Mafia" were operating in South Florida. The men had been convicted in El Salvador of counterfeiting U.S. currency and gun smuggling, according to a report from the National Police in that country. They were also implicated in illegal weapons sales and in several assassinations, he said, although they were never convicted of those crimes.<sup>16</sup>

Varelli was concerned enough to prepare entries in the "Terrorist Album," telling his FBI colleagues that the Bureau should keep a close watch on the men.

But he was dismayed the following year to learn that the men had been recruited by FBI agents in Miami for political intelligence gathering. Varelli noted that airtels from the Miami office gave the code names and numbers of the men, adding they were identified as sources on several communications, including one about a visit by FDR spokesman Mario Velasquez to the University of Miami.

### Who's Really on Trial?

In September 1988, three years after the CISPES probe was closed, FBI Director William Sessions testified before Congress that Varelli had proven to be an unreliable source whose information led the FBI astray.

13. *Boston Globe*, April 20, 1988.

14. See Chip Berlet, "The Search for Red Menace," this issue of *CAIB*, p. 3.

15. *Boston Globe*, September 14, 1988.

16. *Ibid.*

"Absent the information provided by Frank Varelli," Sessions testified, "there would not have been sufficient predication for an international terrorism investigation of CISPES." He added that "[b]y the time it was realized that Varelli's information was unreliable, the investigation had been under way for approximately one year."<sup>17</sup>

However, Sessions' attempt to exonerate the FBI of charges of criminal activity doesn't hold water. Said one Washington source: "The FBI can't have it both ways with Varelli. On the one hand they've painted him as unreliable. But the fact is, they brought Varelli to [the FBI academy at] Quantico to lecture the Bureau's super-elite anti-terrorism agents. By that time, he had already been working for the FBI for two years."

Gary Stern, of the American Civil Liberties Union, noted another discrepancy. Varelli, he said, infiltrated CISPES in Dallas in June 1981. The FBI did not even open an investigation of the group until several months later. "It is absolutely contrary to the guidelines to infiltrate a group before it is under active investigation," Stern noted.

Added Michael Ratner, legal director of the Center for Constitutional Rights: "To scapegoat Varelli for the FBI's investigation is utter nonsense."

Varelli himself points out that in 1984, long after Sessions said he had been unmasked as unreliable, he was invited to serve on a task force planning security for the Republican National Convention. The same year, he adds, he underwent a rigorous polygraph examination, at the end of which he was told he passed and would be recommended for continued employment. A recently released document, moreover, directly contradicts Sessions' testimony. The document, filed in connection with Varelli's claims suit, indicates that as late as May 1985, the FBI's Dallas office "highly encouraged" FBI agents in Houston to rehire Varelli.<sup>18</sup>

It is very distressing that, once again, the FBI has turned its counter-terrorism unit into thought police. After years of promises, reassurances, laws and guidelines, the FBI is still in the business of spying on political protesters. It is, however, even more distressing that the press, Congress and the public have let them get away with it. We must ask, especially after eight years of Reagan doublespeak, have we become so desensitized to the meaning of freedom that we do not recognize when it is blatantly eroded?

17. *Boston Globe*, September 15, 1988.

18. *Boston Globe*, November 29, 1988.

### Correction

In the photo captions on pages 56, 59, and 60 of CAIB number 30, the word "*contra*" should be replaced by the word "rebel."

# The FBI Before Congress:

## Sessions' Confessions

by Ann-Mari Buitrago\*

It was an amazing scene: FBI Director William Sessions before a congressional oversight committee giving a public accounting of the FBI's recently exposed "terrorist" investigation of the Committee in Support of the People of El Salvador (CISPES).<sup>1</sup> Even more amazing was how willing Sessions' audience was to believe his explanations and to use words such as "commend," "candor," "forthrightness," and "encouraging" to describe Director Sessions' testimony.<sup>2</sup> Once again, the FBI brought out the intelligence community's favorite excuse, "we didn't do anything illegal but we'll never do it again," and many present in the audience were swept with déjà vu.

Admissions by the FBI of wrongdoing were so carefully crafted that the scope and nature of the crimes confessed were both minimized and misrepresented. Gross misrepresentation and what appears to be outright lying are the FBI's battle plan in dealing with demands for an accounting of its CISPES investigation. While Sessions did admit to a certain degree of FBI wrongdoing, he continued the time-worn FBI tack of looking a roomful of reporters or members of Congress in the eye and, cool as a cucumber, telling one lie after another.

A comparison of the FBI's previous explanations in the CISPES case with the final version Sessions swore to under oath, leads to insights into how the FBI "crisis-managed" the most severe challenge to its ability to conduct domestic spying since the Church Committee disclosures of 1975. These explanations fall into four distinct phases.

### Phase 1: The Webster Li(n)es

In April 1985, then FBI Director William Webster told the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights, which is chaired by Don Edwards (Dem.-Calif.), that

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1. FBI Director William Sessions testified at hearings before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence on September 14, 1988 and before the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights on September 16, 1988. Sessions was accompanied at each hearing by Delbert Toohey, Deputy Assistant Director of the FBI Inspection Division, the unit that conducted the internal study and wrote the report that formed the basis of Sessions' testimony. All citations for these hearings are to an unofficial *Associated Press* transcript of the proceedings.

2. Two factors worked together to create this atmosphere at the hearings. First, it is long-standing congressional custom to employ *pro forma* politeness in public encounters between committees and members of the Executive Branch. Second, after hard bargaining behind the scenes and harsh public criticism via the press and earlier public and closed hearings, public praise is viewed by committee members as a gracious, face-saving gesture. Both committees seemed to think that in the months preceding these hearings, the committees "beat up" on the FBI, threatening to hold public "victims' hearings if the FBI did not "come clean" in public.

their concerns that CISPES and its members were targets of an FBI investigation were unfounded. The FBI, he lied, was not interested in the members of CISPES or in CISPES, *per se*.<sup>3</sup>

Over a year later, when the FBI was asked by the Edwards Committee how many "spin-off" investigations the CISPES investigation had generated, the FBI responded that it did not understand the question.<sup>4</sup>

In February 1987, the Edwards Committee held additional hearings, this time to look into the over 100 suspicious break-ins of Central America movement offices reported to the Movement Support Network.<sup>5</sup> During these hearings, former FBI informant Frank Varelli charged that the FBI had passed sensitive information to the Salvadoran National Guard, information that could cost many Salvadorans their lives. An FBI official strongly denied Varelli's charges.

In its testimony at these hearings, the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR) and the Fund for Open Information and Accountability reported that in response to Freedom of Information Act requests, the FBI had located over 30 volumes of Headquarters and Dallas field office files on its investigation of CISPES. Remember that, in 1985, Webster had testified that the FBI was not investigating CISPES.

After acknowledging the existence and size of its CISPES files, the FBI announced that it would take at least another year before it could produce the files. After CCR filed an FOIA lawsuit based on improper delay the FBI quickly agreed to produce its Headquarters CISPES file on December 1 and the Dallas file by March 1, 1988.<sup>6</sup>

### Phase 2: Sessions' First Li(n)es

The FBI's initial response to this expose was to take the

3. House Judiciary Subcommittee Hearings, *op. cit.*, n. 1.

4. September 16, 1988 Hearings, House Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights, typescript page 16.

5. The Movement Support Network is a special project of the Center for Constitutional Rights and the National Lawyers Guild. It monitors incidents of repression and provides advice and assistance to movement groups and individuals.

6. For those interested in the details of the underlying FOIA request: The initial request was made in 1986; an administrative appeal on grounds of impermissible delay filed in June, 1987 was then denied; a complaint challenging denial was then filed in federal court in Dallas (locale of the CISPES requester) but prior to a court appearance even being scheduled, the FBI contacted CCR to negotiate a release date. The agreed upon release dates were December 1, 1987 for Headquarters files and March 1, 1988 for the Dallas files. Both these dates were met. Delay has also characterized the continuing production of files from the remaining field offices. CISPES expects to return to court to secure a timely release of these records.

A detailed analysis of the FBI files is available for \$5 from CCR, 666 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012.

most aggressive posture it judged possible under the circumstance. Thus, once they finally admitted there was an investigation, the Bureau emphatically stated that it was properly based on allegations of criminal acts and that CISPES was indeed organized by the Communist Party. The FBI also claimed that since the evidence they had against CISPES was so highly classified, they could not release it and use it in their defense.

The FBI clung to this li(n)e for several days. Daily press coverage recorded the development of this initial inaccuracy, a sampling of which follows.

- The FBI issued a statement reiterating the legal standards for opening an investigation, asserting that the Bureau is sensitive to First Amendment rights and has no interest in interfering with such rights, but concluding that it is "largely precluded from responding to questions regarding the Bureau's conduct of the CISPES investigation because much of the material relative to this investigation is classified."<sup>7</sup>
- An FBI spokesperson told the press that the CISPES investigation was legal and based on reports of alleged criminal activity, namely assisting terrorists, but declined to answer specific questions, saying that much of the information is classified.<sup>8</sup> Patrick Korten, a Department of Justice spokesman, stated flatly to the MacNeil/Lehrer Newshour audience and the *Atlanta Constitution* that the investigation had a proper criminal predicate.<sup>9</sup>
- FBI Director Sessions, called to the White House by Howard Baker, along with Attorney General Meese, assured the President that the CISPES investigation "had a solid basis for its initiation and continuance." According to Press Secretary Marlin Fitzwater, the President was satisfied that the FBI conducted a proper surveillance campaign because Sessions had assured the President that the Bureau began a full "international terrorism" investigation of CISPES based on information that CISPES leaders were aiding leftist rebels involved in terrorist acts in El Salvador."<sup>10</sup>

### Phase 3: The Second Li(n)e

When newly appointed FBI Director Sessions was forced to call a press conference in February 1988, it became clear that the FBI had decided to take a new tack. This intermediate stance was required when its initial outright denial was rejected by public, media, and Congress (only the President believed the FBI's first story).

The new tack consisted of combining an admission that, although properly begun, the investigation did get a little out of hand because it was not always properly supervised. The FBI also asserted that the blame lay squarely with the chief informer, Frank Varelli, who, they said, gave the FBI bad infor-

mation. Finally, they claimed that no one at the top was responsible; in fact, they said, top Bureau officials hardly knew there was a CISPES investigation.

To keep this version floating as long as possible, and to fend off further questions, the FBI swore itself to silence pending the outcome of an internal investigation in which, of course, the FBI would be detective, prosecutor, judge and jury.

As the FBI continued to push this new version, Sessions made several public statements:

- Sessions insisted that the investigation had been prompted by information that CISPES leaders had provided money and supplies to the FMLN but he conceded for the first time, under questioning from reporters, that the information on which the investigation was opened was false and that the investigation determined that CISPES was "involved in political activities in pursuit of First Amendment rights and not international terrorism."<sup>11</sup>
- Sessions asserted that while the inquiry might not have been properly directed in all instances, such as New Orleans's proposal to develop a "plan of attack against CISPES," the investigation was not out of control.<sup>12</sup>
- Sessions claimed that the investigation was "narrow in focus and was limited to CISPES leaders and key members."<sup>13</sup>
- Sessions denied that the FBI improperly expanded the CISPES case to investigate other organizations. "That is not so," he told the press. He said that his review of the inquiry showed that the Bureau had not conducted a "massive" surveillance, that the investigation was focused on only one group, CISPES.<sup>14</sup>

On February 23, 1988, at public hearings of the Senate Intelligence Committee, Oliver "Buck" Revell testified for the FBI.<sup>15</sup> Revell is the head of the FBI's Criminal Division whose signature appeared on many FBI documents authorizing the CISPES probe. The Bureau's strategy, as reflected in Revell's testimony, consisted of an initial concession that the investigation, although justified, was flawed. Thereafter Revell tried to lay all the blame on the FBI's key informer, Frank Varelli,<sup>16</sup> and build a defense to protect himself, former Director William Webster, and the Terrorism Unit that supervised the investigation.

In a stormy four-hour session, the Committee members, conservatives and liberals alike, appeared to buy very little, if any, of this FBI line. Senator Arlen Specter (Rep.-Penn.) was incensed by the Terrorism Unit's effort to justify an investigation by reference to its "state of mind" about CISPES. Evidence, not "state of mind" he told Revell, is what must

11. *New York Times*, February 6, 1988.

12. *New York Times*, February 3, 1988.

13. *Ibid.*

14. *New York Times*, February 3, 1988; *Washington Post*, February 3, 1988.

15. Revell, presently Executive Assistant Director of the FBI, was head of the Criminal Division during the CISPES investigation. The Criminal Division was in charge of the investigation at FBI Headquarters.

16. Varelli, Revell told the Committee, provided FBI agents with information that was later found to be "blatantly false" or "concocted" and that the CISPES investigation was "predicated primarily upon information provided by Mr. Varelli." (Revell's Written Statement)

7. *Dallas Morning News*, January 1, 1988.

8. *New York Times*, January 28, 1988; *Washington Post*, January 29, 1988.

9. *Atlanta Constitution*, January 23, 1988.

10. *New York Times*, January 30, 1988 and February 4, 1988.



drive an investigation and guide the work of trained investigators.

### The Final (So Far) Li(n)e

Under the attack of public and Congressional pressure, the FBI was forced to a more daring strategy — to appear to confess forthrightly to something substantial, but to craft the confession so that the confessed sin and the corrective remedies are both minimized and grossly misrepresented.

It is against four years of continuously changing FBI stories that we must judge the adequacy and significance of Director Sessions' sworn testimony regarding the FBI's conduct in the CISPES investigation — Sessions' Confessions. His testimony was given at public hearings scheduled by the House and Senate Committees on September 14 and 16, 1988.<sup>17</sup>

Based on the results of an inquiry conducted by the FBI Inspection Division, Director Sessions made five key admissions:

1. He admitted, reluctantly and only under persistent questioning, that the CISPES investigation never should have been opened; that the information used to open the case, if checked out, would not have qualified as a predicate for opening the investigation.

2. Sessions confessed that a second irregularity occurred in the CISPES investigation. Seven months after the improper opening, the investigation was improperly expanded into a nation-wide inquiry involving all 59 FBI field offices. This expansion was accomplished by means of an October 1983 teletype from FBI Headquarters to all field offices instructing them to locate CISPES chapters, leaders, members and associates. It was "Buck" Revell who approved the transmission of this teletype.

3. In June 1985, two years after the improper opening and subsequent expansion of the CISPES investigation, it was the Justice Department, not the FBI, that finally ordered the investigation closed.

4. Director Sessions confessed that, between the opening and closing of the main CISPES investigation, 178 new investigations, or "spin offs," were opened: 169 on individuals, 9 on organizations. A whole series of blatant lies have been told for years in response to questions and assertions about these investigations. Sessions and other top officials — either themselves or through FBI spokesmen — falsely denied that any of the individuals or groups in the CISPES file were subjects of investigations.

It became clear during the Senate hearing, when Senator Howard Metzenbaum (Dem.-Ohio) described four improper CISPES-related cases run by the Cincinnati field office, that at least some of the "spin-offs" were also politically motivated. Only one of these cases was previously known — that of Xavier University theology professor Paul Knitter. Of the newly disclosed cases, Metzenbaum stated that one involved obtaining

information about a telephone call without proper authorization; in another case, an unauthorized trash cover was employed.

In a third case the Cincinnati FBI opened an investigation of another Xavier University professor when it learned from "an asset" that the professor had asked a question on a final exam that elicited an opinion about U.S. policy in Central America and had "also allowed an unknown subject to speak in the class and hand out pamphlets concerning the Cincinnati Central America Taskforce." Based on this information, the Cincinnati FBI investigated the professor for five months and also investigated the outside speaker.

5. Sessions admitted to a final "irregularity" in the conduct of the CISPES investigation: the "unsupervised" use of sensitive investigative techniques — surveillance at public rallies and attendance at meetings were two he mentioned.

### Who Takes the Blame?

Punishment was meted out to six agents: two from the Dallas office and four from Headquarters.<sup>18</sup> Three were suspended without pay for 14 days and put on probation for three to six months. Three were censured. Although Sessions declined to name names, the Associated Press identified three as George Van Balen, chief of the international terrorism-global unit at FBI Headquarters; Ronald Davenport, a supervisory Special Agent at FBI Headquarters; and Parks Stearns, a supervisory Special Agent in Dallas.<sup>19</sup>

However, the documents provide a paper trail a mile long leading right up to Oliver B. Revell's door. How could the new Director have missed it? Did he look at the October 1983 document that he told both oversight Committees showed that the Bureau had improperly expanded the investigation to 59 field offices? The "Approved" line on that document is signed by Oliver B. Revell, in his capacity as head of the FBI's Criminal Division. Moreover, only a handful of the released CISPES documents *do not* have Revell's initials on them.

A few days after Sessions' appearance before the Committees, a *Washington Post* editorial declared that the Director's confession was "thorough, credible and generally well-received."<sup>20</sup> These words draw our attention to the serious and dangerous purpose behind the FBI's li(n)es about the CISPES investigation, behind its strategy of admitting a little while grossly misrepresenting essentials.

The strategy is not intended to fool the victims or the FBI's principled opposition. Rather, each inaccurate version has been crafted so as to create a false but reasonable-sounding and slightly self-critical position. With this position, the Bureau hopes to reassure those who might otherwise join in an all-out fight against FBI violations of First Amendment rights — Congress, the media, church groups, trade unions and all the millions who think the government should not be allowed to spy on people exercising First Amendment rights. ●

18. Sessions said that he would have fired a seventh agent but the agent had resigned in 1984. This apparently refers to Daniel Flannigan, Frank Varelli's Dallas control agent, who resigned in 1984 under pressure from the Bureau.

19. *Philadelphia Inquirer*, September 15, 1988.

20. *Washington Post*, September 20, 1988.

17. The Senate Intelligence Committee, with the first scheduled hearing, did not even issue a press release to alert the media to this extraordinary event. It was said that the Committee's press officer was on vacation. Most media learned about the hearing from releases issued by, and phone calls from and to, CISPES and the Center for Constitutional Rights.

## Propaganda and the Media:

# Reagan's 'Public Diplomacy'

by Robin Andersen\*

As early as the CIA began its dirty war on Nicaragua in 1981, it realized it had a major image problem with the *contras*. Christopher Dickey's compelling account in *With the Contras* is still the best description of the CIA's determination to create the *contras* out of a gang of former National Guardsmen loyal to ousted dictator Anastasio Somoza.<sup>1</sup> Knowing full well of their human rights record and reputation for brutality, the CIA nonetheless funded, groomed and directed them.

*Contra* atrocities continued and as they demonstrated that they were not about to change, their handlers realized that at least their image would have to. Through 1982, as Ronald Reagan promoted a Central American policy determined to "roll back" the Sandinistas, key constituencies formulated an opposition. Congress repeatedly watered down White House efforts to fund the *contras* which culminated in the passing of the first Boland Amendment in December of 1982.

A majority of the American public, usually by a margin of two to one, was also against Reagan's Nicaragua policy.<sup>2</sup> In response to congressional and public opposition to the Reagan Doctrine, the CIA, in 1982, initiated what would become the most pernicious domestic propaganda operation institutionalized within the executive branch of the United States Government.<sup>3</sup>

A CIA specialist in clandestine overseas media operations, Walter Raymond, Jr., was detailed to the NSC staff to apply his trade domestically. In Miami, the *contra* directorate was reshuffled and Nicaraguan exile Edgar Chamorro was put in charge (under close CIA supervision) of public relations.<sup>4</sup> Public Diplomacy (a term with striking Orwellian connotations replacing the word propaganda) was underway.

On December 21, 1982, then CIA Director William Casey wrote a classified memorandum to the NSC pressing the need "for more effective governmental instrumentalities to deal with public diplomacy and informational challenges."<sup>5</sup>

Various forces within the Reagan administration perceived the need for a "domestic propaganda bureaucracy," and in January 1983 President Reagan signed National Security Decision Directive 77, "Management of Public Diplomacy relative to National Security."<sup>6</sup> This directive made possible the formation of a public diplomacy apparatus. Congressional investigators have discovered the key role played by Walter Raymond when he "successfully recommended the establishment of an inter-governmental network to promote and manage a public diplomacy plan designed to create support for Reagan administration policies at home and abroad."<sup>7</sup> Thus began the "Thursday Morning Group" headed by Raymond. The group included representatives of the State Department, the United States Information Agency, the AID, the Defense Department, the CIA, and the NSC staff including Oliver North.<sup>8</sup>

The need to increase the focus on management of public opinion specifically concerning Central America led to the creation of the Office of Public Diplomacy for Latin America and the Caribbean (S/LPD) funded through the Department of State, headed by Otto Reich.<sup>9</sup> Over the objections of Secretary of State George P. Shultz, Raymond's interagency group was in control of S/LPD. From its beginning "S/LPD, reported to Raymond and his working group on Central American Public Diplomacy at the NSC."<sup>10</sup>

In a status report to Casey in 1986, Raymond stated that the group took its policy guidance from the Central American RIG.<sup>11</sup> The RIG is the now infamous restricted interagency group made up of Oliver North, Elliott Abrams, and CIA Central American Task Force director Alan Fiers—these are the same national security managers who oversaw General Secord's "Enterprise" which illegally funnelled arms to the *contras*. The Thursday Morning Group was the RIG's domestic counterpart.

Walter Raymond officially resigned from the CIA in April 1983, and he continually tried to get Casey "out of the loop," in an attempt to bypass restrictions placed on the CIA from engaging in the manipulation of American public opinion and political processes. However, under the control of the NSC and the RIG, an S/LPD official would later admit, "the Office

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1. Christopher Dickey, *With the Contras* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1985).

2. Eldon Kenworthy, "Selling the Policy," in *Reagan Versus the Sandinistas* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1987) p. 159.

3. See Peter Kornbluh, *Nicaragua: The Price of Intervention* (Washington: Institute for Policy Studies, 1987), chapter 4; Peter Kornbluh, "The Contra Lobby" in *The Village Voice*, October 13, 1987, p. 23; and Robert Parry and Peter Kornbluh, "Iran-Contra's Untold Story," in *Foreign Policy*, Fall 1988, No. 72, pp. 3-30.

4. Edgar Chamorro, *Packaging the Contras: A Case of CIA Disinformation* (New York: Institute for Media Analysis, Inc., 1987), Monograph Series No. 2.

5. Parry and Kornbluh "Iran-Contra's Untold Story," *op cit.*, n. 3, p. 10.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

7. Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives, "Staff Report: State Department and Intelligence Community Involvement in Domestic Activities Related to the Iran/Contra Affair," September 7, 1988, p. 16.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

11. Parry and Kornbluh, "Untold Story," *op cit.*, n. 3, p. 10.

of Public Diplomacy was carrying out a huge psychological operation, the kind the military conduct to influence the population in denied or enemy territory."<sup>12</sup>

Actions taken by the S/LPD and the domestic propaganda operation were intense, inventive and multifarious. In a recent article entitled "Iran-Contra's Untold Story," Robert Parry and Peter Kornbluh state that:

In its first year alone, S/LPD activities included booking more than 1,500 speaking engagements, including radio, television, and editorial board interviews; publishing three booklets on Nicaragua; and distributing materials to 1,600 college libraries, 520 political science faculties, 122 editorial writers, and 107 religious organizations. Special attention was given to prominent journalists.<sup>13</sup>

The clearly defined goal of this "information" barrage focused on Nicaragua was in Raymond's words, to glue black hats on the Sandinistas and white hats on the *contras*.<sup>14</sup> Determined to create headlines and images which were pro-*contra* and anti-Sandinista, they embarked on an assiduous (if unbelievable at the time) campaign to reverse the coordinates—making the Sandinistas brutal dictators and the *contras* the "moral equivalent of the Founding Fathers."

#### The Covert Approach

From the very beginning they realized the value of using private groups, individuals, and think tanks for disseminating their message. The NSC and the S/LPD, operating under cover of the State Department, hired outside consultants and gave encouragement, support and direction to groups of private citizens outside the government. These groups raised money for *contra* weapons, lobbied the Congress, ran sophisticated media campaigns in targeted congressional districts, and worked with S/LPD to influence American public opinion through manipulation of the American media.<sup>15</sup>

The private sector was a key component of the propaganda blitz. It allowed the S/LPD to use classic CIA tactics, presenting articles, research, ideas and individuals as independent sources, concealing their government sponsorship. The two-fold purpose of these methods was to shield the illegal government involvement, and enhance their credibility to the public, the media, and Congress by presenting themselves as "neutral."

With the help of the (not so) private (but well funded) sector, the propaganda bureaucracy has had a sweeping success on the issue of human rights. Their ability to turn the parameters of debate upside down has been truly phenomenal.

Hammering away at divisions within the Catholic Church in Nicaragua, religious persecution has been at the top of the

agenda to give the Sandinistas black hats. A Catholic intellectual, Humberto Belli, "had his quarrels with the Sandinistas" and was funded by the CIA to write a book titled, *Nicaragua: Christians Under Fire*.<sup>16</sup>

With CIA monies Belli founded the Puebla Institute and went on to produce "neither thorough nor accurate" reports on Nicaraguan government human rights abuses. These reports were used to counter independent documentation of *contra* atrocities.<sup>17</sup> Articles appeared in the press illustrating the Reagan characterization of Nicaragua as a totalitarian dungeon. Nina Shea, director of the Puebla Institute's Washington, DC office, used this "information" for articles placed in the *New Republic*, "Human Rights in Nicaragua: The Sandinista Way of Repression," September 1, 1986 and the *Wall Street Journal*, "Systematic Destruction of Faith in Nicaragua," May 22, 1987.

Another *contra* propagandist, Tom Dowling, dressed in the garb of a Roman Catholic priest, testified to the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs in April 1985 and denounced the Sandinistas for religious persecution:

Committee members did not discover until later that Dowling...was not an ordained Roman Catholic priest, but belonged instead to an unrecognized sect called the Old Catholic Church.<sup>18</sup>

A staff report issued by the House Foreign Affairs Committee lists Dowling as a recipient of monies distributed "at [Oliver] North's request to other persons and entities engaged in activities relating to the *contras*."<sup>19</sup>

#### On The Defensive

A major strategy of the propaganda campaign was to censor and discredit critics of Reagan's Central American policy, particularly those audacious enough to point out the human rights abuses of the *contras*. Otto Reich reported to Walter Raymond in March 1986 that his office, "generally did not give the critics of the policy any quarter in the debate."<sup>20</sup> Presidential red-baiting reinforced through the propaganda ministry was so often repeated in the media, that the sheer uncontested repetition gained credibility.

Groups working on Central America issues are now forced to devote considerable time responding to the Reagan administration agenda, and worse, to "balancing" their reports in order to maintain access to the U.S. media.<sup>21</sup>

Allowing themselves to be pulled into the realm of the propaganda debate led to the complete distortion of their information which became subsumed within the terms of the Reagan view. This process is best exemplified by a *Christian Science Monitor* "news analysis" citing Americas Watch

12. *Miami Herald*, July 19, 1987.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

14. See, Eldon Kenworthy, "Selling the Policy," *op. cit.*, n. 2, p. 164; Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives Staff Report, *op. cit.*, n. 7, p. 22; and Parry and Kornbluh, *ibid.*, n. 3, pp. 5-6.

15. Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives Staff Report, *op. cit.*, n. 7, p. 24.

16. Edgar Chamorro, *Packaging the Contras*, *op. cit.*, n. 4, p. 51.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 52.

18. Parry and Kornbluh, "Untold Story," *op. cit.*, n. 3, p. 15.

19. Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives Staff Report, *op. cit.*, n. 7, p. 26.

20. Parry and Kornbluh, "Untold Story," *op. cit.*, n. 3, p. 17.

21. *Envio*, Historical Institute of Central America, May 1986.



Credit: Barbara Jameson, North Mission News

**Thomas Dowling, posing as a priest, received money from Oliver North for propaganda use.**

reports. Presented as "objective information" to answer common questions raised in the debate surrounding the *contra* aid bill, Charlotte Sailowski wrote on March 19, 1986:

Question: Do the *contras* commit atrocities?

Answer: Reports by human rights organizations, including Americas Watch, show that both the Sandinistas and the *contras* engage in violence and brutality against the Nicaraguan people.

Inculcating the Sandinistas has been no small feat when their behavior is compared to the *contras*—or any other Central American government for that matter. Juan Mendez, head of the Nicaraguan mission for Americas Watch told me that the *Monitor* article "is a bad misreading of the report," which reveals the abuses of the *contras* to be much more serious than those of the Sandinistas.<sup>22</sup> "To compare them is like trying to compare apples and oranges, but" he added, "we would like researchers to understand through facts... Anyone with an intelligent mind can compare what we say about Nicaragua with Turkey or Guatemala and make their own judgments."<sup>23</sup> But logical arguments which demand intelligent judgments have no place in a propaganda environment where uninhibited debate from a broad spectrum has been systematically closed.

The best measure of S/LPD's success is demonstrated by the investigation of the domestic operation by the House Foreign Affairs Committee itself. In the report the writers still refer to the *contras* (who are really counterrevolutionaries) as the "democratic resistance in Nicaragua," another Orwellian phrase churned out by the propaganda mill adapted and legitimated as national discourse (even when critical).<sup>24</sup>

22. Interview with the author, October 2, 1986.

23. *Ibid.*

24. Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives, Staff Report, *op cit.*, n. 7, p. 15.

## Credibility and the Intellectual Academic

Journalists and congresspeople count on intellectuals to be detached and apolitical. This gives them an air of credibility and persuasive authority that allows them to wield great power on the battleground of ideology. Under the Reagan administration intellectuals, particularly of the neo-conservative persuasion, have been used effectively in the service of the state, giving substance to the more rhetorical simplicity of White House accusations against the Sandinistas. In the war of ideology, the White House glued black hats on the Sandinistas—the neo-conservative "intellectuals" helped them stick.

A case in point is Robert Leiken. Leiken's claim to intellectual disinterest is belied by a partially declassified memorandum from Walter Raymond to then national security adviser Robert MacFarlane in January of 1985.<sup>25</sup> Raymond wrote that Leiken had approached him and "wanted to help" sell the *contras*. Raymond knew he would be particularly useful in lobbying democratic congressmen: "He believes we have a pretty good chance of winning the *contra's* fight on the hill if we play our cards right." Leiken had some concrete suggestions about the right way to play the cards, and one had to do with the manipulation of the American public through the press:

Build a positive image of the F.D.N. [Nicaraguan Democratic Force]. To do this we should send down one or more key journalists to start developing major positive stories for the U.S. He thought [University of Southern Illinois professor] Richard Millett might be willing.<sup>26</sup>

While in the service of promoting the administration's covert propaganda and manipulating journalists, Leiken presented himself to honest journalists and legitimate institutions as a nonpartisan intellectual. Six months after Raymond wrote the memo, Leiken was the keynote speaker at an Annual Briefing Session for Professional Journalists held at the Center for U.S./Mexican Studies at the University of California at San Diego. He opened his remarks by establishing his intellectual independence and claiming that each side (left and right) tries to use his academic "research" to their own ends. It was up to some attending Latin Americanists to point out to Mr. Leiken that instead of providing analysis and background, he was simply repeating Reagan allegations which had appeared in the press.

Academic propagandists have also served as information sources for congressional staffers. The administration was extremely successful at labeling congressional opponents as unpatriotic and un-American if they voted against *contra* aid.<sup>27</sup> They were also providing propaganda to staffers seeking information and background. Parry and Kornbluh report that the office of then speaker of the House, Thomas P. O'Neill (a *contra* opponent) "unsuspecting[ly] sought the advice of an

25. *The Nation*, May 7, 1988, p. 628.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 629.

27. For the best discussion see, William M. LeoGrande, "The Contras and Congress," in *Reagan Versus the Sandinistas*, *op. cit.*, n. 2.

academic whose critical report on Nicaragua had been sponsored by the Gulf and Caribbean Foundation."<sup>28</sup>

The Gulf and Caribbean Foundation is woven tightly into the propaganda network, and is far from being capable of producing objective research. Headed by former Republican Representative Dan Kuykendall, a member of Carl (Spitz) Channell's team and a Washington lobbyist, the G&C Foundation appeared on the flow chart in Oliver North's safe.<sup>29</sup> Former Congressman Kuykendall was an active member of the propaganda team attempting to fix the congressional vote on *contra* aid in 1985. In a March 20, 1985 memo from North to MacFarlane on the subject, "Timing and the Nicaraguan Resistance Vote," Kuykendall is listed as a private supporter helping efforts "[A]imed at securing Congressional approval for renewed support of the Nicaraguan Resistance Forces."<sup>30</sup>

### The Media Attempts To Maintain Credibility

The media's response to the now ongoing congressional investigation into domestic propaganda has been to either ignore or downplay the revelations. They maintain that reports of their own manipulation have been greatly exaggerated. After five years of covert domestic propaganda, on September 30, 1987, the Government Accounting Office (GAO), the investigative wing of Congress, released a Legal Opinion stating that the S/LPD had engaged in illegal "covert propaganda activities" to influence the media and the public. The report detailed a number of documented cases of media manipulation.

Clearly of front page news value (where many reports of lesser significance appear) the *New York Times*, on October 4, ran the story on the third page. The headline downplays the significance of the report. In a country where "publicity" is used to sell everything from sliced bread to foreign policy, the headline read, "State Department Linked to Contra Publicity," is hardly wording which would sound an alarm to most Americans.

The most damaging piece of evidence provided by the GAO report is an eyes only memo written by S/LPD staffer Jonathan Miller to Patrick J. Buchanan, then Director of Communications at the White House. The discovery of the memo is a searing indictment of S/LPD's operation, because it boasts of S/LPD's success at media manipulation. The memo refers to the operation as "White Propaganda," and offers "five illustrative examples," one being the manipulation of television news:

In case you missed last night's NBC News with Tom Brokaw...the Fred Francis story on the 'Contras'...was

28. Parry and Kornbluh, "Untold Story," *op. cit.*, n. 7, p. 14

29. See *The Nation*, April 16, 1988, p. 534.

30. Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives, Staff Report, *op cit.*, n. 7, p. 20.

**On December 21, 1982, CIA Director William Casey wrote a classified memorandum to the NSC pressing "for more effective governmental instrumentalities to deal with public diplomacy and informational challenges."**

prepared by Francis after he consulted two of our contractors....It was a positive piece.

Miller goes on to explain in the memo that NBC's Pentagon cor-

respondent, Fred Francis, had gone with the "OPD contractors" on a "clandestine trip" to the "freedom Fighter camp" along the Honduras border. According to Miller, the purpose of the trip was for "many selected journalists" to get a "true flavor" of what the "freedom fighters" were doing—"not killing babies."

What should be treated as a startling revelation with major significance for network newsgathering practices, is instead discounted in the *Times* article with the following two sentences:

Mr. Francis said he made the trip with several other United States journalists. "I don't feel like I was ever duped," he said, calling the public policy office "ineffective."

Aside from the most blatant error which refers to OPD as a public policy office (which may not be too far from the truth), Francis may not be the best judge of his own manipulation. A much better way for the journalist to investigate the effectiveness of the S/LPD would be to do what Miller suggested Buchanan do—call up the TV report on the computer and take a look at it. The description of the Francis story speaks for itself:

John Singlaub inspects *contra* platoon. Addressing *contras* Singlaub says he represents thousands of Americans sympathetic to their cause that want to help....*Contra* military leader Enrique Bermudez points to map. In interview he says rebels have been supplied with food, information, and medical aid, by the civilian population. Rebels play baseball as armed comrades look on.

The story is an exact replica of the White House *contra* propaganda, from its sources to its content. The *Times* correspondent goes on to clear his own organization, and the other paper of record. "There was no explicit evidence that *The Times* or *The Post* had published articles resulting from the operation." Even though *The Times* has asserted (since the surfacing of the Miller memo to Buchanan) its meticulous efforts to verify authorship of its Op-Ed pieces, Robert Leiken has been the pen behind the Op-Ed pieces signed by Arturo Cruz.<sup>31</sup>

### The Efficacy of Propaganda

In the face of press denials of their own manipulation and the general downplaying of reportage on S/LPD, a content

31. *The Nation*, October 17, 1987, p. 403; June 20, 1987, p. 855.



analysis of press coverage in the first months of 1986 reveals the degree to which public diplomacy actually achieved its boastful claims.<sup>32</sup> The debate on renewing aid to the *contras* had become so rigid and one-sided that it is no surprise that military funding was renewed in August 1986. The most important dimension of evaluation, the actual language used to describe Nicaragua, the Sandinistas, and the *contras* was severely circumscribed in the *Christian Science Monitor* and the *New York Times*:

...with respect to both Nicaragua and the Sandinistas, scarcely a positive descriptor can be found. Moreover, although the *Contras* could hardly be described as the "darlings" of the press, they were in fact portrayed in language which was positive twice as often as negative. The war of actual words, the raw material that shape meaning, was clearly won by the supporters of *Contra* aid.<sup>33</sup>

The *New York Times* battered away on the claims of repressive policies of the Nicaraguan government. In a count of items defined as major issues tied to the aid vote, Nicaraguan repression appeared an amazing 15%, and their repressive policies toward the Catholic Church a total of 11%. This can be compared to *contra* atrocities discussed only 8% of the time. Nicaraguan subversion and Cuban expansion were discussed 22% and 15% respectively, while *contra* leadership and military capabilities were placed on the agenda 7% and 9% respectively.

All the hard work has paid off. Reagan's framing of the Sandinistas as repressive communists achieved consensus in the U.S. media. Similar findings were also borne out in Noam Chomsky's examination of editorials during the same period. He found that in the *Times*:

The debate included...nothing that could be construed as sympathetic to the Sandinistas. It is particularly impressive that the two most striking features of their rule were almost entirely ignored: the fact that in sharp contrast to U.S. clients (Nicaragua under Somoza, Duarte in El Salvador, etc.), the government has not engaged in mass slaughter and torture (unmentioned), and the constructive social programs...<sup>34</sup>

Chomsky's findings are even more disturbing, in that he shows, even though no one is supporting the Sandinistas in the public debate, would-be supporters are nonetheless anonymously vilified to circumscribe the possibility of

32. W. C. Soderlund, et. al., "Constructing the Agenda: The President and Aid For the Nicaraguan *Contras*, January April 1986." This paper was prepared for presentation at the 5th Annual Intercultural Communication Conference on Latin America and the Caribbean, University of Miami, February 1988. Analysis of the *New York Times* and the *Christian Science Monitor* coverage for a four-month period beginning on January 1 and concluding on April 30, 1986. The time period included the initiation of the request and the first House and Senate vote.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

34. Noam Chomsky in *The Reagan Administration and Nicaragua* (New York: Institute for Media Analysis, 1987), Monograph Series No. 1, p. 27.

35. Chomsky, *Ibid.*, p. 29.



Credit: UPI/Bettmann Newsphotos

**Walter Raymond (second from left) was part of a delegation observing Guatemala voting in 1985. An ironic position for a man who undermined democracy in the U.S.**

response: "In this practice, we see clearly exhibited some essential features of the totalitarian mentality."<sup>35</sup>

### Conclusion

Locked into the Reagan administration's anti-communist discourse, Congress feared to tread into the only terrain which would have revealed the hypocrisy of the Reagan Doctrine. The vilification of the Sandinistas through allegations of human rights abuses was able to stick because no counter-arguments were offered. Hushed were Sandinista social programs, and worse, the suffering of the Nicaraguan people as a result of *contra* terror. They remain that which cannot be said.

In the environment of propaganda thus created, the debate became the pros and cons of *contra* funding, a debate which reached levels of absurdity. The very fact that the administration was able to claim *contra* funding was the only way to get the Sandinistas to the negotiating table, or the only alternative to U.S. troops, attests to the retarded levels reached in U.S. political discourse. Public diplomacy was successful because the press, the Congress, and legitimate institutions became active participants.

For the media's part in their acquiescence and subsequent denials, in the words of Alexander Cockburn, the media isn't going to admit "what chumps they were and how much rubbish they believed..." Maybe it is quixotic to think, even in the age of risk-free bottom-line management and corporate conglomeration, that some editors will have the gumption to allow journalists to tell the dirty details of this story. As the death knoll rings for the First Amendment, we can only hope that the propaganda apparatus is not so entrenched that not one journalist will be brave enough to tell the American people once again: "Cassius was right, 'The fault dear Brutus, is not in our stars but in ourselves.'"<sup>36</sup>

36. Edward R. Murrow, "See it Now," Broadcast on CBS, March 9, 1954.

# Students, Scholars, and Spies:

## The CIA on Campus

by Robert Witaneek\*

Professors and CIA operatives with academic cover have worked extensively on campuses around the world. As we will see in this article, they have written books, articles, and reports for U.S. consumption with secret CIA sponsorship and censorship; they have spied on foreign nationals at home and abroad; they have regularly recruited foreign and U.S. students and faculty for the CIA; they have hosted conferences with secret CIA backing under scholarly cover, promoting disinformation; and they have collected data, under the rubric of research, on Third World liberation and other movements opposed to U.S. intervention.<sup>1</sup>

The nature of the relationship between the CIA and the academic community is best seen in a 1968 memo from Dr. Earl C. Bolton who, while serving as Vice President of the University of California at Berkeley, was secretly consulting for the CIA. The memo, widely circulated among U.S. universities, advises the use of duplicity and deception to hide CIA connection to the campuses. It also suggests lying about CIA involvement in university projects stating, "The real initiative might be with the Agency but the apparent or record launching of the research should, wherever possible, emanate from the campus." The memo continues:

Follow a plan of emphasizing that CIA is a member of the national security community and stress the great number of other agencies with which the agency is allied [and] ...stress in recruiting articles and speeches that the agency is really a university without students and not a school for spies. There is as much academic freedom within the walls of the building and among those competent on the subject as on any campus I know. (I haven't detected the slightest tendency on the part of anyone to resist saying what he thinks.)<sup>2</sup>

Bolton's memo also recommended setting up programs

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1. In 1976, Professor Michael Selzer admitted at a faculty meeting that he had kept "his eyes and ears open" for the CIA on a trip to Europe and later met with them and reported what he had learned. He also admitted that he knew six professors who had spied for the CIA. See Ernest Volkman, "Spies on Campus," *Playboy*, October 1979. Also of interest is the CIA's participation in a conference entitled "The Middle East and the Superpowers," at Princeton University, October 25-26, 1979. For more on this case, see *CounterSpy*, Vol. 4, No. 1.

2. The August 5, 1968 memo was entitled "Agency-Academic Relations." This reference is as quoted by John Kelly, in his paper "CIA In Academia," delivered at the American Political Science Association's 1979 Annual Convention in Washington, DC.

with CIA funds "to establish the study of intelligence as a legitimate and important field of inquiry for the academic scholar." Under Bolton's plan the CIA was to fund one-year post doctoral programs for selected scholars.

Ironically, the memo also stated that doctoral students spending a year at the CIA working on their dissertations "would of course have to recognize the agency's right to review the finished document for accidental leaks." The contradiction between CIA secrecy and the academic ideal of encouraging the open exchange of information seems to have posed no dilemma for the vice president of one of the country's most prestigious universities.

### A Few Examples

The CIA has a long and sordid history of activity on U.S. university campuses. The examples below list just a few of what are doubtlessly hundreds of CIA operations on college campuses.

- From 1955-59, Michigan State University had a \$25 million contract with the CIA to provide academic cover to five CIA agents stationed in South Vietnam who performed such jobs as drafting the government's constitution, and providing police training and weapons to the repressive Diem regime. The constitution included a provision requiring the South Vietnamese to carry voter identification cards. Citizens without such cards were assumed to be supporters of the Vietcong, and faced arrest or worse by the regime's police.<sup>3</sup>
- In 1956, while the MSU operation was in full swing, the CIA established the Asia Foundation, providing it with approximately \$88 million in funding each year. The foundation sponsored research, supported conferences, ran academic exchange programs, funded anti-communist academics in various Asian countries, and recruited foreign agents and new case officers.<sup>4</sup> Large numbers of American academics participated in the program.
- The CIA started the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Center for International Studies (MIT-CIS) in 1950. By 1952, former Director of the CIA's Office of National Estimates Max Millikan became director of the center.<sup>5</sup> In 1955, the CIA contracted "Project Brushfire" with Millikan to study the political,

3. William Blum, *The CIA: A Forgotten History* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Zed Books, 1986) p. 140.

4. Victor Marchetti and John D. Marks, *CIA and the Cult of Intelligence* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1974) pp. 150-151.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 196.

psychological, economic, and sociological factors leading to "peripheral wars."<sup>6</sup>

- In the mid 1950s, professors at MIT and Cornell launched field projects in Indonesia to train an elite of Indonesian military and economic leaders who later became the impetus behind the coup that brought Suharto to power and left over one million people dead. The elites were trained at the Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies at the University of California at Berkeley by Guy Pauker who had moved there from MIT-Center for International Studies.<sup>7</sup>

### Academics and Africa

The CIA is especially interested in inspiring university African affairs programs. Again, MIT played an important role in promoting CIA interests. In 1956, when former CIA official Max Millikan was director of MIT's Center for International Studies, he appointed Arnold Rivkin from the State Department to head MIT's Africa Research Program. Together, the two supervised studies for CIA use.<sup>8</sup>

That the CIA had a keen interest in academics with expertise in African Studies was evidenced in a Ford Foundation study. In 1958, the Ford Foundation's Committee of Africanists commenced to "survey the current condition and future prospects of African studies." According to its report, the CIA said it would need "a constant level of...seventy people specializing in the African area; they particularly desire those who have training in economics, geography, or political science."<sup>9</sup> Other examples of the CIA's "academic" interest in Africa include:

- In 1965, Rene Lemarchand, a nontenure professor at the University of Florida, returned from a trip to Burundi. Shortly thereafter, Justin Gleischauf, the Miami CIA station chief contacted Lemarchand, asking him for an interview. Manny Dauer, Lemarchand's department chair, advised him to cooperate fully in answering the questions the CIA had for him. Lemarchand, however, turned down the invitation.<sup>10</sup>
- In 1968, George Rawick, a sociology professor at Oakland University was approached by James R. Hooker, of Michigan State University's African Studies Center for recruitment into the CIA. Hooker, a professor with a liberal-left reputation, used an interesting argument. Hooker's rationale for working with the CIA was, "None of us are ever going to get an intelligent approach unless we get trained intelligent people in there to tell us what's going on. If we rely on yahoos, look what we're

going to get."<sup>11</sup>

### Democracy: Rutgers Style

In 1968, the CIA used the Eagleton Institute for Research at Rutgers University in a plan to influence the outcome of the presidential election in Guyana. Through the Eagleton In-



Credit: Associated Press

**Frank Wisner, in the late 1940s, headed up the CIA's first large-scale effort to recruit at universities across the U.S.**

stitute, the CIA helped amend the Guyanese constitution to allow Guyanese and relatives of Guyanese living abroad to vote by absentee ballot. Then 16,000 votes were manufactured in New York City, giving the CIA's candidate, Forbes Burnham, a narrow margin over socialist Cheddi Jagan.<sup>12</sup>

Another operation involving Rutgers University was run by Political Science Department Chair, Professor Richard Mansbach, who used an undergraduate class (without the students' knowledge) as cover for a CIA project entitled the "European Non-State Actors Project" (ENSAP) in 1984.<sup>13</sup>

When Europeans were up in arms over U.S. deployment of Pershing II and Cruise missiles in Western Europe, Mansbach assigned his students to each focus on one component of West Europe's political culture including disarmament, religious, labor, media, left, environmental, and various other groups. They were to produce data intensive reports to Mansbach who would in turn, and in secret, incorporate the data into a report to the CIA. While the study was initially to result in a book, it is believed to have been abandoned after it was exposed.<sup>14</sup>

### CIA "Scholars" on Campus

The CIA recently initiated an "Officer in Residence" program to increase their presence and prestige in the U.S. academic community. According to a CIA official, "about

6. John Prados, *Presidents' Secret Wars*. (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1986) p. 219.

7. Peter Gribben, "CIA in Indonesia 1965," *CounterSpy*, Vol. 4, No. 1, pp. 27-28; See also David Ransom, "Ford Country: Building an Elite for Indonesia," in Stephen R. Weissman (ed.), *The Trojan Horse: A Radical Look at Foreign Aid* (Palo Alto: Ramparts Press, 1974).

8. Ken Lawrence, "Academics: An Overview," in *Dirty Work II: The CIA in Africa*, Ellen Ray, et. al. (eds.) (Secaucus, NJ: Lyle Stuart, Inc., 1980), p. 81.

9. *Ibid*

10. *Ibid.*, p. 82.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 83.

12. See Raymond Bonner, *Waltzing With A Dictator* (New York: Times Books, 1987), p. 150.

13. See Konrad Ege, "Rutgers University: Intelligence Goes to College," *CounterSpy*, June-August 1984. See also Eric Joselyn, "Closing the Company Store," *The Nation*, March 26, 1988.

14. Mansbach has recently accepted a position as head of the political science department at the University of Iowa at Ames. Perhaps he and his CIA partners believe that a change of scenery might allow Mansbach to resume CIA business as usual. University of Iowa students be warned.

ten" major universities across the country host CIA "Officers in Residence."<sup>15</sup> Stanley M. Moskowitz, chair of the CIA Training Selection Board, wrote that the Resident Officers program, "allows senior-level officers to disengage from their normal duties by fully participating in the academic life, including research and teaching." He also stated that the CIA officer,

will demonstrate the quality of CIA people and [the CIA's] commitment to providing U.S. leaders with the very best intelligence we can. The program also serves to strengthen our professional ties to a fertile and indispensable source of ideas and technical expertise and to enhance CIA's recruiting efforts by providing an opportunity for experienced officers to serve as role models, to counsel interested students on career opportunities with the CIA, and to respond to concerns students may have about the agency and the intelligence profession.<sup>16</sup>

The letter makes no bones about the fact that the CIA is on campus to recruit the "fertile and indispensable source of ideas," namely university professors, and to look for recruits among students as well.

An October 9, 1987 memo from the Office of the Associate Dean at the University of Texas to the faculty shows how eager university officials are to cooperate with the CIA's Officer in Residence program. The memo describes Resident Officer James McInnis as having "extensive experience in national security policy and international affairs, especially Latin America and the Middle East" and states that "He [McInnis] might prove a valuable resource to you in your teaching and research. I invite and encourage you to seek him out and explore *mutual interests* [author's emphasis]."<sup>16</sup>

### Recruiting on Campus

Campus recruitment by the CIA is as old as the Agency itself. In the late 1940s, Frank Wisner was director of the CIA's Office of Policy Coordination (OPC), which was then the CIA's operational component. He used 500 OSS World War II veterans who had returned to their careers as academicians after the war, as well as other faculty members, to form "selection committees" which became the OPC's unofficial recruitment arm.<sup>17</sup> Known as the OPC's "P-source," or professor source, these committees provided ideal means for screening potential recruits because they could observe the students over periods of time in a classroom setting.

15. In a recent interview with CIA "Academic Coordinator" Arthur Hulnick, he admitted that the CIA currently has "about ten" Officers in Residence on colleges campuses. This number is up from five only a year ago. Hulnick is travelling to campuses around the country, trying to make a case for accepting CIA recruiting efforts. Given all the evidence to the contrary, Hulnick insists, when confronted with student protests, that the CIA does not break the law and has never carried out assassination, domestic surveillance, etc.

16. *Ibid.*

17. William R. Corson, *Armies of Ignorance* (New York: The Dial Press, 1977), p. 309.

18. *Ibid.*

By early 1950, the program had been expanded to include the recruitment of foreign students attending college in the U.S. to serve as CIA agents in place or moles when they returned to their respective countries.<sup>18</sup> The recruitment of foreign students had its roots in earlier programs in the late 1930s and through the 1940s when students of countries friendly to the U.S. were admitted to U.S. military academies. Their services were especially desired by the U.S. as they would return to their countries to become part of the nation's military elite. Through them, the U.S. hoped to influence events in these countries and to gain information on the inner workings of their governments.

By the late 1970s about 5000 academicians were doing the bidding of the CIA: identifying and recruiting American students and providing fulltime screening committees designed to select 200-300 future CIA operatives from among the 250,000 foreign students who come to the U.S. to be educated each year.<sup>19</sup> Around 60% of these professors, researchers, and administrators were fully aware of and received direct compensation from the CIA as contract employees or from research grants for their role as covert CIA recruiters.<sup>20</sup>

In 1975, the CIA attempted to secretly recruit Ahmad Jabbari, an Iranian student working on his Ph.D. in economics at Washington University in St. Louis. At his interview with the CIA agent, which he taped, the recruiter asked him to spy on other Iranian students, offering an immediate \$750 payment, and American citizenship, if he proved reliable. Jabbari refused all offers.<sup>21</sup>

After recruiting a foreign student, the CIA often uses coercion by threatening to expose the student as a CIA agent while demanding his/her continued cooperation. Since 1948, more than 40 foreign agents recruited on American campuses have committed suicide out of fear of exposure.<sup>22</sup>

In 1977, a federal appeals court ruled that the CIA had no right to secretly investigate Gary Weissman, a former student at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, "for recruitment purposes." Weissman sued the CIA after learning of the investigation.<sup>23</sup>

In June of 1986, David Wise reported that the CIA had made recruiting of new personnel a key priority. The effort has included the opening of 11 recruiting centers around the U.S. Wise wrote that the effort involved a major advertising campaign and that student inquiries have been steadily rising. John P. Littlejohn, the CIA's deputy director of personnel, described the recruitment procedure as follows: The recruiter receives resumes in advance, courtesy of the campus placement offices, and selects candidates for a screening interview. The interview usually takes place on campus but some colleges, like Harvard University, require that the interviews occur off campus.<sup>24</sup>

19. *Ibid.*, p. 312.

20. *Ibid.*

21. See Volkman, *op. cit.*, n. 1.

22. Corson, *op. cit.*, n. 19.

23. Daniel Brandt, "CIA on Campus," *Trojan Parallel*, February-March, 1979.

24. David Wise, "Campus Recruitment and the CIA," *New York Times Magazine*, June 6, 1986.

Potential CIA recruits must complete a 12-page personal history test, undergo a lie detector test, and be subject to physical, psychological, and sometimes psychiatric testing, and a background clearance test of at least four months in duration. According to Littlejohn, approximately 150,000 people inquire about jobs each year, 10,000 submit applications, and 1000 employees are hired. Littlejohn estimates that two to three hundred of these become clandestine officers.<sup>25</sup>



Credit: The Daily Texan

**James McInnis is the CIA's Officer in Residence at the University of Texas in Austin.**

### The CIA at Harvard

While information about CIA campus recruitment is a closely guarded secret, these programs are obviously known by college administrators. Details about the CIA's covert campus recruitment program were presented to eight presidents of America's most prestigious colleges at a secret meeting in Washington, DC's Mayflower Hotel in the spring of 1976. The administrators were told that the Senate would not expose these programs but that information would be provided to assist the college administrators in cleaning up their respective colleges. Ironically, none of the presidents requested the additional information.<sup>26</sup>

Harvard President Derek Bok convened a committee to draft a report on CIA operations at the college and guidelines regulating such activity. In return, the CIA launched a massive campus lobbying effort against the adoption of similar measures. During this effort, from June 1978 through 1979, the CIA held a series of "special briefings" with various University presidents in an attempt to work out secret arrangements for campus recruiting.<sup>27</sup>

The CIA promised that Harvard's rules would be ineffective, as the Agency would simply ignore them. To that effect, CIA Director Turner sent a letter to Bok proclaiming the right of every American to assist the CIA as they chose. He also said that "all recruitment for CIA staff employment on campus is

25. *Ibid.*

26. Corson, *op. cit.*, n. 17, p. 312.

27. Volkman, *op. cit.*, n. 2. These "special briefings" no doubt still occur. In 1984, CIA spokesperson Dale Petersen said the the CIA was holding three to four conferences a year for university presidents in order to discuss "mutual problems."

overt" conveniently avoiding the topic of its recruitment of "agents" and other CIA "assets" not considered as CIA staff.<sup>28</sup>

The CIA has kept its promise to violate Harvard's guidelines, with at least two known cases being recently brought to light. In 1986, professor Nadav Safran resigned as head of Harvard's Center for Middle Eastern Affairs after revealing that he secretly received payment from the CIA to write a book about Saudi Arabia and to stage a conference about the Middle East at the University.<sup>29</sup>

In 1985, an official of the Harvard Center for International Affairs was embroiled in a similar controversy when he conducted research secretly funded by the CIA.<sup>30</sup>

The Bok report documented CIA use of campus "spotters" to provide names to the CIA of prospective CIA recruits. When a spotter finds a potential recruit, the CIA conducts a background investigation of the student. If the CIA decides to approach the student, the spotter is often called upon to make the introduction. Otherwise, the results of the background inquiry go into a permanent dossier on the student without his/her knowledge.

### Conclusion

It's never easy to discover what the CIA is up to, even on our own college campuses. However, many CIA covert academic operations have come to light (usually years after the fact) because of unauthorized leaks, building takeovers resulting in the seizure of documents, or Freedom of Information Act requests.

As it has become clear that university administrators will not keep the CIA off campus, students have once again taken to mass protest to stop CIA activities. All across the country, CIA recruiters have been confronted with angry students and faculty demanding their ouster and an end to university recruiting. At the University of Colorado over 500 students were arrested during several days of anti-CIA recruiting protests.

As more covert CIA academic operations are exposed, the CIA will develop more effective means of protecting its secrecy when it goes to college. Regardless, many dedicated students are seeing to it that the CIA must operate in a campus environment that is less than ideal for the maximum exploitation of its university assets.<sup>31</sup> This is a hopeful sign. ●

28. *Ibid.*

29. Safran received \$107,430 from the CIA for his book, *Saudi Arabia: The Ceaseless Quest for Security*, published by Harvard University Press. He received an additional \$45,700 from the CIA to organize a conference on Islam. Safran's book contract required him to conceal the source of his funding and to submit his writings to the CIA for censorship.

30. Center for International Affairs Director Samuel Huntington was hired by CIA consultant Richard Betts to produce a report on the threat to U.S. interests when authoritarian rulers die in office. With Huntington's help, Betts published "Dead Dictators and Rioting Mobs" in the Harvard quarterly, *International Security*. Betts's contract also required that he not reveal the source of funding for his research and that he submit his writings to the CIA for censorship.

31. At the State University of New York (SUNY) in Albany, the CIA hired limousines to transport recruits from the announced recruitment location to another location in order to escape student protests. Unfortunately for the CIA, their recruitment process was infiltrated by a demonstrator who tipped off the protestors who then marched to the new recruitment site.



# Klansmen, Nazis, and Skinheads:

## Vigilante Repression

by Ken Lawrence\*

Ever since the end of the Civil War, vigilante terrorism has typically been white-supremacist and conspiratorial, epitomized by the Ku Klux Klan, but it has not always been fascist. The KKK was born in 1866. Fascism was not born until the ruins of World War I darkened Europe. The Klan was around for half a century before fascism existed in the world, and actually taught the fascists a great deal in their early years.

In the 1860s the Klan, led by the notorious Nathan Bedford Forrest, represented the guerrilla continuation of the war he had fought as a Confederate general. In essence Forrest, who had been a Memphis slave trader before the war, and the worst war criminal of the Confederacy, exchanged his grey uniform for a white sheet. The earliest Klan, then, was a restorationist movement of the Confederacy.

The Invisible Empire was something quite different when it arose in the 1920s. It was essentially a bourgeois nativist movement, and was not primarily based in the South. The KKK had the potential to go further than it did, because in many places a person had to be a Klansman, and certainly at least had to have the active endorsement of the Klan, to be elected to public office. The Klan came very close to capturing the national Democratic and Republican parties. It was a rightwing, white-supremacist, xenophobic, but essentially mainstream, bourgeois movement, which intended to control the politics of the United States government and as many state and local governments as possible through the traditional legal political apparatus.

Revived in the 1960s, the KKK was essentially a backward looking movement attempting to preserve what was most reactionary and most peculiar of the institutions of the segregated white South. It was under that banner, represented everywhere by the battle flag of the Confederacy that it went out and did its beatings, bombings, lynchings, mutilations, and castrations.

It is something quite different today.

Now it is likely to fight under the banner of the crooked cross, the Nazi Swastika, as under the banner of the Confederacy. In fact, it is the genius of the Klan leaders of today that they have managed to merge those two movements into a single whole, and to create a coherent ideology out of those two divergent strains.<sup>1</sup>

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1. The best source of KKK history is David M. Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism: The History of the Ku Klux Klan* (Franklin Watts: New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, 1981). Chalmers is not responsible for the political interpretation presented here.

### The Background of U.S. Fascism

The fascist movement got its real insurgent birth in the United States from Henry Ford through his newspaper, the *Dearborn Independent*. Today the Nazis and the Klan consider his book *The International Jew* to be one of their bibles. Ford built his automobile empire as close as he could to the New Order fascist dictatorship to which he aspired for society as a whole. He even established an entirely segregated two-city system for his workers. Dearborn, home of what was then the largest factory in the world, the Ford River Rouge plant, was for whites; Inkster was its Black suburb. That little fascist mini-state was not broken until the United Auto Workers CIO organized it in the 1940s, the last of the automobile trusts to be unionized.

Built on the movement that Henry Ford founded, the fascists, but not the Ku Klux Klan, flourished in the 1930s. One of the largest mass movements in the United States, and one of the few outside the mainstream political parties that was capable of packing Madison Square Garden in those years, was Father Charles Coughlin's Christian Front. Huey Long built a similar movement in the state of Louisiana, called Share the Wealth, which was organized by the notorious anti-Semite Gerald L.K. Smith, who became one of the most important figures first in the reconstitution of the fascist movement in the 1950s and gradually bringing it into a working coalition with the Klan over a period of time. Aviation pioneer Charles A. Lindbergh was their man on a white horse, while William Dudley Pelly and Gerald Winrod headed up the storm troopers.

Today's merged fascists and Ku Klux Klan movement has an ideology quite different from that of Nathan Bedford Forrest's Confederacy, or the nativism of David C. Stephenson, the main figure of the KKK's 1920 rebirth, or of 1960s Klan leaders Sam Bowers and Robert Shelton. Many of the leading Klansmen of the sixties have accommodated themselves quite well to the new line, which they shunned as un-American 25 years ago, exemplified by the United Racist Front in North Carolina, responsible for the 1979 Greensboro massacre when five members of the Communist Workers Party were murdered.<sup>2</sup>

### How the Ku Klux Klan Became Fascist

The Ku Klux Klan did not become fascist overnight. But racists, even when divided by important points of doctrine,

2. The best sources on U.S. fascism in the 1930s and 1940s are: John Roy Carlson, *Under Cover* (The Blakison Co.: Philadelphia, 1943); George Selles, *Facts and Fascists* (In Fact, Inc.: New York, 1943); and John Roy Carlson, *The Plotters* (E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc.: New York, 1946).

have considerable areas of political agreement, so it is no accident that one of the leading fascists of the thirties, Gerald L.K. Smith, was also a close kin to the Klans of the fifties and the sixties, and that most of the Klans borrowed heavily from his journal, *The Cross and the Flag*.



Credit: Associated Press

**J.B. Stoner, a long-time Klan and Nazi organizer, has been arrested several times in connection with racist violence.**

### Merging the Nazis and the Klan

The earliest attempt at merging the two movements was in 1940 at Camp Nordland, New Jersey, when the German American Bund and the Ku Klux Klan met, 3,500 strong, on a Bund platform beneath a fiery cross. Anti-Semite Edward James Smythe presided, having spent three years working to consummate such a coming together. Arthur H. Bell, the KKK's Grand Giant, shook hands with August Klapprott, the Bund's vice-president, and Klapprott declared, "The principles of the Bund and the Klan are the same."

But that merger was not to be. A storm of unfavorable publicity forced the Klan's Imperial Wizard, James Colescott, who had originally authorized participation in the meeting, to recant, and to repudiate the Nazis. Eventually Colescott's literature listed fascism among the foreign "isms" the Klan officially opposed, and Smythe's dream was stillborn.

But from that time on, some of the most committed Nazis viewed the KKK as their most likely road to power. Among these was J.B. Stoner, who was a Klan Kleagle (organizer) in Tennessee during World War II, but was also organizing a "national anti-Jewish political party" and distributing the favorite tract of the Jew haters, *The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion*, a document forged by the secret police in tsarist Russia to justify anti-Jewish pogroms.

In 1958 the National States Rights Party was founded by Edward Fields, who had worked with Stoner in the forties, and Matthias Koehl. Koehl later succeeded George Lincoln Rockwell as head of the American Nazi Party.

Stoner's Nazi sympathies were never veiled. He told the *Atlanta Constitution* in 1946 that Hitler had been too moderate and that his party wanted "to make being a Jew a crime,

punishable by death." But he also practiced law jointly with KKK leader James Venable of Atlanta. During the early years of the NSRP, Stoner's role was low-profile (the 1958 Birmingham church bombing for which he served a prison term was committed during this period), but he eventually emerged as its national chairman and main spokesman.

After the United Racist Front, a Klan/Nazi umbrella organization formed in September 1979 in North Carolina, carried out the Greensboro massacre in November of that year, NSRP leaders Stoner and Fields saw the opportunity to hasten the fascist development of the whole movement.

Fields organized the New Order Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, combining the two movements in the name. The New Order Klan simultaneously projected its politics (by organizing a union, then calling a strike to protest the hiring of Mexican workers at the Zartic Frozen Foods plant in Cedartown, Georgia) and prompted "Klan Unity" (by inviting leaders of the various competing Klan factions to a meeting to "honor" two of the Greensboro killers). One Klan leader after another aligned himself with Fields, and the Nazification of the Ku Klux Klans was achieved.<sup>3</sup>

### The Government Role

During the 1960s civil rights workers in the South frequently reported that the FBI was on the side of the Ku Klux Klan and Citizens Council white supremacists who were waging a war of terror and intimidation against them. Often when racists administered public beatings to freedom riders and voter registration workers, FBI agents would observe and take notes, but would never intervene to protect the victims, let alone arrest the perpetrators of the violence.

In November 1962, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. publicly complained about the attitude of FBI agents in the South. "To maintain their status, they have to be friendly with the local police and people who are promoting segregation," he said. FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, whose grudge against Dr. King predated that statement, and who worked secretly to undermine, smear, and discredit Dr. King as a popular leader from then until the civil rights leader was assassinated in 1968, publicly blasted back in 1964, branding Dr. King "the most notorious liar" in the United States.

After members of the White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan murdered three civil rights workers in Mississippi in the summer of 1964, Hoover ordered COINTELPRO (Counter-intelligence Program) operations against "White Hate Groups."

But the anti-Klan COINTELPRO was quite different from the others. Whereas the order targeting "Black Nationalist/Hate Groups" instructed FBI field offices to "expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit, or otherwise neutralize the activities of Black nationalists and supporters," the "White Hate" COINTELPRO was aimed at "the relatively few individuals in each organization who use strong arm tactics and violent actions to achieve their ends." The COINTELPROs directed against the Communist Party, the Socialist Workers

3. Ken Lawrence, *Fighting the Klan* (Sojourner Truth Organization: Chicago, 1981); Ken Lawrence, "The Ku Klux Klan and Fascism," in *Urgent Tasks*, no. 14, Fall/Winter 1982, pp. 12-16.

Party and the New Left went well beyond their membership; the anti-Klan COINTELPRO did not.

To establish this new COINTELPRO, the FBI actually created a statewide Ku Klux Klan organization from scratch and recruited 200 members to it. The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence concluded that this tactic "risked increasing violence and racial tension." At a speech to one Klan rally, the FBI's undercover man told his KKK followers, "We are going to have peace and order in America if we have to kill every Negro."

In some cases in the 1960s and 1970s, the United States government sponsored fascist terrorist organizations without even the pretense of being opposed to violence, but actually financing them, arming them, and directing their activities.

### Legion of Justice

The United States Army's 113th Military Intelligence Group based in Evanston, Illinois, and the Chicago Police Department's Red Squad jointly operated a fascist organization called the Legion of Justice from 1969 to 1972. Legionnaires clubbed and maced members of socialist and anti-war organizations, broke into their headquarters, stole their files, and planted bugging devices; vandalized a progressive bookstore; stole films from Newsreel, a movement film making and distributing collective; and tear gassed performances by a Soviet Dance Company and a Chinese Acrobatic Troupe with grenades supplied by a police Intelligence Division officer. In one case a Legion member attended an anti-war rally, burned the rally organizer's hand with a cigarette butt, and then made his escape with police help.

The Legion's founder, S. Thomas Sutton, had participated in Nazi and Ku Klux Klan mob violence against demonstrations for open housing and school desegregation in the 1960s. He ran as an independent segregationist candidate for governor of Illinois in 1968. On university campuses he agitated for the formation of a "rightwing terrorist underground." The post office box address Sutton used for the Legion of Justice in Elgin, Illinois, was also used by Robert B. DePugh's Minutemen, a super-secret rightwing guerrilla organization which had waged vigilante terror against the left until DePugh was captured and sent to prison on kidnapping, blackmail, and illegal weapons charges.

The Legion had overlapping memberships with other fascist organizations including the American Nazi Party, the National Socialist White People's Party, and the National States Rights Party. Besides the Legion of Justice, Sutton founded and led a racist organization called Operation Crescent from 1966 until his death in 1974. In 1975 a Cook County Grand Jury report condemned the police and the army for operating the Legion of Justice.

### The Secret Army Organization

In the summer of 1971 the Secret Army Organization was founded by former members of the Minutemen on the West Coast. The main SAO target was Peter Bohmer, an anti-war activist in San Diego, California. On one occasion, two SAO members drove past Bohmer's home, firing shots into the

house and wounding a woman inside. Other Secret Army vigilante acts against the peace movement included slashing tires, telephone death threats, destroying property, arson, and firebombings, but police never managed to catch the perpetrators.

After SAO bombed a theater in 1972, the San Diego police could no longer look the other way. They knew the FBI had an undercover informer inside SAO, and they demanded to know his identity. The FBI supplied his name: Howard Berry Godfrey, a former Minuteman and the commander of SAO's terror squad. In the arrest that followed, police confiscated quantities of explosives and munitions that had been acquired from Camp Pendleton with, as it turned out, the tacit approval of police and the FBI. Even with the Secret Army Organization fully exposed, the FBI remained loyal to Godfrey, obstructing the investigation and concealing evidence.

In 1973 Lyndon LaRouche's National Caucus of Labor Committees, which had started out five years earlier as a bizarre leftwing cult, suddenly emerged as a vigilante organization. LaRouche ordered his storm troopers to launch violent attacks on communists, socialists, labor and welfare rights activists in a terror campaign he called Operation Mop-up. The violence continued over the next three years as Operations Counterpunch and Amsterdam, broadened to add Maoist organizations as targets. In 1975, former members reported that LaRouche was sharing intelligence reports on the left wing with the U.S. military. By 1977, NCLC members were serving as auxiliary spies and provocateurs for the FBI and the New Hampshire state police. During the Reagan years, NCLC intelligence agents have enjoyed access to officials at the CIA and the Defense Intelligence Agency.

The Klansmen and Nazis who murdered five members of the Communist Workers Party in Greensboro had been infiltrated by two provocateurs, Bernard Butkovich of the U.S. Treasury Department's Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, and Edward W. Dawson, an informant for the Greensboro Police Department and the FBI, who urged the fascists to attack the CWP's "Death to the Klan" demonstration, and who led them to it while other Greensboro police looked on but made no move to prevent the violence.<sup>4</sup>

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**In some cases in the 1960s and 1970s, the United States government sponsored fascist terrorist organizations without even the pretense of being opposed to violence, but actually financing them, arming them, and directing their activities.**

4. Hearings before the Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with respect to Intelligence Activities of the United States Senate, Volume 6, Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Government Printing Office: Washington, 1976; Final Report of the Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with respect to Intelligence Activities, United States Senate, Book III; Dennis King and Ronald Radosh, "The LaRouche Connection," in *The New Republic*, November 19, 1984, pp. 15-25.

## U.S. Fascism in the 1980s

The difference between the new face of the Ku Klux Klan and its earlier expressions is that the role of racism and anti-Semitism and scapegoating in general is quite different ideologically for a fascist movement from that of a rightwing conservative movement or a traditional Klan-type movement. The new strategy is not to put people in their place; it is not



Credit: Birmingham News

**The look of the “new” Klan – white robes and military fatigues.**

to make a sub-class out of them and to exploit, or super-exploit, their labor. It is genocidal. It is exterminationist.

The manual of the current Klan/Nazi strategy is a novel, *The Turner Diaries*, written by William Pierce, fuhrer of a Nazi group called the National Alliance, under the pseudonym Andrew MacDonald. It is a stirring call to arms. To cast it in literary terms, it turns *The Iron Heel* upside down. Where Jack London projected a look back at the future revolution to see its horrors, William Pierce employs the same literary strategy to extol the revolution that creates the New Order and to show how he wants it to take place.

The fictional strategy for the Nazi seizure of power presented in *The Turner Diaries* is very similar to the actual strategy of the Nazis in Europe today. The French fascist who devised the strategy, Michel Faci, who uses the *nom de guerre* LeLoup, calls it the “Strategy of Tension.” Resorting to bombings and other terrorist atrocities, this strategy attempts widespread social destabilization, based on the assumption that the fascist movement had reached its peak “respectable” legal strength. They hope to polarize society and build on the fears, tensions, and the disarray that can be created by disrupting the fabric of politics as usual, and at the same time highlight the relative weakness of official authority.

The vision this book projects is a strategy for seizing control of the entire society, exterminating minorities, Jews, and the white “race traitors,” and creating a fascist controlled government.

A white-supremacist group called the Aryan Nation and centered in Hayden Lake, Idaho, spawned a gang called the Order which is modeled after the fictional organization of that

name in *The Turner Diaries*, which sought to implant the novel’s vision literally. Financing themselves with the proceeds from counterfeiting and bank and armored car robberies, members of the Order carried out dramatic acts of exemplary violence, including the 1983 machine-gun murder of Alan Berg, a Jewish radio personality in Denver.

Tolerating, even creating, fascist organizations to terrorize the left is one thing; permitting a fascist group to embark on a path aimed at the overthrow of the government is quite another. Even a Washington administration insensitive to the meaning of Bitburg wasn’t about to permit that kind of activity to grow unchecked. Over the past few years, the government had vigorously pursued the Order, killing its founder, Robert Mathews, “turning” or otherwise corrupting some of its members, and jailing others. But a trial of 14 top white-supremacists in Fort Smith, Arkansas, last spring ended in acquittals, enhancing the prestige of the main three: Louis Beam, believed to be the underground movement’s top commander, former head of the most violent Klan faction in Texas, best known for its attacks on Vietnamese fishermen in Galveston Bay; Richard Butler, founder of the Aryan Nations; and Robert Miles, head of the racist Christian Identity Church, who served six years in prison for bombing school buses in Pontiac, Michigan, in 1971. The Fort Smith acquittals were celebrated by 250 white-supremacists who gathered at Hayden Lake in July for the Aryan Nations World Congress.

Despite that setback, the government isn’t likely to let up on its attempts to suppress these forces in the Nazi movement, and its concern is understandable. Robert Miles once regaled his KKK followers, “When a Klansman finds he has cancer, or is ill or something and doesn’t have long to live, he should cash in his insurance, send his family away, and buy himself a rifle. He can then go hunting for big game – judges, politicians, and government guys.” But this Medusa monster won’t die. As the government packed the surviving members of the Order off to prison in 1985, its successor, the Order II, was formed in 1986 to carry on the Nazi revolution, and launched another wave of robberies, bombings, and murder. Its members, too, were captured, and recently four Order II terrorists pleaded guilty to charges of racketeering, counterfeiting, and firearms violations.

While federal, state, and local authorities have kept the heat on the sectors of the terrorist right that includes the government among their principle targets, other overlapping branches of the Nazi movement have been relatively unscathed by prosecutions, and these include the most menacing of the vigilante street fighters, who aim their violence at protest movements among oppressed people, peace activists, progressives, and leftists.

### Today’s Storm Troopers

Today’s storm troopers are being organized by different factions of the neo-Nazi right. David Duke is a former Ku Klux Klan leader, and head of the National Association for the Advancement of White People. In 1988 he was the presidential candidate for the Populist Party, whose principle vehicle is the *Spotlight*, the weekly tabloid of Willis Carto’s Liberty Lobby,

the most widely circulated anti-Semitic weekly in the United States. *Spotlight* circulation has dropped below 100,000, down from its peak of 340,000 in the early 1980s, but Liberty Lobby reaches untold thousands more through its weekly satellite radio broadcast, "Radio Free America." This is also the faction which sponsors the Institute for Historical Review, a pseudo-scholarly center in California that specializes in mustering evidence that the Nazi Holocaust never happened, that it's simply an invention by Jews to secure permanent special status for the state of Israel. The mass constituencies pursued by this wing of the fascists are family farmers driven to desperation by the agricultural crisis, including members of the militant Posse Comitatus, followers of the martyred "tax protester" Gordon Kahl, and blue collar workers who feel their jobs threatened by immigrant workers and foreign imports.

More violent and dangerous at present are the so-called "Third Position" fascists who oppose both the "communist East" and the "capitalist West," mirroring the line that has a broad following among today's Nazis in Europe. The tendency is called "Strasserite," after the brothers Gregor and Otto Strasser, who represented the most radical anti-capitalist wing of German National Socialism until Adolf Hitler brought them to heel. The main U.S. advocates of the Third Position are Gary Gallo, leader of the National Democratic Front, and Tom Metzger, head of the insurgent White Aryan Resistance (WAR). As a vigilante leader, Metzger, a former California Ku Klux Klan leader, is probably the most dangerous rightwinger now. An excerpt from his speech to the 1987 Aryan Nations World Congress sums up his political line:

WAR is dedicated to the white working people, the farmers, the white poor... This is a working class movement... The conservative movement in this country is dead. The right wing is dead. The Marxist left never was alive, so don't worry about that. This is the white wing... Our problem is with monopoly capitalism. The Jews first went with capitalism and then created their Marxist game. You go for the throat of the capitalist. You must go for the throat of the corporates. You take the game away from the left. It's our game! We're not going to fight your whore war no more! We've got one war, that is right here, the same war the SA fought in Germany, right here, in the streets of America.

Metzger's WAR appeals for racial solidarity of white people in the United States and Russia, opposes U.S. intervention in Central America, supports the environment "green movement," and backs militant strikes by mainly white workers, such as the P-9 strike against Hormel in Austin, Minnesota. But the main recruits for battle are alienated street youth, Nazi skinheads, organized by Metzger's son John, who recruits them for his White Student Union/Aryan Youth Movement and then trains them in hand-to-hand combat and knife fighting. Tom Metzger's call-in program "Aryan Alert," spells out the vigilante aim when he gives the addresses of various left and progressive organizations and says to his fol-

lowers, "Why don't you pay them a call?" He got even more specific about members of the John Brown Anti-Klan Committee, which has fought Metzger every step of the way, calling upon his members to find out "where they eat, where they meet, and where they sleep." Metzger specifically builds on the militancy of other sectors of the fascist movement. He led a demonstration in support of the Fort Smith defendants, for example. Yet Metzger is not harassed or stopped, even in ways the government could carry out routinely. His weekly cable television show, "Race and Reason" (named after Carlton Putnam's 1961 segregationist bible which holds a special place in the racist pantheon), airs in more than 40 cities with nary a raised eyebrow from the Federal Communications Commission.

The Metzgers and their Nazi skinheads have taken every advantage of public exposure. Even a face-to-face confrontation with anti-racists on the Oprah Winfrey show helped them more than it hurt, and skinhead violence is now the main form of vigilante terror in the United States. Nurtured by racist rock music, Nazi youths have perpetrated such atrocities as nailing a man to an eight-foot plank after he defected from their ranks; hurling a teen-age boy through a plate glass window after he had tried to prevent them from putting up an anti-Semitic poster; and kidnapping and torturing a prostitute. They threatened to lynch a Black woman. Skinhead violence has spread to every part of the United States, erupting in California, Florida, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nevada, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Texas.

During the first six months of 1988, the Klanwatch Project of the Southern Poverty Law Center documented 20 assaults, 4 arsons, 3 murders, 30 vandalisms, and 12 cross burnings, all committed out of extreme racial or religious bias. "Half of the assaults and two of the murders were officially attributed to neo-Nazi skinheads," says the Klanwatch report, and to those should be added their explicitly political acts of violence aimed at anti-racist organizers.<sup>5</sup>

## Conclusion

This is the new face of political repression, conducted by vigilante terrorists who, ironically, are being recruited among alienated youth who just a few years ago seemed more drawn to the left's vision of peace, equality, and justice, but today have turned away from that in favor of the white-supremacist New Order. Vigilante repression, just like government repression, is now a permanent feature of the U.S. political landscape. Liberals and leftists have developed fairly sophisticated organizing networks and political/legal strategies for fighting state repression, but far less attention and resources have been devoted to this other aspect of political repression. If that does not change soon, we can expect things to get much worse. ●

5. Ken Lawrence, "Fighting the Klan," *op. cit.*, n. 3; Daniel Gearino, "Klan's Blueprint for Revolution, Takeover of Nation is Revealed," in the *Chicago Sun-Times*, August 5, 1980; Scott Klug, "Architect of the American Reich," in the *City Paper*, May 15-21, 1987; *Shaved for Battle*, Anti-Defamation League: New York, 1987; and information generously supplied by the Center for Democratic Renewal (formerly the National Anti-Klan Network), the John Brown Anti-Klan Committee, and the Klanwatch Project of the Southern Poverty Law Center.

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# COINTELPRO against the Black Panthers:

## The Case of Geronimo Pratt

by Ward Churchill and Jim Vander Wall\*

During the late 1950s, 1960s and early 1970s, the FBI conducted a covert war against the black liberation movement in the United States. This program, part of the FBI's COINTELPRO, or Counter-Intelligence Program, was designed to harass, disrupt, and dismantle groups and organizations who were challenging U.S. government policy in everything from the Vietnam War to poverty and racism.

Because of its militant stance, and also because FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover was an avowed racist, the Black Panther Party (BPP) came under heavy attack by the FBI's COINTELPRO. On November 25, 1968, Hoover dispatched a memo stating that he viewed the Black Panther Party as being the "single greatest threat" to political stability in the U.S. and calling upon his agents to "exploit all avenues of creating...dissension within the ranks of the BPP." All "recipient offices [were] instructed to submit imaginative and hard-hitting counterintelligence measures aimed at crippling the BPP." The Bureau's COINTELPRO specialists responded with an array of proposals, quickly approved by Headquarters. One person intensely targeted by the FBI's COINTELPRO was Geronimo Pratt, head of the BPP in Los Angeles.

Louisiana born and raised, Elmer Gerard ("Geronimo" or "G") Pratt enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1965 at the age of seventeen. Over the following eighteen months, Pratt participated in a series of highly classified missions, garnering some eighteen combat decorations—including the Silver Star, Bronze Star (for valor), Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry and the Purple Heart—while becoming increasingly disenchanted with the nature of the war, the military system and the social order which spawned them.

Availing himself of an "early out" discharge from the Army in exchange for his double tour in Southeast Asia, he relocated from Louisiana to Los Angeles in August of 1968. Using his benefits under the G.I. Bill, he enrolled at UCLA through the High Potential Equal Opportunity Program, taking an active role in the campus Black Student Union. He became acquainted with local BPP leaders Jon Huggins and Bunchy Carter and was later recruited into the BPP.<sup>1</sup>

Pratt became an active member of the Los Angeles BPP

\*Ward Churchill is co-author, with Jim Vander Wall, of the recently released book, *Agents of Repression*, from which this article is excerpted. Jim Vander Wall is a member of the Denver Leonard Peltier Support Group and has written several articles on the case of Leonard Peltier.

1. The information concerning Pratt's discharge, re-entry into civilian life and recruitment into the BPP derives from a comprehensive summary of his case assembled anonymously by various members of his defense. Hereafter, this document—a copy of which is on file, and which can be made available through the law offices of Jonathan Lubell in New York City—will be referenced simply as *Summary*.

(LA-BPP) Chapter and grew close to Eldridge Cleaver and his wife, Kathleen, prior to Cleaver's exile over an alleged parole violation during November 1968. It was undoubtedly through this association that Pratt also became personally familiar with others in the Panther national hierarchy, including both Bobby and John Seale, David and June Hilliard, and George Murphy.

A short time later Pratt became head of the LA-BPP<sup>2</sup> and was then personally targeted for "neutralization" through FBI COINTELPRO techniques.<sup>3</sup>

### Targeted by the FBI

Pratt was designated a "Key Black Extremist" by the Los Angeles FBI office and placed in the National Security Index.<sup>4</sup> He was not only targeted for neutralization by the FBI, but, as former Panther infiltrator Louis Tackwood pointed out, this automatically placed him "on the wall" of the Los Angeles Police Department's Criminal Conspiracy Section (CCS).<sup>5</sup> As Tackwood explained the CCS operation:

The room is broken up into divisions, see my point? Black, white, chicano and subversives. Everybody's there. And every last one of the walls has pictures of them. This one black, the middle all white, and the chicanos all on this side. Most of the files are on the walls, you see?... They got everybody. Panthers, SDS, Weathermen. Let me explain to you. They got a national hookup. You see my point? And because of this national power, they are the only organization in the police department that has a liaison man, that works for the FBI, and the FBI has a liaison man who works with the CCS.<sup>6</sup>

The inevitable consequence of this was that Pratt was placed under intensely close surveillance by the FBI<sup>7</sup> and sub-

2. *Summary*, p. 5.

3. As is revealed in *Summary*, p. 6.

4. The "Key Black Extremist" tag seems to have been adopted for local use by the LA office COINTELPRO group from at least as early as January 20, 1969, based upon internal office memos. A memo from SAC, Los Angeles to the Director, dated 4/21/69 and captioned "BLACK PANTHER PARTY—ARRESTS, RACIAL MATTERS," recommended placing both Pratt and his second in command, Roger Lee Lewis, in the National Security Index.

5. Citizens Research and Investigation Committee and Lewis E. Tackwood, *The Glass House Tapes: The Story of an Agent Provocateur and the New Police-Intelligence Complex* (New York: Avon Books: 1973), pp. 34-35.

6. Jo Durden-Smith, *Who Killed George Jackson? Fantasies, Paranoia, and the Revolution* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf: 1976), pp. 145-46.

7. This is readily borne out in a Bureau document, LA 157-3436 in Section V ("MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS RELATING TO ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATED WITH THE BPP").

jected to a series of unfounded but serious arrests by the Bureau's local police affiliates at Criminal Conspiracy Section.

There is considerable evidence that Pratt initially attempted to steer the LA-BPP away from any overemphasis on armed struggle; during his early tenure, he is known to have worked very hard to maintain the Chapter's Free Breakfast for Children Program, community education and health care efforts. The FBI's response to such efforts was to open a conspiracy investigation of Pratt with regard to the robbery of a Bank of America facility already known by the Bureau to have been carried out by members of Ron Karenga's United Slaves (US).<sup>8</sup>

This was followed very closely by a Bureau effort to ensnarl both Pratt and Roger Lewis in a violation of the 1940 Smith Act and plotting of "insurrection."<sup>9</sup> The LA-FBI office, apparently on the basis of its own contrived image of the Panther leader's "violence" and "criminality," then prepared a "biography" of Pratt to accompany its recommendation that he be elevated to "Priority I" status in the National Security Index. The FBI also announced that he was forthwith being included in the FBI's "Black Nationalist Photo Album" across the country.

As he entered his sixth month as leader of the LA-BPP, Pratt was thus specifically singled out for neutralization by head of the Bureau's LA-COINTELPRO section, Richard Wallace Held, son of Richard G. Held who orchestrated the coverup of FBI involvement in the Fred Hampton-Mark Clark assassinations.<sup>10</sup> Their first attempt to get Pratt was in November 1969:

The pretext of the raid was two-fold. The police, first of all, claimed that on November 28, 1969, George Young and Paul Redd had thrown a police sergeant out of Panther headquarters at gunpoint, and that, later in the day, Geronimo Pratt had taken a bead on a passing police car with a machine gun. Arrest warrants for all three had been sworn out a week before the raid. Second, the SWAT assault group was armed with a search warrant (as well as an armored personnel carrier, AR-15 automatic rifles, helicopters, tear gas and dynamite). They were to search for stolen weapons... [I]n getting the search warrant, police deliberately misled Municipal

8. See Memo from SAC, Los Angeles to the Director, FBI, dated 5/6/69 and captioned "ELMER PRATT, BR - CONSPIRACY."

9. Los Angeles office Field Report, LA 157-3553, dated 5/14/69. The character of the case reported upon is described as, "RM - SMITH ACT OF 1940; SEDITIOUS CONSPIRACY AND INSURRECTION." The document was circulated to 8 Bureau offices, the Norton Air Force Base Office of Strategic Intelligence, the 115th Military Intelligence Group, and the Secret Service in its initial distribution.

10. See Counterintelligence Report from the SAC, Los Angeles, to Director, FBI (LA 157-17511), dated 6/3/69 and captioned "COUNTERINTELLIGENCE PROGRAM, BLACK NATIONALIST-HATE GROUPS, RACIAL INTELLIGENCE (BLACK PANTHER PARTY)." As to the younger Held's position in the LA-COINTELPRO operation, see deposition of former FBI agent M. Wesley Swearingen, taken in October 1980, in Honolulu, Hawaii, p. 1: "I knew RICHARD WALLACE HELD as head of the COINTELPRO section in Los Angeles [during this period]."

Court Judge Antonio Chavez.

The reason CCS Sergeant Raymond Callahan gave for the prospective search was that he wanted to look for six machine guns and thirty M-14s stolen from Camp Pendleton Marine base, as well as the weapons used in what he called "the assault on officers." In an affidavit under oath, Callahan told Judge Chavez that George Young had been at Camp Pendleton when the machine guns and M-14s were stolen and that he later went AWOL. What he didn't tell him was that Young was in the stockade at the time of the theft and he knew it. "I didn't think it was important," he later said.<sup>11</sup>

### The FBI Attempts to Kill Pratt

Four days prior to the Los Angeles raid, an FBI assault against BPP headquarters in Chicago had left Panthers Mark Clark and Fred Hampton dead. The similarities between the raids are undeniable: A special local police unit closely linked to the FBI was involved in both assaults, spurious warrants seeking "illegal weapons" were utilized on both occasions, predawn timing of both raids to catch the Panthers asleep and a reliance upon overwhelming police firepower to "accomplish the mission." Both raids occurred in the context of an ongoing and highly energetic COINTELPRO operation against the BPP, and — as in the Hampton assassination — bullets were fired directly into Pratt's bed. (Unlike the Chicago leader, however, Pratt was sleeping on the floor, the result of spinal injuries sustained in Vietnam.)<sup>12</sup>

In both instances, the FBI had managed to place an infiltrator/provocateur very high within the local BPP chapter — in Los Angeles it was Melvin "Cotton" Smith, number three man in the LA-BPP — who provided detailed floor plans, including sleeping arrangements of the Panther facility, prior to the raid.<sup>13</sup> And, in both cases, surviving Panthers were immediately arrested for their "assault upon the police."<sup>14</sup>

When the resultant "case" against the L.A. Panthers was finally prosecuted in July 1971:

...there was a "surprise" development. Melvin "Cotton" Smith turned up as a star witness for the prosecution. According to Deputy District Attorney Ronald H. Carroll, Smith had turned State's evidence to escape prosecution... [However] on November 22, 1971, [FBI informant] Tackwood testified...he had started working for [CCS Sergeant R.G.] Farwell in the fall of 1969, before the December 8 raid, and had been told by Farwell that [FBI

11. Durden-Smith, *op. cit.*, n. 6, pp. 134-35. There is absolutely no evidence that Pratt aimed a weapon at police.

12. Summary, at p. 6.

13. Durden-Smith, *op. cit.*, n. 6, p. 136, quotes Tackwood describing "Cotton" Smith before the raid, "cutting up this cardboard and making this building, and he's putting little dolls with names on them, where they were, and associations and such and such." The LA version of the floor plan in Chicago was thus apparently in three dimensions.

14. See memo from SAC, Los Angeles to Director, FBI, dated 12/8/69 and captioned "BLACK PANTHER PARTY, ARRESTS - RACIAL MATTERS."

infiltrator] Cotton Smith was to be Tackwood's contact. Since Smith's testimony was crucial to the State's case, Tackwood's exposure of Smith's real role was a devastating blow to the prosecution.<sup>15</sup>

One consequence of this revelation was that, after eleven days of deliberation, the jury returned acquittals (or failed to reach any verdict whatsoever) relative to charges of conspiring to assault and murder police officers brought against all thirteen Panther defendants.<sup>16</sup>

Pratt spent more than two months in jail following the shootout, until some \$125,000 in bail could be raised to secure his release.<sup>17</sup> Once out, he made a whirlwind national speaking tour and then dropped out of sight (while remaining mostly in Los Angeles).<sup>18</sup> The Bureau, which attempted to "turn" the Panther leader into an informer while he was in lockup, now opted to launch a COINTELPRO to destroy his position in the Party:

For the information of the Bureau, in view of PRATT's adamant expression of hatred toward law enforcement personnel in general, no consideration is being given to reinterview PRATT for the purpose of development as a PRI [informer]. It is noted, however, that constant consideration is given to the possibility of utilization of counterintelligence measures with efforts being directed toward neutralizing PRATT as an effective BPP functionary.<sup>19</sup>

That this attempt was undertaken (through the efforts of FBI infiltrator "Cotton" Smith) is borne out by the sudden subjecting of Pratt to a battery of "loyalty tests" (which he passed) administered by representatives of the BPP national hierarchy in June of 1970.<sup>20</sup> However, his outspoken alignment with Eldridge Cleaver, in combination with the lingering suspicions created by the FBI disinformation campaign, served to bring about his formal expulsion from the BPP when, "on August 5, Huey Newton came out of jail, and [soon] issued orders 'to wash everybody who's a [Cleaver] man...right out of the Party.'"<sup>21</sup>

With Pratt isolated from the BPP, and correspondingly vulnerable, the FBI moved quickly to finish him off. On September 14, Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael A. Heuer obtained a federal warrant on the charge of interstate flight to avoid prosecution, and a nationwide manhunt for Pratt was

begun.<sup>22</sup> Meanwhile, a grand jury was convened in Los Angeles to hear evidence prepared by CCS detective Callahan intended to result in his indictment on murder charges. According to both Tackwood and "Cotton Smith," there had been a considerable controversy in CCS and the FBI over exactly *what* murder to use in preparing a case against Pratt.

### The Set-up

In June 1972, Geronimo Pratt was brought to trial, charged with a murder committed in 1968. The former BPP leader was represented by a relatively inexperienced court-appointed attorney, Johnnie Cochran (assisted by attorney Charles Hollopeter), in whom he professed little confidence. Virtually no defense funds or external support were raised.<sup>23</sup> His misgivings over the situation were well founded, given the welter of



Credit: Eddie Crespo

**FBI agent and COINTELPRO specialist Richard W. Held worked against Pratt in Los Angeles.**

COINTELPRO complexity which attended the prosecution from start to finish.

On its face, the case was forthright enough: At a little after 8 p.m. on December 18, 1968, two black men robbed and shot a white couple, Caroline and Kenneth Olsen, on a Santa Monica, California tennis court. Caroline Olsen died one week later. Pratt was accused of "the tennis court murder" in a letter dated August 10, 1969, addressed to LAPD sergeant Dwayne Rice by an "underworld informant."

The informant then testified at the trial that Pratt, in direct personal conversation with him, had "bragged" of the crime. He further testified that a .45 calibre Colt automatic seized by the police in January 1970 belonged to Pratt but did not ballistically match the tennis court murder weapon because Pratt had "changed the barrel" in order to alter its ballistic pattern. A second informant, who did not testify, corroborated this tes-

15. *The Glass House Tapes*, op. cit., n. 5, p. 104.

16. See "63 Verdicts End Panther Trial," *Los Angeles Times*, December 24, 1971.

17. See memorandum from (deleted), Los Angeles, to (deleted) Intelligence Division, dated February 9, 1970, and captioned "Elmer Gerard Pratt."

18. For example, a Teletype, dated May 21, 1970 and captioned "BLACK PANTHER PARTY (BPP)—TRAVEL OF LEADERSHIP," distributed by the Atlanta Field Office to Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Chicago, has "Jeronimo" speaking to an SCLC rally in Georgia on that date.

19. Los Angeles office Field Report, LA-3436, dated 2/26/70 and captioned "ELMER GERARD PRATT, aka 'Gee,' 'G,' P.C."

20. *Summary*, at p. 6.

21. Durden-Smith, op. cit., n. 6, p. 155.

22. Circular (43 LA CODE) issued to the FBI Special Investigations Division via Director, FBI, by SAC, Los Angeles, dated 9/15/70 and captioned "ELMER GERARD PRATT, aka Elmer Pratt, Geronimo, Gee, 'G'—FUGITIVE, UFAP—FALSE IMPRISONMENT AND ADW."

23. It is worth noting that, by 1980, Johnnie Cochran was third ranking member of the District Attorney's Office in Los Angeles, and was still adamantly insisting that not only was Pratt innocent of the tennis court murder, but that if he'd had access to COINTELPRO documents withheld at trial, the case would have been "no contest."

timony.<sup>24</sup>

Kenneth Olsen, the surviving victim, then identified Pratt as the murderer in open court, as did Barbara Reed, a shopkeeper who'd seen the gunmen prior to the shooting. Mitchell Lachman, who'd been near the tennis court on the evening of the murder, testified the gunmen fled in a vehicle matching the description of Pratt's white over red GTO convertible.

Pratt's main line of defense was (and is) that he was in Oakland, some 400 miles north of Santa Monica, attending a BPP national leadership meeting on the evening in question. Presentation of this alibi was, however, severely hampered by the COINTELPRO-induced refusal of many of those also in attendance—such as David, June, and Pat Hilliard, Bobby and John Seale, Nathan Hare, Rosemary Gross and Brenda Presley, all of the Newton faction—to testify on his behalf.<sup>25</sup>

Kathleen Cleaver, also in attendance at the meeting, did testify that Pratt was in Oakland from December 13-25, 1968, but even her efforts to do so had been hampered by COINTELPRO letters to her husband "explaining" that it was "too dangerous" for her to return to the United States during the trial.<sup>26</sup> With the weight of testimony heavily on the side of the prosecution, Pratt was convicted of first-degree murder on July 28, 1972; the sentence imposed was seven years to life, standard under California's indeterminate sentencing guidelines.

### The "Evidence" Falls Apart

Of course, there were certain problems with the case which went beyond the Bureau-imposed constraints attending Pratt's attempts to assemble defense witnesses. For instance, it did occur to the defense that if the FBI were tapping the phones of, or otherwise electronically surveilling, the BPP national offices in Oakland during December 1968—as seems likely—the Bureau itself might well be able to substantiate Pratt's whereabouts on the crucial night.

The FBI, however, submitted at trial that no such taps or bugs existed, an assertion which was later shown to be untrue.<sup>27</sup> The Bureau then refused to release its logs from the taps, on "national security" grounds, until forced to do so by an FOIA suit brought by attorneys Jonathan Lubell, Mary O'Melveny and William H. O'Brien.<sup>28</sup> At that point, the transcripts were delivered, minus *precisely* the records covering the period of time which might serve to establish Pratt's innocence; "The FBI has indicated (not by affidavit) that the

**...eight years after Pratt's trial, the California Attorney General's office filed a declaration in court that his defense camp had been infiltrated by one FBI informant.**

transcripts of the conversations recorded by these telephone taps have been lost or destroyed," wrote the frustrated judge.<sup>29</sup>

Then there was the matter of the identity of the State's

star witness; the informant who first accused Pratt of the tennis court murder in his letter to Rice, testified to Pratt's "confession" of the crime, and finally reconciled the prosecution's ballistics difficulties.

It turns out that this informant was Julius C. Butler, an infiltrator/*provocateur* who was expelled from the BPP by Pratt. At the trial, the prosecution went considerably out of its way to bolster Butler's credibility before the jury by "establishing" that the witness was *not* a paid FBI informant (although they were willing to allow that he'd been a deputy sheriff prior to joining the BPP).

During the whole of 1970, Butler filed monthly reports with the Bureau, and was "evaluated" by the FBI as an informant during that year. His PRI file was not closed until May of 1972 (immediately prior to his going on the stand).<sup>30</sup> Louis Tackwood has consistently contended that Butler was an FBI infiltrator in the BPP from the day he joined the Party in early 1968 and that he actively worked with CCS detectives Ray Callahan and Daniel P. Mahoney to eliminate Pratt.<sup>31</sup> It should be noted that, since the trial, Butler has been able to complete law school and enter the California bar, despite guilty pleas to four felony charges.<sup>32</sup>

The supposed informant corroboration of Butler's testimony, it was later revealed, was obtained from "Cotton" Smith, already unmasked as an infiltrator/*provocateur* during the 1971 shootout trial and thus unable to credibly take the stand in the Olsen murder case. In 1985, Smith totally recanted his allegations against Pratt, stating unequivocally that the former Panther leader had been "framed," but by "the FBI rather than local police;" he specifically named LA-FBI COINTELPRO operative George Aiken as having been instrumental in the affair.<sup>33</sup> At the trial, the Bureau also submitted that Pratt was not the target of COINTELPRO activity; several hundred documents subsequently released under the FOIA demonstrate this to have been categorically untrue. Further:

On 18 December 1979, eight years after Pratt's trial, the California Attorney General's office filed a declaration in court that his defense camp had been infiltrated by one FBI informant. The Deputy Attorney General wrote to the court and defense counsel on 28 July 1980, enclosing a copy of a letter of the same date from the Executive As-

29. For Judge J. Dunn's dissenting remarks, see his minority opinion *In Re Pratt*, 112 Cal. App. 3d 795; Cal. Rptr. (Crim. No. 37534. Second Dist., Div. One. 3 December 1980); hereinafter referred to as "Minority" and "Majority."

30. *AI*, op. cit., n. 27, pp. 107-110.

31. *Summary*, at p. 15.

32. *Ibid.*, at p. 79.

33. Lee Richardson, "Ex-FBI Agent Exposes Use of Informants to Destroy the BPP," *Freedom Magazine*, January 1985, p. 31.

24. *Summary*, at pp. 1-2.

25. On prosecution presentation, see *ibid.* at pp. 2-3; on Newton faction refusal to testify for Pratt, see pp. 94-96.

26. AIRTEL from SAC, Los Angeles, to Acting Director, FBI, dated 7/18/72 (caption deleted).

27. See Amnesty International, *Proposal for a commission of inquiry into the effect of domestic intelligence activities on criminal trials in the United States of America*, hereinafter referred to as *AI* (New York: Amnesty International, 1980), p. 29.

28. See *Elmer G. Pratt v. William Webster, et. al.*, United States Court of Appeals in the District of Columbia (No. 81-1907) for presentation of the case, and *Pratt v. Webster, et. al.* (508 F. Supp. 751 [1981]) for the ruling.

sistant Director of the FBI. This letter revealed that two [FBI agents] had been in a position to obtain information about Elmer Pratt's defense strategy.<sup>34</sup>

As to Kenneth Olsen's positive identification of Pratt as his assailant and his wife's murderer, both he and the District Attorney omitted mention of the fact that he had positively identified another man — Ronald Perkins — in a police lineup very shortly after the fact, on December 24, 1968; they had similarly neglected to mention that police personnel had "worked with" Olsen with photo spreads for some months prior to the trial, with an eye toward obtaining the necessary ID of Pratt.<sup>35</sup>

Again, both the prosecutors and Mrs. Redd, the other witness who offered a positive ID on Pratt, "forgot" comparable police coaching, and all parties to the State's case somehow managed to overlook the fact that both Olsen and Redd had initially (and repeatedly) described both gunmen as "clean shaven," while Pratt was known to have worn a mustache and goatee for the entirety of his adult life.<sup>36</sup> This leaves Lachman's testimony that the assailants fled the scene in a white-over-red convertible "like" (but not necessarily) Pratt's; even if it *were* the same car, it was well established — and never contested by the State — that virtually the whole LA-BPP had use of the vehicle during the period in question.

Despite the obvious and extreme problems with this case, Pratt's first appeal was denied by the California Court of Appeals on February 1, 1974, with the exception that sentence was set for rehearing before trial judge Kathleen Parker due to the fact that he had been under 21 years of age at the time of the alleged crime; sentence was sustained on January 10, 1975.

On November 20, 1979, Pratt filed a writ of *habeas corpus* through the office of San Francisco attorney Stuart Hanlon, in Los Angeles Superior Court; the argument, based on FOIA disclosure of COINTELPRO documents and governmental misrepresentation at trial, was heard once again by Judge Parker, and denied on January 18, 1980 (along with a request for an evidentiary hearing in the matter).<sup>37</sup> Consequently, an identical writ was filed with the California Court of Appeals on April 10, and denied on December 3, 1980.<sup>38</sup> On April 1, 1981, the California Supreme Court joined in denying the writ and evidentiary hearing.<sup>39</sup>

Perhaps a portion of the various courts' inability to see the obvious in the Pratt case has to do with the FBI's (and its associates') continued desire to obfuscate it. For instance, in a continuation of *habeas corpus* proceedings in 1985, Stuart Hanlon was finally allowed to depose certain COINTELPRO principals such as the LA-FBI's Richard W. Held, Brendan O. Cleary and Richard H. Bloesner, as well as Ray Callahan and Daniel P. Mahoney of CCS. Each displayed a truly remarkable inability, for all their professional training in



Credit: Katy Raddatz

### Geronimo Pratt.

"recall," to remember much of anything they ever did with regard to their jobs.

Nor has justice been better regarding parole. Pratt's first hearing on the matter occurred in February 1978. Chairperson of this three-person panel was Ray Brown, former head of the Oakland Police Department's anti-BPP Squad (that smaller city's approximation of Los Angeles's CCS) from 1967-72. Although petitioned to do so, Brown refused to disqualify himself, and the panel unanimously decided to deny Pratt a release date.<sup>40</sup> The performance has been repeated on each occasion since, including the former Panther leader's last hearing, in April 1987 and, in mid-1988 the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals refused to consider the Pratt case, arguing on the sublimely technical ground that they "could not" because an attorney had filed the paper a couple of days late at one point in the appeal process.

### Conclusion

One reason for the seemingly blanket recalcitrance of the authorities — federal, state and local — in extending even the most elementary pretense of justice in the Pratt case may revolve around his quiet refusal to abandon the political principles which caused him to become a COINTELPRO target in the first place.

Pratt contends that the very fact that he remains in prison after all these years is itself proof that there is not, and never was, a sincere belief on the part of the State that he murdered Caroline Olsen. After nearly 20 years in lockup, eight of them in solitary confinement (the longest stint of any prisoner currently in U.S. captivity), he still refers to himself as a Prisoner of War and holds that, "If what they thought I was really guilty of is murder, I'd have been back on the street years ago. The average murderer serves only a few years under the rules of the California system. So, you see, I'm in San Quentin for other reasons." These, he says, revolve around the fact that he can't see himself "being other than a person who struggles for liberation," a view strongly corroborated by the State when, during his last parole hearing, it argued that he should remain in prison because "he's still very much a political man." ●

40. *Summary*, at p. 4.

34. *AI, op. cit.*, n. 27, p. 25.

35. *Summary*, at p. 3.

36. *Ibid.*, at p. 2.

37. *AI, op. cit.*, n. 27, p. 22.

38. "Majority," *op. cit.*, n. 29, p. 13.

39. Order Denying Writ of *Habeas Corpus* (Criminal No. 21826), California Supreme Court En Banc, 1 April 1981.

# U.S. Intelligence in Puerto Rico:

## Keeping Track of a Colony

by Osha Davidson\*

Since the opening days of this century, Puerto Rico, "the most important colony of the most important empire in history,"<sup>1</sup> has been the subject of a non-stop campaign of intelligence gathering and covert actions by the United States government. In 1900, just two years after the U.S. wrested control of the island from Spain, the War Department was sending its spies in the insular police force into the countryside to report on the activities of suspected subversives.<sup>2</sup> Of course, in those early days many "subversives" were Spanish loyalists. Very quickly, however, the U.S. came to realize that the greatest threat to imperial rule came from the independence, or nationalist, movement.

To counter this threat, the U.S. developed an extensive network of intelligence agencies and informants. A 1918 confidential Military Intelligence letter cited the following as "regular sources of information:" the Naval Intelligence Officer, the Marshal and Deputy Marshals for the Federal Court, a Special Agent in the Department of Justice, the Commissioner of Immigration, the Collector of Customs, Steamship and Railway ticket offices, and most important, the Chief of Insular Police, through whom, the letter says, the federal authorities are able "to keep their fingers on the pulse of the entire island."<sup>3</sup>

An intelligence report from the Navy in 1948 not only adds the Puerto Rican Department of Education to the list of "sources," but notes at the bottom of the page that copies of the report were sent to two other agencies at work on the island destined to become major players in the covert action field: the FBI and the CIA.<sup>4</sup>

The modern era of covert action began in 1960 when the FBI's J. Edgar Hoover, infuriated by the Cuban revolution, turned his recently begun COINTELPRO operation loose on Puerto Rico.<sup>5</sup> His memo to the agency's San Juan office was

explicit about the reasons for his concern:

The Bureau appreciates that the situation in Puerto Rico is unique because of conditions in Cuba, its accessibility to Puerto Rico, and the seemingly unrestricted travel of some of your citizens to Cuba...Bulet [Bulletin] August 4, 1960, advised that the more positive effort must be made not only to curtail but to disrupt the activities of Puerto Rican nationalists.<sup>6</sup>

### Puerto Rico and COINTELPRO

The Puerto Rican Independence movement was, in fact, the second target of the infamous operation (the first was the Communist Party of the U.S.A.) that was later expanded to include Dr. Martin Luther King, the Black Panthers, and virtually every leftwing group of any size in the country.<sup>7</sup> Over the next 11 years, until COINTELPRO was officially ended in 1971, the FBI undertook hundreds of operations on the island using such tactics as mail interceptions, planting editorials in "friendly" newspapers, campaigns to disrupt the personal lives of independence leaders by sending anonymous letters to spouses alleging infidelity, and "snitch jacketing" (falsely labeling members of the movement as FBI informers).<sup>8</sup>

According to a former FBI secretary, from July 1969 to December 1971 at least 40 of the San Juan Field Office's 80 agents "were basically assigned to what they call 'national security,' whose main work consisted in collecting information, penetrating and harassing the Puerto Rican independentista leaders and organizations."<sup>9</sup>

It must be remembered that while members of the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party called for an armed uprising to oust the U.S., that group had been eliminated as a real force on the island by the mid-1950s. The majority of Puerto Rican COINTELPRO targets did not advocate violence in the pursuit of independence, nor were they suspected of illegal acts of any kind; they simply wanted Puerto Rico to be a separate nation. Yet Hoover and his agents regarded them as dangerous criminals deserving of the harshest treatment. In a 1964 message from the San Juan office to Hoover, the field agent

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1. Juan Mari Bras, interview with author, May 28, 1988.

2. Letter from Corporal Leopoldo Garcia to the Chief of the Insular Police, February 24, 1900.

3. Confidential letter from Lieut. Col. Orval P. Townshend, Intelligence Officer of Puerto Rico, to the Chief of Military Intelligence Branch, Executive Division, May 11, 1918.

4. Confidential Intelligence Report from District Intelligence Officer, January 26, 1948.

5. The FBI's COINTELPRO (Counterintelligence Program), begun in 1956, used techniques of surveillance, harassment and disruption lifted from the wartime arena and placed in a domestic, civilian context. For a short discussion of how COINTELPRO was implemented in Puerto Rico see William Lichenstein and David Wilmhurst, "Red Alert in Puerto Rico," *The Nation*, June 30, 1979. For an overview of the program see Cathy Perkus, *COINTELPRO: The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom* (New York: Monad Press, 1975).

6. Memorandum from FBI Director to Special Agent in Charge (SAC), San Juan, August 16, 1960.

7. Carmen Gautier Mayoral, "Notes on the Repression Practiced by U.S. Intelligence Agencies in Puerto Rico," in *Revista Juridica de la Universidad de Puerto Rico*, 1983, #3, pp. 431-450.

8. Carmen Gautier Mayoral, "Persecution of the Puerto Rican Independence Movements and Their Leaders by the Counterintelligence Program (COINTELPRO) of the United States' Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) 1960-1971, 1978," report prepared for the United Nations, pp. 20-128.

9. Sworn Declaration of Gloria Teresa Caldas de Blanco, 25 December 1974, quoted in Gautier Mayoral, *Ibid.*, p. 126.



gloated over the success of an FBI anonymous letter operation directed against Puerto Rican Socialist Party leader Juan Mari Bras:

[A source] stated that Mari Bras' heart attack on April 21, 1964, was obviously brought on by the strain and overwork and opinioned [sic] that the anonymous letter certainly did nothing to ease his tensions for he felt the effects of the letter deeply...This particular technique has been outstandingly successful and we shall be on the lookout to further exploit our achievements [sic] in this field.<sup>10</sup>

The FBI's loathing of *independentistas* nurtured a climate of hate and violence on the island that resulted in the execution-style murders of two young *independentistas* by agents of the insular police department in 1978 on a Puerto Rican mountain top called Cerro Maravilla.<sup>11</sup>

The murders became a cause celebre on the island and have been the subject of several government investigations. Thus far, the evidence linking the FBI to the killings remains circumstantial. There is, however, reason to believe that final hearings into the affair, conducted by the Puerto Rican Senate and due to begin in early 1989, could prove such a connection. According to former Watergate prosecutor Sam Dash, who is serving as special counsel in the matter, "the role of the FBI is a significant one in Cerro Maravilla."<sup>12</sup>

According to another source close to the investigation, the Puerto Rican police agent provocateur who lured the two *independentistas* to their deaths, Alejandro Gonzalez Malave, worked closely with both the FBI and the Naval Investigative Service (NIS) on at least two joint task forces.<sup>13</sup> Gonzalez Malave bragged as much to journalist Anne Nelson.<sup>14</sup> Others, including former Puerto Rican Police Superintendent Astol Calero, believe that Gonzalez Malave was working for the FBI at the time of the Cerro Maravilla killings.<sup>15</sup>

Gonzalez Malave was himself murdered by unknown assailants shortly after the publication of Nelson's book, leading at least one knowledgeable Puerto Rican analyst to speculate that he was killed by agents of either the FBI, the NIS or the Puerto Rican police.<sup>16</sup> The police assume that the murder was the work of the *independentista* group — "Los Macheteros."<sup>17</sup>

While the FBI may be the most active intelligence force on the island, it is far from being the only one. In fact, there are so many agencies operating in Puerto Rico that one commentator has called it "the Casablanca of the Caribbean."<sup>18</sup>

In addition to the FBI, the Naval Intelligence Service, the 302nd Battalion Army Intelligence unit, the National Security Agency, and the CIA are all stationed on the island.

Since the early 1960s the FBI and the CIA have made extensive use of rightwing Cuban exiles living in Puerto Rico to spy on suspected leftists both inside the exile community and in the mainstream society,<sup>19</sup> often using the Puerto Rican police department as a go-between.<sup>20</sup> Given the close links between rightwing Cubans and various intelligence agencies, there is good reason to suspect government complicity in at least some of the many terrorist attacks waged by these exiles against leftwing targets on the island. Even the FBI attributed forty acts of terrorism, mostly bombings, to the Cuban exiles from 1970 to 1979, giving Puerto Rico the highest rate per capita of Cuban terrorism in the U.S.<sup>21</sup>

The recent case in the Puerto Rican city of Mayagüez in which a Cuban exile from Miami was injured and another Miami resident was killed when the bomb they were assembling went off prematurely, underscored the continued threat from this group.<sup>22</sup>

There have been some positive changes on the island since Rafael Hernandez Colon was elected governor there in 1984. The Intelligence Division of the police department, the unit responsible for the murders at Cerro Maravilla, was disbanded and the department is making an attempt to leave behind the old ways of terror and intimidation.<sup>23</sup>

With the apparent blessings of the FBI, the ID for decades carried out a campaign of surveillance and harassment of as many as 150,000 Puerto Ricans, mostly *independentistas*. The Puerto Rican Supreme Court will soon decide the fate of the illegally compiled files.<sup>24</sup>

While the loss of what was once a completely docile police department will certainly make things harder for federal intelligence agencies, they have many other "assets" to fall back on. At least one of the former ID policemen connected to the Cerro Maravilla murders now works for the NIS,<sup>25</sup> and the Cuban exile community maintains its links with other ex-ID agents.<sup>26</sup> And although the COINTELPRO operation was officially ended in 1971, few believe the FBI has substantially changed its ways on the island.<sup>27</sup>

A Spanish colonial minister once said "You can get away with anything in Puerto Rico."<sup>28</sup> There is still a lot of truth in that observation.

19. Gautier Mayor, "Apuntes sobre la represión actual de Puerto Rico," *Casa de las Americas*, November-December 1980, pp. 130-32.

20. Lindin, "Terrorism: Right and Left," *The San Juan Star*, February 23, 1981, p. 21, quoted in Gautier Mayor, *op. cit.*, 7, p. 444.

21. *New York Times*, October 21, 1979, p. 55.

22. Associated Press, "Puerto Rico-Bomb," June 24, 1988.

23. Lopez Feliciano, *op. cit.*, n. 17.

24. Osha Davidson, "The Bureau Goes to San Juan," *The Nation*, November 7, 1988, pp. 456-460.

25. See note 12.

26. Antonio de la Cova, phone interview with author, May 1988.

27. In interviewing ex-Police Superintendent Astol Calero, the author began a question, saying: "When the FBI ended the COINTELPRO operation..." and Calero interrupted, asking rhetorically, "Who ever said they ended the program?" Many others, including Juan Mari Bras and Carmen Gautier Mayoral, believe the program continues in much the same form.

28. Quoted in Raymond Carr, *Puerto Rico: A Colonial Experiment* (New York: Vintage Book, 1984) p. 29.

10. Memorandum from SAC, San Juan to Director FBI, May 2, 1964.

11. Osha Davidson, "The Day Puerto Rico Won't Forget," *In These Times*, July 20-August 2, 1988, p. 2. For in-depth coverage of the murders see Manuel Suarez, *Requiem on Cerro Maravilla* (Maplewood, NJ: Waterfront Press, 1987); and Anne Nelson, *Murder Under Two Flags* (New York: Tickner & Fields, 1986).

12. Phone interview with author, May 24, 1988.

13. Phone interview with author, July 1988.

14. Nelson, *op. cit.*, n. 12, p. 245.

15. Interview with author, May 26, 1988.

16. Juan Manuel Garcia Passalacqua, interview with author, May 27, 1988.

17. Police Superintendent Carlos Lopez Feliciano, interview with author.

18. Garcia Passalacqua, *op. cit.*, n. 16.

## Counterinsurgency Perfected:

# Repression against the Independentistas

by Michael E. Deutsch and Richard J. Harvey\*

In the dawning hours of August 30th, 1985, over 350 heavily armed FBI agents, recently flown in to Roosevelt Roads Naval Base from all parts of the United States, broke into 35 homes and offices in Puerto Rico, armed with the most wide-ranging search and arrest warrants. They were backed by the U.S. military and they used SWAT and Hostage Rescue Teams to arrest 13 people under an indictment filed in Hartford, Connecticut.

The second U.S. invasion of Puerto Rico had begun and, with it, the United States government implemented a crucial stage in its counterinsurgency program for Puerto Rico. This plan, developed at a conference in 1978 with the assistance of military repression strategists from Europe and Latin America, was aimed at striking a fatal blow to anti-colonial independence activists on the island.

At one apartment on August 30th, 1985, the FBI met with armed resistance as Filiberto Ojeda Rios defended his home and homeland. Ojeda, fully aware of the historical role of the FBI in the brutal repression of the independence movement, found himself surrounded by a large number of heavily armed agents with aerial support circling above his home. With every reason to believe they intended to cause death or serious bodily injury to himself or his family, he held them off with automatic weapons fire for over an hour.

Elsewhere in Puerto Rico, the FBI was busy seizing every telephone number, name, address and printed document they could find. The counterinsurgency character of the raids was clear from the FBI's codename for the operation, "D-Day." So great was Washington's fear of "subversion" that no member of the police of Puerto Rico was informed until the morning of the raids.

In what has become known as the Puerto Rico/Hartford 15 case, a total 15 Puerto Rican *independentistas* stand charged in Hartford, Connecticut, 1500 miles from their homes, families and community, with conspiracy to expropriate \$7.2 million from Wells Fargo. Most of them had never been to Connecticut in their lives but what all had in common, according to the prosecution, was their alleged membership in or support of "Los Macheteros," a patriotic clandestine organization which had claimed responsibility for numerous attacks on U.S. military and governmental installations on the island.

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### The Counterinsurgency Plan for Puerto Rico.

The role of law in "democratic" systems, particularly as applied to the Puerto Rican independence movement, was explored in detail in a secret conference entitled "Special Seminar on Terrorism" held in 1978 in San Juan, Puerto Rico. The seminar, funded by the U.S. Justice Department, gathered together experts in counterinsurgency from U.S. law enforcement agencies and throughout the world, including those experienced in the efforts to suppress liberation struggles in Ireland and Latin America.<sup>1</sup>

The Seminar planning documents<sup>2</sup> proposed a strategy to combat, in its earliest stages, the inevitable escalation of militant support for Puerto Rican independence, asserting the need for

special emergency legislation in response to armed propaganda, riots and strikes; preparation for the enactment of substantive laws making new offenses, defining more clearly certain aspects of terrorist conduct ... and its degree of severity; possible revision of laws that restrict response on the part of authorities related to arrest, search, detention and intelligence gathering ... and analysis and study of various anti-terrorist laws in effect in other countries.

The planners of the conference also stress the importance of controlling the media to discredit independence activists, referred to repeatedly in the documents as "terrorists." The documents also propose developing a "denial system" which, "by definition will deprive the terrorist of resources needed for survival, targeting legal defense funds and supportive media."

The 1978 Special Seminar stressed the need of law enforcement

1. Planning documents for this Special Seminar were sent anonymously to Michael Deutsch. A copy is on file at CAIB's office.

2. The theoretical underpinnings for the strategy developed in the seminar come from the book, *Low Intensity Operations, Subversion, Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency*, (Faber & Faber, London, 1971). The author, Frank Kitson, is the former head of the British counter-insurgency program in Northern Ireland. Kitson argues that there are three stages of insurgency and that: "the army must be geared towards and prepared for facing popular movements long before they have taken the shape of violent uprising." His three phases are:

- (1) Preparatory phase; no insurgency and little organizing, if any;
- (2) Non-violent phase; organizing and political work begins to emerge;
- (3) Open insurgency phase.

Kitson says that infiltration and population surveillance are most effective and critical in the preparatory phase.

cement for extra powers to identify potential participants in, and supporters of insurgency. The theories and proposals of the seminar have become the harsh reality of the 1980s. The U.S. government's efforts to criminalize the clandestine Puerto Rican independence movement and its supporters and the willing cooperation of the U.S. judiciary have brought about repressive changes in the law. The permanent imposition of counterinsurgency methods has developed particularly out of the federal law enforcement campaign to identify and imprison members of the U.S. based FALN (Fuerzas Armadas de Liberacion Nacional Puertorriqueno) and the Puerto Rico based patriotic clandestine "Los Macheteros".

### Surveillance and Intelligence Gathering

The Puerto Rican Civil Rights Commission recently revealed that, under the direction and assistance of the FBI, the Police of Puerto Rico Intelligence Division has developed a "Subversives List," containing approximately 100,000 individual files on those who, by reason of their suspected support for Puerto Rican independence, are viewed as threats to security.

The Subversives List targets *independentistas* for surveillance and it provides the U.S. government with a tool with which to disrupt the private lives, families and jobs of the people from all sectors of Puerto Rican society involved in First Amendment protected activities. Even lawyers who represent accused Macheteros on trial in Hartford are on the Subversives List.

In 1983 the FBI put miniature cameras with lenses the size of a dime in private residences in Chicago believed to be FALN safe houses. For six months they filmed each and every activity there and then tried to persuade a federal judge to let them use the films as evidence against four *independentista* activists charged with seditious conspiracy.<sup>3</sup>

Since no Act of Congress provides for such total invasions of privacy, the trial judge suppressed the filmed evidence. However, on appeal it was held that federal courts have the "inherent power" to issue a search warrant for video surveillance as part of the court's power to "regulate procedure." The Court of Appeals ruled that:

We do not think that the Fourth Amendment prevents the government from coping with the menace of this organization (FALN) by installing and operating secret television cameras in the organization's safe houses. The benefits to the public safety are great, and the costs to personal privacy are modest.

The unprecedented extent of audio surveillance revealed in the Puerto Rico/Hartford 15 trial shows how far the FBI will go to ignore the law. In sixteen months they intercepted over 1,000 private conversations from homes, cars and telephones of suspected Macheteros. Miniature microphones transmitted conversations to listening devices carried in briefcases in FBI surveillance cars and to reel-to-reel recorders in the FBI's listening posts.

3. *United States v. Torres*, 583 F.Supp. 86, (ND Ill. 1983).

The District Court in Connecticut was faced with defense demands that all tapes be ruled inadmissible due to the numerous proofs that the FBI had flouted federal law. This would have meant throwing out the entire government case against most of the defendants. While the court ruled that most of the FBI's violations were not relevant and that they had acted in "good faith," nevertheless, the trial judge was forced to suppress approximately 100 key tapes from the home of Filiberto Ojeda Rios because the FBI had broken the law by waiting three months before sealing them.

The Justice Department is now appealing this ruling, ultimately to the U.S. Supreme Court, where the prosecutors intend to argue that the FBI should be allowed a "good faith exception" to the law and that the government's interest in jailing suspected "terrorists" should override the public interest in the protection of privacy and freedom of speech, expression and association.

### Psychological Profiles and General Warrants

To assist in the post-arrest interrogations, the FBI brought in their Behavioral Science Unit (BSU) to provide "psychological profiles" on forms detailing, among other things, each target's family life, sexual preferences and activities, alcohol use, ways of talking, "level of paranoia," and a host of other personal data on the alleged Macheteros collected for intelligence purposes. Such profiles are part of the counterinsurgency strategy of gathering any information possible about members of insurgent movements, potential recruits and "sympathizers."

Similar tactics underlie the wholesale seizures of every scrap of writing, including children's school exercise books, poems and general literature. The FBI tried to justify seizing songs of the Cuban musician Silvio Rodriguez on the basis that such music can stir up revolutionary action. They seized U.S. Congressional hearings on the "Caribbean Basin Initiative" as a "terrorist training manual." They claimed that anything a suspected Machetero reads provides intelligence information, probative of a seditious conspiracy, and they seized all books on Marxism, Cuba, Nicaragua and Puerto Rico itself.

The defense claimed that the entire operation was not part of a legitimate criminal investigation but was instead a counterinsurgency intelligence-gathering exercise in the form of a General Warrant, and therefore unconstitutional under the Fourth Amendment. Judge Clarie agreed that more than half of the paragraphs in the warrant were so vague and broad as to require suppression. However, although more than half of the warrant was "general," he refused to suppress all of its poisoned fruits, deciding instead to go through the government exhibits one by one, thus ensuring that the evidence of most importance to the government would not be excluded.

The court thus went along in part with the government's claim that there should in effect be a "political organization exception" to the probable cause requirement of the Fourth Amendment, sanctioning the search of any alleged member based on evidence that some member of the organization might possess the items sought.

Given the scale of such searches and seizures, the sinister

implications of the "psychological profiles" and the capacity to conduct video and audio surveillance without any real control by the courts, it is hardly surprising that the FBI also has access to a sophisticated computerized cross-referencing system for storage and retrieval of massive raw intelligence data. Through an artificial intelligence computer system, the FBI can now provide tactical analysis to its agents in the field and even develop legal strategies on specific cases.<sup>4</sup>

### Preventive Detention

Under the Bail Reform Act of 1984 the government is empowered to detain people awaiting trial without bail if they are held to be a "danger to the community" or a "risk of flight."



Credit: UPI/Bettmann Newsphotos

### Filiberto Ojeda Rios as he leaves Federal Court.

Seven of the Puerto Rico/Hartford 15 defendants were detained for 16 months before the Second Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that due process imposes some limitations on the length of detention. One more remained in jail until released by Judge Clarie after 29 months. Finally, Filiberto Ojeda Rios was ordered released by the Court of Appeals after 32 months and 20 days, then the longest period of pretrial detention ever imposed in the United States. The Court, holding that due process could not tolerate his further detention, ordered the strictest bail conditions ever imposed on any defendant in the Second Circuit.

Ojeda was required to wear an electronic anklet at all times, monitored, via his lawyer's telephone, by a computer in Florida. Each time he left the apartment, where he was required to live with his lawyer, the anklet alerted the FBI. Any attempt to remove the anklet would have sent an alarm call to the FBI. He was subject to an 8:00 P.M. to 7:00 A.M. curfew, reporting daily to Pretrial Services at the Hartford courthouse and he was confined to the city of Hartford. His two requests to travel to New York, one in response to a United Nations invitation to present testimony to the U.N. Decolonization Committee, and the other to receive a human rights award

from the City University of New York Law School, were both denied.

Ojeda complied with each and every one of these stringent conditions for three months. However, on the ninety-eighth day of his bail, as he entered the Federal courthouse to report to Pretrial Services, he was seized by the FBI, taken before the U.S. Magistrate and charged with the three-year-old offense of resisting arrest in Puerto Rico on August 30th, 1985. Despite the Appeals Court ruling, the government asked for and won denial of bail while Ojeda was taken back to Puerto Rico.

In Puerto Rico, the government treated Ojeda like a Prisoner of War, refusing to confine him with other federal prisoners and incarcerating him in the U.S. Naval Base, Roosevelt Roads. There, in the "brig," he was kept 23 hours a day in a cell eight feet square in an average temperature of 90 degrees or more. The conditions and diet were found in court to be liable to cause his sudden death in view of his recent triple bypass open heart surgery. The government then moved him to the Navy Base hospital, ringed by armed guards, in a segregated wing guarded by U.S. Marshals, three miles inside the heavily-guarded base. Despite that security, the government insisted that he be tied to a hospital bed on a six foot chain.

Rather than submit to these inhuman conditions, Ojeda announced his intention of starting a hunger strike. The Federal court in Puerto Rico reacted immediately, ordering him to be detained without bail and to be deported from Puerto Rico to the Metropolitan Correctional Center in Manhattan, on the pretext that this would guarantee him better medical care and access to his attorney in New York.

At the time of writing, Filiberto Ojeda Rios, who has never been convicted of any crime, has started his fourth year of preventive detention. His detention is being challenged in the Second Circuit, where he has asked the Court to enforce its May 1988 ruling and compel the Attorney General to withdraw his demand for preventive detention. He is also challenging it on appeal to the First Circuit in Boston.

### There's Nothing Like the Old Laws...

The Seditious Conspiracy statute, more than a century old, has re-emerged with new vigor in prosecutions against Puerto Rican independence activists. Since the prosecution of the I.W.W. Wobblies in the early part of the century, seditious conspiracy has been used almost exclusively<sup>5</sup> against the independence movement, making membership in a clandestine organization the basis for criminalization.

In Chicago in 1981, 1982 and again in 1983, accused members of the FALN were charged with conspiracy to oppose the authority of the U.S. government by force to obtain the independence of Puerto Rico. A 1985 Chicago prosecution equated forceful opposition to U.S. government authority in Puerto Rico with membership in the FALN. Since seditious conspiracy is the only conspiracy statute which does not require an overt act by a member of the conspiracy, member-

4. *New York Times*, November 24, 1986.

5. See in this issue, however, the current prosecution of the U.S. anti-imperialists—the Ohio 7—for both seditious conspiracy and RICO acts, p. 47.

ship in an organization which agrees to use force to oppose U.S. presence in Puerto Rico, without *any* act of violence or force taken in furtherance of the conspiracy, is enough for a conviction.

Although an essential element of the offense is opposition to U.S. "authority," the courts have refused to allow the defense to present any international law challenge to the legality of the authority which the U.S. purports to exercise over Puerto Rico.

Thus the U.S. government is able, without going to the same lengths as the British in Northern Ireland and actually banning whole organizations, to achieve the same counterinsurgency goal of criminalizing entire groups and their members based on their pro-independence activity and to create the legal framework to prosecute the political movement without appearing to act outside neutral principles of established law.

### Unless the New Laws...

Using the shibboleth of fighting terrorism, U.S. counterinsurgency specialists are planning new laws to criminalize political association and activity. An expansive definition of terrorism was placed on the statute book in a law providing rewards to informers. The act defines terrorism as an "act of violence," (against property as well as persons) which violates criminal law "and appears to be intended ... to influence the policy of a government by intimidation and coercion." With this broad definition established, further federal statutes to outlaw other political conduct must be expected.

The U.S. government equates militant support for Puerto Rican independence with terrorism. Giving otherwise legal support (money or services) to sectors of the independence movement could well be criminalized as aiding and abetting terrorism. The potential chill on constitutionally protected activity is overwhelmingly apparent.

*Independentista* trials are characterized by serious repressive measures aimed at denying trial by their peers, excluding evidence of U.S. government repression, intimidating supporters and the general public and with the final goal of burying the movement's activists for life in the most inhuman penal conditions.

All *independentistas* in the U.S. federal courts are today virtually assured that they will be tried by jurors who are given numbers to replace their names and addresses and asked not to identify their workplaces due to violence associated with the case.

Traditionally, the jury has always been the last hope of the accused in political trials, hence the abolition of jury trial in South Africa and Northern Ireland. In the United States, the process of restricting the independence of the jury is a critical cog in the counterinsurgency machinery. Any jurors given compulsory anonymity due to the alleged violence of those to whom they are supposed to give an impartial trial can not avoid feeling prejudiced.

Even in the trial of *independentistas* on criminal contempt for refusing to testify before a grand jury,<sup>6</sup> hardly a crime of

violence, the government asked for an anonymous jury. The court then ordered the anonymous jury without even holding a factual hearing.

Historically, colonial powers have transferred independence fighters from the colony to the metropolis for trial. In 1967, the entire leadership of SWAPO (South West African Peoples Organization) was transported from Namibia to Pretoria, tried by the South African government and given very long sentences. North American patriots in their struggle against British colonialism faced laws which allowed them to be transported to Nova Scotia or even to England for trial. This practice was one of the grievances cited in the Declaration of Independence.

In the Puerto Rico/Hartford 15 trial, 15 of the 16 accused are Puerto Rican nationals, residing in Puerto Rico. The core of the government's conspiracy case and almost all of the disputed facts took place in Puerto Rico. Most of the witnesses for both sides are in Puerto Rico and the voluminous documents and electronic surveillance tapes are almost entirely in Spanish. Nevertheless, the U.S. government removed the accused from their homeland within 48 hours of their arrest, even before numerous witnesses could testify in their bail hearings.

A trial before a non-Spanish speaking jury, ignorant of Puerto Rican history and culture, cannot be a trial by their peers. The danger of prejudice, of jurors equating independence activities with being anti-American, combines with the fear already instilled into the anonymous jury to make a mockery of due process. Moreover, the jurors cannot evaluate the best evidence, the tapes and documents, in their original version.

The Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure provide for transfer of trial venue in the interests of justice and convenience. However, the U.S. courts have refused to send the case back to Puerto Rico, where the government knows that *independentistas* enjoy significant support among their people. The setting of the trial in Connecticut is clearly part of a deliberate strategy to isolate the accused from their political base and to maximize the possibilities for jury bias leading to convictions and extremely long jail terms.

### Courtroom Security

Trials of independence activists in U.S. courts have been accompanied by extraordinary security. Metal detectors, concrete bunkers, armed U.S. marshals and sharpshooters on roofs surrounding the courthouse, the public subject to multiple searches and production of identification before being

serves the subpoena and the victim, granted "use" immunity and stripped of all Fifth Amendment rights, must answer virtually all questions, however political or personal or even relevant. Refusal to answer or untrue answers result in jail for contempt or perjury.

In 1982, five U.S.-based independence organizers and supporters, who had all previously served sentences for refusing to answer grand jury questions, were re-subpoenaed and found guilty of criminal contempt after refusing to provide intelligence information about the independence movement. The prosecution asked for a 15-year sentence. The judge gave them three years and they were denied parole under a regulation made specially for them, on the theory that they had aided bombing and murder by refusing to testify.

6. The Justice Department has repeatedly usurped the federal grand jury subpoena power to compel information for investigative purposes. The FBI

allowed to attend the trial; all these have become common practice.

Requiring photographic identification of spectators is an obvious form of intelligence-gathering and members of the public who come to the court, as well as those who stay away, are given the impression that the defendants are dangerous terrorists who pose a personal threat to the jury and the general population.

This counterinsurgency tactic is aimed at repression of actual or potential supporters, discouraging media coverage of all but the prosecution's version of the case and creating a climate of fear in the community and most especially in the minds of the jury.

*Independentistas* convicted in U.S. courts have routinely received draconian sentences designed to hold them for life.<sup>7</sup> Counts are frequently run consecutively with maximum time on each and in some cases, in which the accused have claimed Prisoner of War status, refusing to submit to the court's jurisdiction, illegal sentences have been imposed.<sup>8</sup>

Prison conditions for Puerto Rican independence activists, whether awaiting trial or serving sentences, have been designed to isolate them from their families and community, to break them physically and psychologically and aimed at developing informers against the movement among the ranks of the prisoners.<sup>9</sup>

### Provocateurs and Informers

Provocateurs play a key role in counterinsurgency tactics. The role of the FBI in the cover-up of the assassinations of two young *independentistas* at Cerro Maravilla in 1978 was exposed by Manny Suarez in his book, *Requiem on Cerro Maravilla*. In 1978, Alejandro Gonzalez-Malave was employed as a spy by the FBI-trained Intelligence Division of the Police of Puerto Rico, to lure Arnaldo Dario Rosado-Torres and Carlos Enrique Soto-Arrivi into a supposed plot to blow up a radio tower. When they arrived at the tower, unarmed and with no explosives, Malave dove for cover while the others were ambushed. They were forced to kneel and were brutally tortured by the police before they were shot dead.

The killings and the ensuing coverup led to a public outcry which finally resulted in the prosecution of 10 officers for perjury and for obstructing justice. The FBI was widely criticized for its attempts to cover up the facts. Only when public pressure became overwhelming did they take any action. Given the

7. Fourteen imprisoned Puerto Rican independence combatants are serving sentences between 35 and 90 years. William Guillermo Morales, who escaped from U.S. custody and whose extradition was recently refused by Mexico, has now received political asylum in Cuba. Before his escape, he faced a 99-year sentence for possession of explosives.

8. Fourteen captured Puerto Rican freedom fighters, relying on U.N. General Assembly Resolutions and the 1977 Protocols to the Geneva Conventions, have assumed the right under international law to Prisoner of War status. They refuse to recognize the jurisdiction of the U.S. courts.

9. A special prison for women, in the basement of the federal prison at Lexington, Kentucky, targeted political women including the *independentista*, Alejandrina Torres, and two anti-imperialist prisoners, Susan Rosenberg and Sylvia Baraldini, for special isolation under conditions of sensory deprivation, psychological torture and forced strip searching akin to rape. For more on Lexington Prison see, this issue, p. 49.

tangled network of counterinsurgency in Puerto Rico, the FBI is widely presumed to have known from the outset that Gonzalez-Malave was a provocateur and that Rosado-Torres and Soto-Arrivi had been murdered in cold blood.

### The Mass Media

A critical aspect of the entire counterinsurgency strategy proposed in the 1978 Special Seminar in San Juan was the use of the mass media to discredit and dehumanize the political activists. The inflammatory use of the words "terrorist" and "terrorism" has come to replace any rational discussion of the issues underlying the actions of those targeted. The government seeks to place the media under its discipline when covering the armed struggle for Puerto Rican independence.

The recent sympathetic coverage given Mr. Ojeda Rios by the Puerto Rican media played a key role in the government's decision to take him off the streets in his recent arrest. The government was heavily criticized in the press coverage of his treatment in Puerto Rico. Ojeda was therefore removed from the island to New York, with the evident aim of depleting public concern in Puerto Rico. In a further demonstration of official displeasure, the editor of *El Mundo*, one of Puerto Rico's leading daily newspapers, was sacked expressly because of his critical coverage of the persecution of Ojeda.

The government uses the media for its own propaganda; Edwin Meese and William Webster held a press conference following the August 30, 1985 arrests, proclaiming a victory against international terrorism and asserting that the accused were aided by the government of Cuba. Adjectives such as "Cuba-controlled" are as regular a part of the 1980s counterinsurgency lexicon as "communist-dominated" was in the McCarthy era of the 1950s.

While Margaret Thatcher has recently imposed censorship on the British broadcast media covering members of lawful organizations in Northern Ireland, in the U.S. the combination of self-censorship and editorial pressure is serving to minimize coverage of repression in Puerto Rico, virtually excluding the Hartford trial from the mainstream U.S. media.

### Conclusion

A review of these counterinsurgency tactics indicates that the 1978 Special Seminar on Terrorism in San Juan was not merely a theoretical exercise. Each and every program considered there has been implemented and developed to an alarming extent. Permanent changes have occurred in investigative, trial and prison procedures which threaten not only *independentistas* but all political activists in the U.S. and Puerto Rico.

However, there has been little public outcry from traditional civil liberties and human rights groups. The terrorism label has done its work of intimidation. Just as techniques of repression developed by the British in Northern Ireland are now being used by the police and courts in Britain, U.S. repressive tactics in Puerto Rico are coming home to roost throughout the U.S. law enforcement and judicial system. The failure to appreciate this reality will be fatal to democratic values in our society. ●



## Counterinsurgency in the Courtroom:

# The "Resistance Conspiracy Case"

by Laura Whitehorn\*

Low intensity warfare against the people of Central America has its domestic reflection in counterinsurgency programs against solidarity, resistance, and national liberation movements within the U.S. Reestablishing and strengthening domestic counterinsurgency has been one of the Reagan administration's key programs for the past eight years. This was indicated when Reagan initiated his first term with the pardon of Mark Felt and Edward Miller, the only two FBI agents ever prosecuted for illegal acts carried out as part of COINTELPRO. But pardoning FBI agents was only the first step. The programs themselves had to be protected, the Levi Guidelines of 1976 had to be circumvented, and covert domestic operations had to be expanded, to meet the Reagan era demand for repression.

Eight years later, counterinsurgency operations constitute a central and far reaching aspect of "law enforcement" in this country. These programs have been rendered more unaccountable than ever, nestled under the expansive wing of the National Security Council and nurtured in the fertile medium of "anti-terrorism." In the name of "anti-terrorism," structural shifts have been effected in law enforcement, to be inherited by the Bush administration.

The "Resistance Conspiracy" case currently in pre-trial in Washington, D.C., and the seven-year investigation leading to it, reveal some of the component elements in current U.S. domestic counterinsurgency. The government signaled the significance of the case when U.S. Attorney Jay Stephens announced the indictment on May 11, 1988, saying: "Let this be a warning to those who seek to influence the policies of the U.S. through violence and terrorism that we will seek unrelentingly to bring them to justice." All seven of those charged—Alan Berkman, Tim Blunk, Marilyn Buck, Linda Evans, Susan Rosenberg, Laura Whitehorn and Betty Ann Duke (who is not in custody)—are long-time anti-imperialist activists for human rights. They are charged with conspiracy and a number of bombings of military and government buildings, including the U.S. Capitol after the U.S. invasion of Grenada and the shelling of Beirut. (Among the overt acts charged in the indictment is the practice of placing warning calls to these buildings; the bombings resulted in property damage but no injury to personnel.)

### Counterinsurgency as Anti-Terrorism

The ideological scaffold for expanding domestic counterinsurgency is "anti-terrorism," wherein all militant leftist or anti-imperialist resistance, and all national liberation

struggles, become "terrorist." Anti-terrorism is the McCarthyism of the 1980s, sweeping a wide spectrum of left groups and positions into one category of evil, and justifying the curtailing of civil liberties and abrogation of democratic rights.

In this world view, no differentiation can be made between indiscriminate attacks on civilians, on the one hand, and, on the other, strategic campaigns against militarized settler colonies or military personnel and installations, or victimless acts of armed propaganda. Little by little, guerrilla warfare itself is defined as "terrorism." The PLO, Robert Mugabe, the Sandinista government, the FMLN of El Salvador—all have been or are "terrorists" in Reagan's lexicon.

Once anti-imperialist resistance is converted into "terrorism," it can be combatted by a wide variety of counterinsurgency measures. Repressive measures taken against "terrorists" are likely to generate broad opposition.

Watergate, the exposure of COINTELPRO, and the Levi Guidelines of 1976 limited the FBI's ability to engage in much domestic spying. The FBI had to develop ways of circumventing the guidelines and they had to build in "plausible deniability" for then FBI Director William Webster, for those occasions on which operations over-stepping legal boundaries might be investigated.

One way to circumvent the guidelines was to "discover" that a domestic target of investigation actually has foreign links and therefore allow the wider range of techniques permissible in foreign counterintelligence operations. FBI agent H. Thomas Moore, one of the case agents in the investigation and prosecutions leading to the Resistance Conspiracy indictment, told a Grand Jury in Baltimore, Maryland on June 7, 1985, that he was assigned to "the Foreign Counter-Intelligence Squad." He stated that he was working on an investigation "of the details of a Brinks robbery which occurred in Nyack, New York, which has developed into a Foreign Counterintelligence domestic terrorism matter." Similarly, the original investigation of CISPES in 1981 was justified by the FBI as being probative of "terrorist links to foreign countries."

At the same time, another FBI agent active in the investigation of the Resistance Conspiracy case in Baltimore testified in related court proceedings in New York and Philadelphia that he was the FBI liaison sitting on the National Security Council. The NSC's role in helping to bypass limitations on both foreign and domestic counterintelligence operations has recently been well documented. The assignment of special Agent David Major to the NSC as FBI liaison suggests illicit expansion of domestic counterinsurgency; Major simul-

\*Laura Whitehorn is a defendant in the "Resistance Conspiracy Case."

taneously played a central role in the intelligence gathering leading to the D.C. indictment. Among other functions, he was the affiant for the search warrant in a key search and seizure in the case, and he personally oversaw the perusal of documents from that operation.

Investigations of domestic revolutionary groups are pursued with search and destroy methodology. In 1982-85, an investigation and search for New Afrikan and white revolutionaries was carried out in the northeast. Computer code named "BOSLUC" (combining "Boston," the initiating FBI office, and "LUC" for Raymond Luc Levasseur, one of the Ohio 7), this massive "law enforcement" mission combined the resources of as many as seven different federal, state and local police agencies.

Part of this investigation was "Western Sweep," a literal sweep of western Connecticut following some alleged leads or "citings" of revolutionaries in that area. This sweep, led from the headquarters of the Massachusetts State Police, included circulating children's photographs and medical histories to teachers and doctors, stopping commuter traffic to hand out "wanted" photos and ask the public for information, and using media coverage consistent with the most dramatic Hollywood images conjured by the word "manhunt."

Exhaustive follow-up investigations continued for at least two years. BOSLUC gave birth to a modernistic, high-tech operation involving unprecedented sharing and coordination of computerized information among law enforcement bodies. Local and state police forces were thus able to upgrade their available resources through access to federal systems. The federal political police were able to root their investigations in local police forces on a continuing basis. Everyone was able to expand the access and usefulness of the resources in the 1980s.

### **The Joint Terrorist Task Forces**

This kind of cooperation has been institutionalized in the creation of Joint Terrorist Task Forces. In 1979, a JTTF was created to join the forces of the FBI and the New York City Police Department to investigate suspected plans to disrupt the Democratic Convention by the FALN (Fuerzas Armada de Liberacion Nacional) of the Puerto Rican Independence Movement. Since then, the JTTF in New York has played a major role in attacking the Black Liberation Army (BLA), the FALN, the liberation struggles they are a part of, and the U.S. anti-imperialist movement. Agents of the New York JTTF participated in the interrogation and torture of Sekou Odinga of the BLA and William Morales of the FALN in 1983. In November of 1983, the JTTF showed off their "war room" for TV news cameras by running through an impressive exercise: the computer-simulated capture of New Afrikan revolutionary, Dr. Mutula Shakur.

Documents and police testimony culled from the years of investigation leading to the Resistance Conspiracy indictment show the involvement of the JTTF at every step of the way, in New York, New Haven, Washington, D.C., and elsewhere. The JTTF has coordinated not only the investigation but also the prosecutions of all prior cases relating to this indictment.

The JTTF now exists in most major U.S. cities. These structures extend the political police and "anti-terrorism" into local police jurisdictions a logical end product of the LEAA drive to militarize and professionalize local police forces. Expanding federal domestic military power and covert capabilities and blurring the lines of accountability, JTTF serves as the foundation of low intensity counterinsurgency.

### **The Courts and the Prisons**

The criminal justice system, too, is applied to crush resistance. The vagueness of conspiracy as applied to political activity has long been evident, and conspiracy charges have been repeatedly used to put political prisoners behind bars usually for inordinately and disproportionately long periods, often amounting to life sentences. The Resistance Conspiracy indictment uses conspiracy in this way, and now adds "aiding and abetting." The government does not know who did any of the bombings. Therefore, they construct the indictment so that they only have to prove the defendants are associated through common politics and/or clandestine work, in order to convict them of aiding and abetting the bombings. This is a move towards making membership in some political organizations illegal, without having to change any laws or risk being perceived as abrogating the First Amendment.

Conditions political defendants face in prison serve to repress. Political prisoners are regularly denied bail and held in preventive detention for periods as long as four years. Laura Whitehorn, one of the Resistance Conspiracy defendants, is now one of the longest held pre-trial detainee in preventive detention. By alleging "special security needs," law enforcement personnel make sure that defendants are prevented from meeting together, doing legal research, and having contact with legal and community groups; they are held in isolated and inhumane living conditions. In the Resistance Conspiracy case, this has included 23-1/2 hour lockdown, no exercise or fresh air, and being handcuffed and shackled during all legal visits and meetings (as well as in social, noncontact visits).

In the courtroom, "special security" prevails as well. Spectators must show identification and go through multiple searches. In at least one case, they were also required to be photographed before entering the courtroom.

The case is scheduled to be heard in a special courtroom where a bulletproof glass wall divides the spectators from the court. This wall serves no security purpose, especially as spectators have previously passed through two separate searches before entering the courtroom. It does, however, have an important propaganda function to broadcast the extraordinary character of this case, and to convey the message that the defendants are dangerous "terrorists."

All these devices and techniques have come about with a minimum of legislation or public awareness. The Reagan administration has been able to generate severe repression with little accountability. Investigation and watchdogging are needed, but to defeat this expansion of domestic counterinsurgency, a resounding rejection of the government's attempts to label resistance as "terrorist" is necessary as well. ●

## U.S. Political Prison:

# Lexington Prison High Security Unit

by Mary O'Melveny\*

On August 19, 1988 the United States Bureau of Prisons closed the doors to a small underground women's prison in Lexington, Kentucky known as the "High Security Unit" (HSU). In the less than two years that the HSU was operational, this 16-bed control unit (which never housed more than six women) became a focus of national and international concern over human rights abuses by the U.S. government, and direct proof that political prisoners not only exist in the United States but are the targets of a well-organized counterinsurgency campaign.

Lexington's origins and opening were shrouded in secrecy, without congressional oversight or public scrutiny. By the time the HSU was closed 22 months later, it had been a formal agenda item at the U.S.-U.S.S.R. Summit Conference, had been condemned by national and international human rights advocates (including a 38-page report by Amnesty International in London), had been held by a U.S. federal judge to have been operated in violation of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, and had come to symbolize America's hypocrisy on the issues of human rights and political prisoners.

The government's closing of Lexington is, in its view, a mere transferring of its "mission" to a larger women's facility in Marianna, Florida, a remote area near the Georgia and Alabama borders.<sup>1</sup> Thus, while the particular Lexington experiment may have ended, the government has not disbanded its mission. It is important to examine and analyze Lexington's lessons, particularly as they reflect counterinsurgency within U.S. borders against those who resist racism, genocide, colonialism and imperialism and end up as political prisoners in U.S. jails and prisons.

My first visit to the Lexington "High Security Unit" occurred in December 1986. My client, Susan Rosenberg, an anti-imperialist North American political prisoner, and Alejandrina Torres, Puerto Rican independentista and proclaimed POW, were the first women prisoners in the federal prison system to go to the High Security Unit when it opened in October 1986. The "new" federal underground prison unit was a prison within a prison. Fundamentally, in intent and practice, the HSU was an isolation unit (although the Bureau of Prisons denies this label) intended to closely monitor and control its residents. The conditions were startling. The HSU was in a basement of an old 1930s building,

formerly owned by the Public Health Service, which was "remodeled" in 1986 to house 16 women at a taxpayer expense of approximately \$735,000, and an annual per woman maintenance cost of more than \$55,000, more than the annual cost for women in all other federal prisons.

This modern dungeon bore little relationship to the larger (1,700 inmates) prison at Lexington within which it sat amidst rolling hills and green Kentucky grazing land. Its residents could not see the pastoral landscape which lies past the double-razor wire shrouded building. Ceiling-high windows were so thickly screened that daylight was barely perceptible.<sup>2</sup> The HSU prisoners lived in constant artificial light. Their only link to the world above was a television set, an occasional ten-minute social telephone call, and less frequent visits from attorneys. The things we take for granted as basic components of human existence—natural light, fresh air, color, sound, human contact, variable smells—were conspicuously, intentionally absent from the lives of the women confined to the HSU. Also denied were those equally important, slightly more subtle human needs—privacy spheres, intellectual stimulation, comradeship, continuing connections to family, friends and caring others, undisturbed sleep, health care, educational and recreational options, and spiritual comforts.

### The Political Basis of Assignment To Lexington

The Bureau of Prisons made no secret of the political basis for the designation of the first women sent to this unique experimental control unit. Susan Rosenberg was said to be "associated with the FALN, Black Liberation Army and other terrorist groups" and one who had "threatened in open court to take her armed revolution behind prison walls."<sup>3</sup> Alejandrina Torres was also said to be associated with the FALN and with the militant struggle for an end to the colonial domination of Puerto Rico. Both women were to spend nearly three months alone in the underground silence of the HSU,

2. There were two groups of cells separated by a corridor. The women were housed on the "dark side" of the corridor until the summer of 1987 when a tour by the ACLU National Prison Project questioned the basis for the room assignments. Windows on the "light side" were still heavily screened, but were located at regular window height, permitting slightly more light to enter.

3. Memorandum from William A. Perrill, Warden, Federal Correctional Institution, Tucson, Arizona to Jerry T. Williford, Regional Director, Western Regional Office of the BOP dated August 19, 1986, designating Ms. Rosenberg for transfer to maximum security custody status at the HSU. Also cited by Warden Perrill was Ms. Rosenberg's asserted "link" to the 1979 escape of Assata Shakur from prison in New Jersey, even though those charges had been dropped by the government in 1985.

\*Mary O'Melveny is the attorney for Susan Rosenberg and will represent her in the up-coming "Resistance Conspiracy" case due for trial this spring.

1. Letter dated September 30, 1987 from BOP Director J. Michael Quinlan to Congressman Robert W. Kastenmeier (Dem.-Wis.).

## Reflection on Being Buried Alive

by Susan Rosenberg

We stood at the electronically controlled metal gate under the eye of one of eleven surveillance cameras, surrounded by unidentified men in business suits. We were wearing newly issued beige short sleeve shirts, culottes, and plastic slippers. We were in handcuffs. An unidentified man had ordered us placed in restraints while walking from one end of the basement to the other. The lights were neon fluorescent burning and bright, and everything was snow white—walls, floors, ceilings. There was no sound except the humming of the lights, and nothing stirred in the air. Being there at that gate looking down the cell block made my ears ring, and breath quicken.

The cell block was 100 feet long with 9 cells on one side and seven on the other. They were all locked shut. Alejandrina Torres (Puerto Rican Prisoner of War) said "it's a white tomb, a white sepulcher." I nodded, and whispered "it's Stammheim." (Stammheim is a special isolation prison in West Germany). The official in charge said to the voice box on the wall "open R1 please, I have Torres and Rosenberg." A disembodied voice answered "please move a little to the left, I can't see you on my screen..." For nearly three months we were the only two prisoners there, then a third political prisoner, Silvia Baraldini, and a social prisoner, Debra Brown, were brought there.

After our first week Alejandrina and I were "teamed" by officials. We were informed that we were permanently designated to the HSU, expected to serve our entire sentences of 35 to 58 years there. We were told that we had no due process because the director of the Bureau of Prisons, acting as an agent for U.S. Attorney General Meese, had personally approved our placement, and only he could approve our removal. When we asked if there was any way for us to get out of the HSU we were informed that if we changed our associations and affiliations a change would be considered. The staff joke was you got a "one-way ticket" to the Lexington HSU.

All contact with everyone was monitored, surveyed, and analyzed. No contact was allowed with anyone other than attorneys and immediate family for the first 16 months. The phone calls and mail were utilized for ongoing political surveillance against our friends, and our movement. There were never set policy rules so procedures changed daily, making life completely unpredictable.

At first we were told that we could not receive any mail unless we submitted a list of 15 names to be investigated. Only those who passed the investigation would be allowed to communicate with us. We refused to submit such a list. After three months this "rule" was changed and we were allowed to receive and send mail but not allowed any political literature. All mail incoming and outgoing was logged, and read by the Special Intelligence Lieutenant assigned to

the HSU. Publications which were rejected as "promoting violence, and were a threat to the orderly running of the institution" included, *The Nation*, *Claridad*, *MERIP Reports*, *CovertAction*, and others.

At one point we were allowed to review rejected political literature. We would be brought into the front of the unit under the eye of the camera and one or two officers, seated at a card table and told "you have one hour." Once, the administration had both Alejandrina and I review the literature at the same time. The officer put two cartons of literature on the table and said, "girls, you can't exchange literature, remember we're watching you."

The unit was shown to every law enforcement official who came to the prison. This meant that we were on constant display. It got so bad that officers would bring their wives and children to tour the unit. A group of high school students came and so did Ed Meese. We made a sign that read "FREE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS IN U.S. PRISONS—STOP HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES," and would display it when we heard a tour coming.

One day a man toured the unit. As he came on the cell block he said, "So this is the dead wing." He had an Irish accent, and we asked where he was from. He said he knew all about the "boys" (the Provisional IRA). He said this must be the "terrorist isolation wing" which was similar to the "dead wings" throughout Irish and British prisons.

While law enforcement and "terrorism" specialists had full access to HSU tours, they were denied to groups such as the National Lawyers Guild, the Kentucky Chapter of the National Organization for Women, and the American Sociology Association.

Everyone who wrote us asked how we felt about what was happening and how we resisted it. It was never an easy question to answer, and it still isn't. Small-group isolation is a form of mental/psychological maltreatment, recognized by the tortured and torturer alike. The isolation, the sensory deprivation, the constant inactivity, and the forced dependency for basic life necessities on jailers who both hate you and fear you mean that existence is a constant confrontation where the four walls become the world.

We survived relatively intact only because we knew what the Justice Department was trying to do to us, and that knowledge enabled us to hold onto our political commitments and identities with strength. When we were enraged and tempted to live out the stereotypical behavior that they expected (i.e., to be violent) we had a collective of each other. This unity of the political prisoners and some of the social prisoners allowed us to laugh, to find humanity in each other, and to carry on. Despite the most extreme efforts of the Bureau of Prisons, they did not win. We never lost memory or reality of ourselves or our political opposition to U.S. imperialism. ●

surrounded by guards who were tutored to hate and fear them,<sup>4</sup> their every movement monitored by cameras and in log books, cut off from virtually all contact with families, friends, and political supporters.

In January 1987, Susan Rosenberg and Alejandrina Torres were joined by Silvia Baraldini, an Italian national who had worked for years in the U.S. anti-imperialist movement before her 1983 conviction for conspiracy to liberate Assata Shakur from a New Jersey prison. As with the others, politics formed the obvious basis for this transfer:

Although Ms. Baraldini scores well enough on her Custody Scoring Sheet to be considered for a custody reduction, she is a member of the May 19th Communist Party which is sympathetic to other radical groups including the New African Freedom Front and the FALN.<sup>5</sup>

The Bureau of Prisons advanced two criteria for placement of women prisoners in the HSU. The first was the one it used to try to justify sending all three political prisoners to the Unit:

Candidates for placement in this Unit are those females whose confinement raises a serious threat of external assault for the purpose of aiding the offender's escape.<sup>6</sup>

The second, said to be applicable on only a "space-available basis," was for those women with "serious histories of assaultive, escape-prone or disruptive activity." Later, the BOP's criteria became even more explicitly political:

[A] prisoner's past or present affiliation, association or membership in an organization which has been documented as being involved in acts of violence, attempts to disrupt or overthrow the government of the U.S. or whose published ideology includes advocating law violations in order to "free" prisoners...<sup>7</sup>

No one, once sent to the HSU, could get out unless "the original factors for placement in the Unit no longer apply and when placement in a less secure facility becomes appropriate."<sup>8</sup> For political prisoners, the message could not have been clearer—renounce the political affiliations and beliefs which had led the FBI/BOP to define them as candidates for the HSU, and they could get out. Fail to do so and remain in isolation, denied all basic components of humane

4. The women reported several occasions where unit guards remarked on having studied them in a special "school" to prepare them for dealing with the "terrorists" who were to be their charges at the HSU. Photographs and profiles were apparently part of the materials studied. During later litigation about the HSU, the government never produced any documents or information about such special training, but one BOP official, Southeast Regional Director Gary R. McCune, admitted that he had attended a special course given by the FBI about how to deal with "terrorists" in prison.

5. December 23, 1986 Memorandum from Pleasanton FCI Case Manager, Terry R. Ennis to Acting Associate Warden Dave Wischart.

6. September 2, 1986 Memorandum from G.L. Ingram, BOP Assistant Director to BOP Regional Directors.

7. September 30, 1987 letter from BOP Director J. Michael Quinlan to Congressman Robert W. Kastenmeier (Dem.-Wisc.).

8. *Op. cit.*, n 6.

existence and political connection, for 35 to 58 years. All were told they had a "one-way ticket" to the HSU.

For nearly two years these women lived alone together, cut off from the rest of the world in all but the most superficial ways. Until their situation eventually provoked outcries from human rights groups, religious communities, families and friends, attorneys and political activists, they existed in a sort of physical and psychic limbo, buried but still very much alive.



Credit: DAedalus Productions

Alejandrina Torres, Susan Rosenberg, and Silvia Baraldini (left to right) in Lexington HSU.

### The Strategy of Isolation and Denial

The defining feature of the Lexington HSU women's control unit was small group isolation. Isolation as torture is not new. In fact, it began as part of the Nazi experiments at Dachau, used first on the Communists and homosexuals imprisoned there. There is a science to the use of isolation, as witnessed by the fact that all conditions in isolation are remarkably similar. Nelson Mandela's isolation in South Africa's Pollsmoor High Security Prison shared the same essential characteristics as those in Uruguay's "La Libertad" prison/interrogation center.<sup>9</sup> The isolation units in Italy and West Germany known as "white cells" or "dead wings" are likewise strikingly parallel to the Lexington HSU.

Nearly ten years ago, Amnesty International condemned the use of small group isolation and solitary confinement against the Red Army Faction and 2nd June Movement in West Germany's Stammheim high security prison as "torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment" of prisoners, in violation of the 1977 United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, and the 1966 United Nations Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The detailed Amnesty report on Stammheim chronicled the effects of long-term confinement of these

9. See Maxwell Bloche, "Uruguay's Military Physicians: Cogs in a System of State Terror," Report for the Committee on Scientific Freedom and Responsibility, American Association for the Advancement of Science, Washington DC, March 1987, pp. 6-8.

political prisoners in extreme isolation and described the inhumane conditions they were subjected to in these "high security" wings.

There can be no doubt that the Lexington HSU was conceived by U.S. authorities as an experimental version of Stammheim's isolation wings, and as part of a deliberate effort to destroy revolutionary and radical political prisoners and their capacity to organize support for their politics. The known life-threatening effects of such long-term confinement on the RAF prisoners did not go unnoticed by U.S. counterinsurgency experts, and the reality of Lexington as it unfolded over 20 months made evident that the significant incapacitation of its residents was indeed the intended effect. Thus, at the 1978 U.S.-sponsored "Special Seminar on Terrorism in Puerto Rico" workshop, participants were specifically encouraged to examine the "interesting lessons" from West Germany and Italy and the conditions employed against political prisoners at Stammheim which resulted in the deaths of four RAF leaders.<sup>10</sup>

### The Conditions Underground

The severe isolation of the HSU was accompanied by sensory and by often extreme voyeurism and sexual harassment by the mostly male staff, as well as sleep deprivation, overt hostility by guards, completely arbitrary rules and rules changes. No meaningful work or recreational opportunities or educational programs were offered. Personal property was forbidden, or so severely restricted as to be meaningless, as a way of establishing an independent identity in the midst of a totally controlled, sterile environment. Twenty-four-hour camera and visual surveillance recorded every word and every activity: moods, illnesses, menstrual cycles, eating patterns.

Correspondence was severely censored for many months. Prison guards prepared logs documenting the names and addresses of every person who corresponded with the HSU prisoners. Telephone calls were also very limited and were not only monitored, but were also the subject of detailed memos analyzing the conversations, listing the names of all people referred to in the conversations, and describing the assertedly "relevant" portions of what was said. These memos went to other agencies for evaluation and follow up.<sup>11</sup>

### The Effects of Lexington on the Prisoners

The more time which passed underground, the more overwhelming the effects. Susan Rosenberg described the conditions as "existential death," Debra Brown as akin to being "in the grave."<sup>12</sup> Sleep deprivation experiments<sup>13</sup> led to insom-

10. Terrorism Conference Background materials, pp. 25-6. For more on this seminar, see Richard Harvey, this issue, pp. 42-43.

11. These telephone logs came to light in the litigation brought against the Justice Department in March 1988 (Baraldini v. Meese, Civ. No. 88-0764).

12. Letter from Susan Rosenberg, ABC "20/20" interview with Debra Brown.

13. Sleep deprivation tactics, another common torture technique, occurred sporadically over several weeks-long periods.

**According to Dr. Richard Korn, the mission of Lexington High Security Unit was "...to reduce prisoners to a state of submission essential for their ideological conversion."**

nia, exhaustion and unventilated rage. So too, the denial of privacy or personal space, coupled with constant sexual harassment either in fact or in threat, and the effort to infantilize the women because of

their enforced dependency on the hostile guards who defined every aspect of their lives.

Early on, the women began to experience some of the predictable psychopathological effects of longterm isolation: vision impairment, memory loss, inability to concentrate, loss of appetite and weight, and lethargy.<sup>14</sup> In August 1987, Dr. Richard Korn, a clinical psychologist and correctional expert, issued his first report for the American Civil Liberties Union's National Prison Project based upon a tour of Lexington and interviews with the prisoners. His findings about the conditions of Lexington were stark. First, he observed that "the power of the institution over the prisoners was total, beyond questioning and accounting, even if it appeared to violate traditional fairness or common sense."<sup>15</sup>

Among the factors affecting the psychophysical well-being of the prisoners were rules "tending to depersonalize and deny individuality" (drab, colorless government clothing, sterile and bleak living spaces, denial of adequate reading materials, severely limited personal effects). Dr. Korn concluded that the restrictions imposed upon the women's lives were nothing less than an ideological attack which was "carefully deliberate, in every detail."

The psychological consequences for the prisoners were "evident" to Dr. Korn: claustrophobia, chronic rage reaction, suppressed, low-level to severe depression, onset of hallucinatory symptoms, defensive psychological withdrawal, blunting of apathy. Likewise, there were concrete physical reactions: loss of appetite, marked loss of weight, exacerbation of pre-existing medical problems, general physical malaise, visual disturbances, dizziness, heart palpitations.

Finding that Lexington had "many similarities" to the federal prison at Marion, Illinois and to West Germany's Stammheim prison, Dr. Korn had "no question" about the nature of the experiment being conducted:

to reduce prisoners to a state of submission essential for their ideological conversion. That failing, the next objective is to reduce them to a state of psychological incompetence sufficient to neutralize them as efficient, self-directing antagonists. That failing, the only alternative is to destroy them, preferably by making them

14. See, S. Grassian, "The Psychopathological Effects of Solitary Confinement," *American Journal of Psychiatry* (November 1983), pp. 1450-54; Amnesty Federal Republic of Germany Report; H.D. Nelson, "Long Term Health Effects of P.O.W. Incarceration" (Paper, Resident Talk, December 7, 1987); The Center for Victims of Torture, "Therapeutic Models: A Beginning" (Draft, April 26, 1988).

15. "The Effects of Confinement in HSU" by Dr. Richard Korn, p. 3 (hereafter "Korn Report"), appended to August 25, 1987 Report on The High Security Unit for Women, Federal Correctional Institution, Lexington, Kentucky, by National Prison Project of the ACLU Foundation (hereafter referred to as the "NPP Report.")



desperate enough to destroy themselves.<sup>16</sup>

### The Effects of Lexington as a "Deterrent"

Bureau of Prisons officials referred endlessly to the "mission" of Lexington. Deterrence was clearly another central feature of that mission. Some political prisoners, such as Carol Manning and Marilyn Buck, were "designated" to Lexington long before they were eligible for transfer anywhere, while others were threatened with the prospect of being sent there. Even though in-prison behavior was so obviously irrelevant to the designation decision, social prisoners at Pleasanton FCI, one of the BOP's general population prisons, were "threatened" with the spectre of the HSU if they did not "behave."<sup>17</sup>

In addition to increasing the level of intimidation and control over women in the federal prison system, Lexington obviously served as a chilling deterrent to political activists on the outside, particularly as the BOP expanded its placement criteria to include actions which might "disrupt the government" or membership in groups which advocated "law violations."<sup>18</sup>

### The Political and Legal Opposition to Lexington

Central to the movement against Lexington was the prisoners' determination not to be broken by the never-ending attempts to destroy them, even as their physical health evidenced the strain. They were joined first by their families, friends and by lawyers who offered crucial support (including women lawyers in Kentucky who immediately mobilized to offer assistance). The Puerto Rican independence movement embraced the issue and played a crucial role in bringing attention to the existence of the Unit and the inhumane treatment of the prisoners. Religious leaders and thousands of other individuals responded to the issue as one of basic human rights, rejecting the Reagan rubric of "terrorism" as a justification for inhumane conditions or political persecution.

A tour in September 1987 by the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church resulted in a highly condemnatory report which directly confronted the political issues of Lexington, and the concern that it was a secret experiment in political persecution.<sup>19</sup> Not only did the Methodists' report state that the "extreme isolation...from all meaningful human contact and from any hope of such contact in the future" was "cruel and unusual punishment," but they called for the U.S. government to officially recognize the existence of political prisoners.

In October 1987 the Bureau of Prisons announced that it would close Lexington and move its "mission" to a new, larger women's prison in Marianna, Florida. However, despite the reports by the National Prison Project condemning Lexington as a "living tomb" which was "incompatible" with constitu-

tional guarantees, and the concerns raised by the Methodist Church, Amnesty International, and others, the BOP continued to keep it open, refused to transfer the women to general population facilities, and persisted in defending the HSU as "safe" and "humane." By not backing away from the politics of Lexington, the BOP continued to keep the women there, causing them to suffer the maximum damage from its intolerable conditions.

A lawsuit was finally begun in March 1988 seeking injunctive relief to close the Unit and transfer the women. After voluminous testimony by deposition and at a trial in June 1988, a federal judge ruled on July 15, 1988 that the BOP and Justice Department had unlawfully designated prisoners to Lexington based on their past political associations and personal beliefs.

Judge Barrington Parker found that political views of Silvia Baraldini and Susan Rosenberg which were "unacceptable" to the government could not form a constitutional basis for sending them to Lexington, particularly when their in-prison conduct had demonstrated no basis for finding them to be escape risks. The Court rejected the government's effort to make it a "crime" for prisoners to be "members of leftist political organizations, even if those groups have engaged in unlawful pursuits in the past," and found that the government had failed to document any basis for their assignment other than "their alleged past connections with leftist groups promoting ideas that some government officials did not favor."

While breaking ground on the matter of recognizing the political nature of Lexington—and thus the existence of U.S. political prisoners—the Court rejected the Fifth and Eighth Amendment claims in the lawsuit, finding that the treatment of the prisoners did not constitute cruel and unusual punishment. However, Judge Parker did find that the issue was a close one since the Unit had at times "skirted elemental standards of human decency," particularly in light of the "exaggerated security, small group isolation, and staff harassment," all of which "constantly undermine the inmates' morale." He castigated the government for its "shameful" delays in remedying some of the more egregious conditions, and for operating "a unit that in many respects, measures below acceptable standards for federal prisons."

Amnesty International monitored the Lexington lawsuit, sending an observer to the trial. In August 1988, Amnesty issued its report which defined the HSU as, "an experimental control unit," with a "deliberately and gratuitously oppressive" regime in which:

The constant and unjustified use of security chains, the repeated strip searching, the almost total lack of privacy, the claustrophobic lack of sensory stimuli, freedom of movement, possessions, choice of activities and incessantly small range of contacts cannot be other than debilitating.

Whereas most small security units compensate for any necessary physical limitations by granting prisoners extra privileges and greater autonomy, the reverse appears to

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.

17. Interviews with Linda Evans and Laura Whitehorn, political prisoners then at FCI Pleasanton, September 1987.

18. *Op. cit.*, n. 7.

19. "Report of Visit by General Board of Global Ministries Team to High Security Unit for Women, Federal Correctional Institution, Lexington, Kentucky," October 15, 1987 (hereafter "Methodist Report").

be the case at HSU.<sup>20</sup>

In addition, Amnesty's observer found "overwhelming evidence that the prisoners at HSU have deteriorated physically and psychologically during their custody there. There has to be a prospect that one or more will finally resort to suicide should their custody at HSU be prolonged."<sup>21</sup> Amnesty recommended Lexington's immediate closing and made clear that Marianna "should not replicate HSU."<sup>22</sup>



Credit: DAedalus Productions

Political prisoners Susan Rosenberg and Silvia Baraldini under constant surveillance at Lexington. The HSU has been compared to the infamous "dead wings" used to incarcerate IRA suspects in British prisons.

### The Government's Response

The government responded to the Court ruling by ignoring its direction to move the women to general population federal correctional institutions. Instead, it designated the three political prisoners to pre-trial holding facilities (Metropolitan Correctional Centers), ensuring that they would continue to experience many of Lexington's most serious health-threatening conditions. It also appealed, a process which may take months or even years.

The new "high security" prison in Marianna, Florida opened for business in August 1988 without shower curtains, educational programs, or even adequate medical staffing. By October 1988 more than 50 women had been sent to Marianna, none of them political prisoners. However, the government was already arguing for an expedited appeal because of

an "urgent" need to transfer four Puerto Rican POWs to Marianna based upon their "FALN" membership,<sup>23</sup> and the government's intent to send other women political prisoners to Marianna remains clear.

Greater control and repression of federal women prisoners will be the hallmark of Marianna regardless of the outcome of the government's appeal from its loss on Lexington. The existence and public acceptance of control units was largely unaffected by the court case. Marion remains locked down, despite national and international criticism of its inhumane conditions, and increasing numbers of state control units are being opened and filled.<sup>24</sup>

### The Lessons of Lexington

In addition to the experiment in new forms of psychological torture, Lexington was an intelligence-gathering mission. The government learned a great deal from the Lexington experiment—about the psychology of women political prisoners, about the effects of long-term small group isolation and the denial system, and about the nature and content of the resistance mounted against the HSU. No surprise that every letter to the women was read, and the sender's name and address recorded. No surprise that analytical memoranda were made of every phone call. No surprise that the government never retreated from justifying the need for the Unit or the appropriateness of its operating conditions.

Lexington opened, existed and "closed" in the midst of increasing retreats from constitutional guarantees both for persons charged in political cases and for political prisoners. Preventive detention and house arrests, together with the imposition of exaggerated sentences in political cases and the deliberate silent complicity of the mainstream press, all set the stage for the inhumanity of a Lexington control unit, and the larger counterinsurgency strategy it represents.

In other countries, the number and operation of special political prisons has been directly affected by the level of public exposure and resistance. These countries at least recognize that political prisoners exist. Thus, the lessons of the Lexington experiment must always be premised on exposing the myth that the United States has none. This done, the political repression and violations of international law which Lexington symbolizes can be more easily recognized and resisted.

The political prisoners held at Lexington, like their counterparts in isolation at Marion and elsewhere in U.S. prisons, were and are victims of psychological torture. They were saved from joining the ranks of the "neutralized" and "disappeared" through growing public education generated by unrelenting political organizing. This model can and should be applied to expose the larger issues of how the U.S. government treats political resistance in the United States, and how to prevent more live burials. ●

20. Amnesty International: USA, "The High Security Unit, Lexington Federal Prison, Kentucky," (AI Index: AMR 51/34/88). Amnesty appended its 15-month correspondence with the BOP about Lexington to the report. Observer's Report, p. 15.

21. *Ibid.*

22. *Ibid.*

23. See government's Motion To Expedite Appeal, filed September 9, 1988 in *Thornburgh v. Baraldini*, C.A. 88-5275 (D.C. Court of Appeals), pp. 6-10.

24. See, e.g., Amnesty International Report on "Allegations of IM-Treatment in Marion Prison, Illinois, USA" (AMR 51/26187), May 1987; "An Uneasy Calm..." Report on the U.S. Penitentiary at Marion by John Howard

## State Defense Forces:

# The Government Readies for Repression

by Ed Connolly\*

Underpinning plans to mobilize the National Guard for foreign combat, at least 24 states sanction volunteer paramilitary groups to quash opponents of the next war.<sup>1</sup> Know generically as State Defense Forces, the groups now maneuver at cadre strength but will balloon by state-imposed conscription when called to the streets.

Even strategists within the Department of Defense acknowledged 15 years ago that the economy can not sustain a regular military large enough to control world resources demanded by American appetites. Accordingly, under the Total Force doctrine established by Melvin Laird, the DoD has appropriated and armed the National Guard for deployment outside the country instead of continental defense. By 1988, the National Guard contributed nearly half of all Army combat units.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, since 1983 approximately 176,000 National Guard troops had trained overseas, including 38,000 guardsmen sent to Central America, despite some governors' strong opposition.<sup>3</sup> A misadventure involving only partial mobilization of the National Guard—which has not occurred in almost 40 years—would provoke unprecedented civil strife; a contingency judged worth risking for commerce, the State Defense Forces suggest.

Working through the Office of Policy and Liaison in the National Guard Bureau, the Reagan administration began early in its first term to advocate state bills to organize volunteer militia. Many states had sponsored home guards under federal aegis, particularly during the Second World War, but most units were defunct after 1950. Statutes still on the books varied. A model act issued by the office has guided legislators, so that the new foot soldiers march to the same missions across the country.

On governors' authority, the paramilitary volunteers are chartered to suppress "civil disorders," fight "terrorists and saboteurs," and occupy "key facilities."<sup>4</sup> In practice, such constabulary missions are emphasized, while disaster relief, the prime National Guard assignment, is an afterthought. Out of 428 total call-ups in 1987, the Army National Guard responded to three civil disturbances. State Defense Forces

are used to subdue the republic, not protect it.

### Fantasy Junction

The various State Defense Forces (they have no uniform title) recruit mostly by word of mouth, with notable exceptions. For instance, the Utah State Guard manned a booth at a gun show to find candidates. Lieutenant Dwight McCarthy, chief recruiter, stocked the booth with literature for the clandestine paramilitary group, the Aryan Nation.<sup>5</sup> McCarthy gained notoriety as host of a radio talk show for the white supremacists on a station now off the air, KZZI. Following newspaper accounts that Utah State Guard members pilfered weapons from the U.S. Army depot at Tooele and were engaging in night combat exercises with live ammunition, the Governor was forced to reorganize the group.

The Virginia Defense Force was less selective. It posted flyers in shopping centers inviting everyone to join, as part of an advertising campaign. With no screening system, thousands swelled the ranks. To practice crowd control, units policed the Apple Blossom parade and Montpelier races in battle dress, says State Representative Gladys Keating of Franconia, who convened a subcommittee to recommend command changes. Since the shotgun approach backfired, some units have narrowed the field for new prospects. In November, the *Washington Post* carried a bulletin-board item in its Virginia supplement: "The Northern Virginia Defense Force is recruiting to fill vacancies within the unit. No military experience is necessary to join but Vietnam veterans with combat experience are preferred."<sup>6</sup>

*Soldier of Fortune* magazine published a nine-page article promoting State Defense Forces, "Citizen Soldiers: Fighting for the Right to Defend America," focusing on the Texas State Guard and a splinter group commanded by former Rhodesian mercenary Robert Holloway.<sup>7</sup> Unlike other sanctioned State Defense Forces, the Texas State Guard has continuously operated for more than 50 years. In 1984, the behavior of the 105th Military Police under Holloway became so extreme that he was discharged and the remainder of the battalion disbanded, although former members were later integrated within other units. After the split, Holloway formed his own unit, the Texas Reserve Militia, to drill for the day when thousands of alien terrorists cross the Mexican border. In an extended argument for State Defense Forces, Professor George Stein of Miami University in Ohio warns that 50% of

5. *Salt Lake Tribune*, articles by Mike Carter, November 22 and 23, 1987, p. B-1 (both days). Author updated the information with interview of Carter, December 14, 1988.

6. See also, *Washington Post*, August 9, 1987, p. B-1.

7. *Soldier of Fortune*, May 1987.

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1. "Point of Contact List (State Defense Force Program)," National Guard Bureau, Washington, DC, 1987. The list is also available from the author or CAIB.

2. "The National Guard Update," Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, Publication Number 214-288, June 1988.

3. "Central America U.S. National Guard Activities," Washington, DC: General Accounting Office, Report Number GAO/NSIAD-88-195, July 1988.

4. This kind of language is commonly found in State Defense Force literature. See for example, "State Military Reserve Basic Handbook" from California, CAL SMR Manual 600-10, 1983, pp. 4-5.

the U.S. Border Patrol has reserve commitments.<sup>8</sup>

### SDFAUS Rallies Support

In September 1988, Stein spoke at the fourth annual conference of the State Defense Association of the United States (SDFAUS), a private fraternity based in Kansas City, Missouri to foster federal and state support. His lead presentation on the employment of State Defense Forces assails an "orgy of wishful thinking about a changed Soviet Union and renewal of peaceful coexistence [that] is the tune of the times." Stein asserts that State Defense Forces are the missing link in national security for fighting the threat he sees. Other presentations at the conference included "Soviet *Spetsnaz* and Protection of Key Assets," delivered by a Defense Intelligence Agency representative, and one titled "Reflections on International Terrorism" by a civilian professor at the National Defense University. Unless psychologically enfeebled, the State Defense Forces must stave off attacks by Soviet proxies on vacant National Guard armories.

SDFAUS co-founder, Major-General C.D. "Gus" Lambros, who commands the Ohio Military Reserve, testified before members of the House Committee on Armed Services during review of two proposed bills that would free government weapons and training to State Defense Forces in peacetime.<sup>10</sup> Title 32 of the United States Code permits state governors to create State Defense Forces but requires amendment to allow federal assistance. The general indicated such obsolete equipment as M-16 and even old M-1 rifles would supply arsenals.<sup>11</sup> He is a veteran of the legendary police violence during public demonstrations at the 1968 Democratic national convention in Chicago. Lambros also knows the value of the M-1 in "civil disorders"—he was defense counsel to the National Guardsmen who shot and killed four students at Kent State University in May 1970, following the U.S. invasion of Cambodia.

Congress took no action on the bills, so states still supply all equipment. Given the deepening deficit, proposed state entitlements fare poorly with the Office of Management and Budget. Nonetheless, Lt. Col. Alexis Siefert, the spokesperson for State Defense Force matters at the National Guard Bureau, says Secretary of Defense Frank Carlucci is contemplating reintroduction of legislation for federal aid during the next congressional session.

Federal aid is anticipated but meanwhile units are well-armed. For example, the Oregon National Guard Reserve stipulates mandatory training with 12-gauge shotguns and riot batons for "security specialists."<sup>12</sup> The Guard also plans to

take enemy prisoners, according to the operative field manual. Further, federal equipment is available to state governments for civil emergencies under provisions laid out in the Army's Nixon-era GARDENPLOT civil disturbance plan, secretly resuscitated and revamped to fit the 1980s.<sup>13</sup>

### Command Chain Mapped

Under many state laws, every able-bodied citizen between 18 and 45 years except members of the regular military belongs to the militia. National Guard and State Defense Force cadre are regarded as the organized militia; everyone else pooled together, the unorganized militia. The National Guard serves both as a state service under command of a governor through



Credit: State Defense Force Association of the U.S.

### SDFAUS Executive Director Jerry Fogel and Vice President George Bush.

the adjutant-general, and as a federal service that can be called by the President without warning and without congressional approval. By contrast, each State Defense Force answers only to the governor through the adjutant-general.

While the State Defense Forces have no defined federal mission, they have developed functional links to the national command chain. During peacetime the Army domestic defense plan runs through the force commander, who is responsible for the five standing continental armies. The National Guard and State Defense Forces report to state area commands called STARCs or SACs. Officers representing the regular military forces in a region report to the STARCs along with state civil defense directors and Federal Emergency Management Agency envoys.

When the national command authority—presumably the President—executes one of several contingency plans including military support of civil defense, then the force commander's title and authority changes suddenly to Commander-in-Chief, Forces Command. That leap gives the four-star general command not only of the Army, but also sweeping powers over other services for protection of the continental United States. SACs become JSACs or Joint State Area Com-

8. *Military Review*, September 1984.

9. The Defense Intelligence Agency officer was Lt. Col. Henry Shields, U.S. Air Force Reserve. The National Defense University professor was Dr. Joseph Goldberg.

10. The two bills: (a) H.R. 3068, introduced by Rep. Ike Skelton, (Dem.-Missouri), and (b) H.R. 2581, introduced by Rep. James Traficant, Jr. (Dem.-Ohio).

11. Hearing on H.R. 3068, H.R. 2581, H.R. 3140, and H.R. 2873, before the Readiness Subcommittee, House Committee on Armed Services, September 29, 1987, p. 33.

12. "Security Specialist Training," Oregon National Guard Reserve Regulation Number 350-1, Oregon National Guard Reserve Training Program, January 10, 1986, Appendix B, p. B-2.

13. Interviews with Maj. Gen. C. D. Lambros, Ohio Military Reserve, and Lt. Col. Nathan R. Smith, California Army National Guard, December 12, 1988.

mands under the general's direction, while the state adjutant retains control over the State Defense Force. Lately though, State Defense Force volunteers have been representatives in contingency planning at the JSAC level.

By any standard, State Defense Force members are zealots. They receive no pay, buy their uniforms, and technically are liable for court-martial. In the event National Guard troops are federalized for foreign combat duty, the cadre structure now in place can marshal draftees from the unorganized militia which upon a governor's order can be culled from motor vehicle records. Most states annually allocate only about \$250,000 to their State Defense Force, usually with a cadre cap of some 1,500 members. Half of the funding can be consumed by one or more fulltime administrators, so such bodies are generally shoestring operations. California accepted a small bequest to its Military Reserve, despite standing prohibitions. The possibility of private monetary contributions in other states has not been scrutinized.

Two circumstances at least temporarily mitigate fresh ex-

pansion of State Defense Forces: (a) stalled legislation to provide federal equipment and training, and (b) antipathy from state National Guard officers.

### Conclusion

Citizens concerned about the evolution and implications of armed state volunteer forces should meet those involved now and bring them into open dialogue and peaceful challenge in the light of day, rather than waiting for inevitable future confrontations.<sup>14</sup> Meetings are held at National Guard armories and are accessible. Apathy or inaction toward the very real dangers these paramilitary forces present to constitutional rights is the best weapon they can ever hope to have at their disposal. ●

14. See also, "State Defense Forces: U.S. Secret Militia," by Peggy Moore and Mike Meyer, *Resist Newsletter*, November 1988, pp. 3, 4 and 8. The best, most up-to-date citizens resource on National Guard issues is the *National Guard Update*, available from: National Guard Clearinghouse, 438 N. Skinker, St. Louis, MO 63130. Tel.: 314-727-4466.

## COINTELPRO Gets a New Name

by Louis Wolf

Officially, the FBI's so-called Counterintelligence Program (COINTELPRO) was ended by the Bureau in 1971. The *New York Times* quoted a former FBI official involved in COINTELPRO that the program was continuing apace at least as of the time he left the Bureau in mid-1974.<sup>1</sup>

In 1979, CAIB received information from a knowledgeable source that COINTELPRO was continuing. Further, it was then operating in Puerto Rico and elsewhere under two new FBI cryptonyms: COMTEL and TOPLEV, presumably for Communications Intelligence and Top Level. A Freedom of Information Act request was filed with the Bureau in March 1979 for information on these programs. A reply dated August 3, 1979 from David G. Flanders, then head of the FOIA office in the FBI's records management division, stated as follows:

This is in further response to your Freedom of Information-Privacy Acts request for information pertaining to Comtel and Toplev programs in Puerto Rico. The fact of the existence or nonexistence of information of the kind you request is properly classified...

CAIB's FOIA request was thus summarily denied by the FBI, and subsequently on appeal, in January 1980 by the Department of Justice.

The first sentence of the Flanders letter refers to the "Comtel and Toplev programs," more than implicitly indicating their reality, while the ensuing declaration regarding "their existence or nonexistence" is, in the view of CAIB editors and a half dozen experts who have read hundreds of such letters from government agencies and thousands docu-

ments released in response to FOIA requests, an informal acknowledgement that the programs do exist.

Indeed, there is documented evidence in the Church Committee report of TOPLEV's existence. The FBI alerted its field offices in October 1967 that it was initiating a program for "the development of ghetto-type racial informants," and that it was expanding its operative "Black Nationalist Groups TOPLEV Informant Program."<sup>2</sup>

If these blinking red lights tell us anything, it is that many people's suspicions about ongoing COINTELPRO-type operations and the striking similarities of certain events and patterns with the COINTELPRO-of-old, such as the FBI's massive investigation of CISPES described in this issue, as well as the high-profile harassment, break-ins, infiltration of meetings, applications for employment with progressive organizations, mail-opening, telephone service interference, FBI visits to families and employers, even occasional open physical threats of violence against individuals as well as some still-unsolved assassinations of well-known political activists, many of the above which have been documented by the Movement Support Network, are strong indicators that COINTELPRO is alive and well.

The FBI should not conclude that by changing the name of the COINTELPRO operation, journalists, investigators, activists, and Congress will be fooled. The FBI hopes that by going further underground they can dampen the criticism of covert activities like COINTELPRO. The FBI is in for a surprise. People have memories. ●

2. SAC Letter Number 07-72, October 17, 1967, "Final Report of the Select Committee to Study Government Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities," Supplementary Detailed Staff Reports on Intelligence Activities and the Rights of Americans, Book III, April 23, 1976, pp. 493-94.

1. *New York Times*, February 24, 1975.

# The World Without War Council

by Richard Hatch and Sara Diamond\*

The pleasant old house on Martin Luther King Jr. Way in Berkeley, California is unremarkable except for the blue Mobius strip sculpture and a small sign reading "World Without War Council." But the World Without War Council (WWWC) is a most unusual "peace" group. In that house, Robert Pickus, head of the WWWC, pitched one of the authors, a chemist, to train for travel to the Soviet Union. "We can use science as a lever against the Soviets," Pickus said. He pulls many such levers in his attacks against what he considers the "hate America" orientation of the U.S. anti-intervention movement.

This unique "peace" group claims to be challenging the mainstream peace and anti-intervention movements while it "seeks an alternative to the Pentagon's" plans. However, the WWWC places a high priority on finding "non-military ways to conduct and resolve conflict" in accordance with U.S. government foreign policies. Since its founding in 1958, the WWWC has annoyed many other peace groups. Former board members of the WWWC have labelled the WWWC as "divisive" and charged it with "deception."<sup>1</sup> A close examination of the WWWC reveals that it is directly connected to the U.S. government and a network of U.S. intelligence assets.

The WWWC operates from offices in Berkeley, Chicago, Seattle, and through its project in Washington, D.C., the James Madison Foundation. The two top officers are Robert Pickus, president of the WWWC and George Weigel, president of the James Madison Foundation. The WWWC's activities range from high-level policy studies to propaganda attacks on liberal or leftwing causes. In between, the WWWC collects information on the various elements of the U.S. peace/anti-intervention community in the U.S. and tries to draw non-governmental organizations (NGOs) into closer contact with the State Department.

All of these activities are cloaked in "peace" jargon; for example, information gathering is described as "building a directory of peace groups." Attacks on other anti-war groups are portrayed as attempts at self-criticism to help build a better movement. The actions of the WWWC provide a case study in "public diplomacy" applied to domestic opposition.<sup>2</sup>

\*Richard Hatch is a professional research chemist and free-lance writer. Sara Diamond is a sociologist and author of the forthcoming book, *Spiritual Warfare: The Politics of the Christian Right*, South End Press, 1989.

1. *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, March 9, 1987.

2. Gilbert Robinson, former special advisor to the Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy, ironically said: "As a people, we are still uneasy with the concept of public diplomacy, since it smacks of manipulation, mind control, and 'propaganda.'" Hearing before the Subcommittee on International Operations of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the House of Representatives, July 16, 23, August 6, and September 24, 1986.

## Central America

Central America is a major area of the WWWC's "public diplomacy." The WWWC has organized public events to support Reagan administration policies in Central America. Some of these events suggest possible involvement in U.S. government projects. The WWWC claims to be working for non-violent solutions, but parallels Reagan policy by blaming nearly all regional problems on Nicaragua. The WWWC characterizes opponents of the Reagan administration's policies as (at least) dupes of totalitarian forces. The WWWC couples attacks on progressive religious and other anti-intervention groups with a lack of criticism of Nicaraguan counter-revolutionary, Guatemalan, Honduran or Salvadoran government abuses.

The WWWC supposedly rejects the use of military force in Central America. M. Holt Ruffin, former executive director of the WWWC's Seattle office, claims that of speakers brought on tour by the WWWC "not one...has expressed support for the policy of military support for the *contras* (Arturo Cruz whom we brought to Seattle in November 1984, did not support the *contras* then.)."<sup>3</sup> Pickus repeated this claim in an interview but added that the WWWC supported the *contras* "politically but not militarily."<sup>4</sup> But in 1984, the WWWC's Chicago office published a recommendation for non-military aid to the FDN to preserve "the option of returning to the present policy."<sup>5</sup> These hair-splitting rationalizations serve to cover a number of *contra* propaganda events managed by the WWWC.

## CIA Propaganda Tours

The WWWC arranged speaking tours for Nicaraguan *contra* leaders Arturo Cruz and Humberto Belli in 1984-1986. Cruz spoke in Chicago and Seattle in November 1984. In April 1985, Cruz admitted that the CIA had paid him with funds laundered through an unidentified foundation, even before he joined the *contra* directorate. The CIA supposedly cut off his payments after House Intelligence Committee chairman Lee Hamilton complained that Cruz might be lobbying Congress while being paid by the CIA. Intelligence sources said the payments were part of a CIA plan to encourage political opposition to the Nicaraguan government.<sup>6</sup>

3. *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, April 4, 1987.

4. Interview with Sara Diamond, August 22, 1988.

5. *An American Strategy of Peace; Toward a Constructive Foreign Policy in 1984 and Beyond*, World Without War Council-Midwest, 1984.

6. *Wall Street Journal*, April 23, 1985 p. 64; *Washington Post*, April 25, 1985 p. A35. The CIA also reportedly pressured the Nicaraguan business alliance COSEP to persuade Cruz to boycott the November 1984 elections in an attempt to discredit the Sandinistas. *New York Times*, October 21, 1984. p. 12.



## WWWC and the U.S. Institute of Peace

Max Kampelman, Robert Pickus, and George Weigel all work together with the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), a U.S. government established non-profit corporation "to promote peaceful resolution of international conflicts." Like the National Endowment for Democracy, the USIP is entirely federally funded. Kampelman is a presidentially appointed ex-officio member of the USIP board; Weigel's publisher Evron Kirkpatrick is a board member of the USIP. Pickus received an Institute grant for surveys of the "activities of non-governmental organizations in the peace, security, and world affairs fields for the years 1983-86." [Author's note: now extended through 1988.] The James Madison Foundation received a grant for similar work.

The USIP is governed by a board that includes the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and the Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and, as an ex-officio member, the President of the National Defense University. The chairman of the USIP, John Norton Moore, is a consultant to the President's Intelligence Oversight Board<sup>1</sup> and chairman of the National Security Council Interagency Task Force on the Law of the Sea. Other board members of USIP include William Kintner, a former high level CIA planner, and Robert Turner, a former CIA lawyer and counsel to the Intelligence Oversight Board.<sup>2</sup>

USIP grants have funded such "peace" advocates as Reagan intelligence adviser Paul Seabury and the former CIA chief of station in Turkey, Paul Henze. James Billington, who spoke at a SDI seminar for Congressional representatives sponsored by the WWWC, works with Weigel on an academic project funded by the USIP. The USIP granted Weigel's project \$91,400; this and Pickus's grant of \$57,200 were among the largest given out by the Institute. Billington is a professor, former CIA officer and consultant who is now the Librarian of Congress.

Aside from the particular recipients of USIP grants, the Institute is, by law, a part of the U.S. intelligence apparatus. The legislation that established the USIP in 1984 specifies the "The director of Central Intelligence may assign officers and employees" of the CIA to the USIP. The Institute is also authorized to use and disseminate "classified materials from the intelligence community." Similar to government funded "area studies" of foreign countries and political trends, the USIP represents an organ through which the CIA and its scholarly assests can better study domestic movements challenging U.S. policy. ●

1. *Developing Cooperative Forces in the Third World*, eds. Charles Wolf, Jr. and Katharine Watkins Webb (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1987).

2. *Fishers of Men or Founders of Empire*, David Stoll, (London: Zed Press, 1982), p. 83; *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, June 30, 1987.

Cruz's support later shifted to Oliver North's secret organization which paid Cruz \$7,000 per month. Ruffin's claim that Cruz was opposed to military support for the *contras* is clearly false; Cruz was paid by the CIA, which was directing *contra* operations.

It is unknown whether Cruz was actually on the CIA payroll when he was touring with the WWWC, but this matters little to the WWWC. WWWC still distributes literature that berates those who protested Cruz's appearances in the U.S. The WWWC claims credit for press coverage for "this heroic man's [Cruz's] ideas" which were heard over shouts of "CIA stooge."<sup>7</sup>

Besides sponsoring two speaking tours for Humberto Belli WWWC also promoted Humberto Belli's two books attacking the Nicaraguan government for alleged human rights violations. Ruffin's denials aside, when the WWWC brought Belli to speak he had already worked in a secret relationship with the *contras*. According to Edgar Chamorro, former *contra* directorate member in charge of propaganda, the FDN faction of the *contras* paid Belli, and the CIA provided the funds to publish one of his books. Chamorro wanted to publish the book identified as FDN but Belli and the CIA didn't want to make that fact public.<sup>8</sup> While pushing for pressure on Nicaragua, but not yet admitting connections to military forces, Belli could have the maximum impact on the liberal religious groups that he targeted.

According to Chamorro, Belli then founded the Puebla Institute with CIA help to continue such work; WWWC board members Weigel and James Finn are now board members of the Puebla Institute. Pickus said Belli's and Cruz's CIA ties are irrelevant. "If true, that's the right way for the CIA to spend its money," he said, despite of laws barring the CIA from propagandizing the U.S. public.<sup>9</sup>

In addition to arranging tours for CIA assets, the WWWC also participated in a May 1985 conference in Seattle "Inside Nicaragua: The Sandinista Impact" sponsored by CARP and CAUSA, two tentacles of the Unification Church of Rev. Sun Myung Moon. Holt Ruffin spoke on a panel with Thomas Dowling, George Clift, Matthew Morrison and Geraldine Macias. Morrison was the executive director of CAUSA Northwest. CAUSA is a virulently anti-communist organization which has been a major donor to the *contras*. Clift is a former State Department officer. Geraldine Macias and her husband Edgard Macias were volunteers for ARDE. Formerly based in Costa Rica, ARDE is now defunct but had fielded *contra* units inside Nicaragua with CIA support.

James Madison Foundation President George Weigel shows open contradiction with the WWWC's stated emphasis on non-violent resolution of conflict. Weigel signed a statement by PRODEMCA (an acronym which stands for Friends of the Democratic Center in Central America) calling for military aid to the Nicaraguan *contras*.<sup>10</sup> PRODEMCA was a

7. WWWC handout "What Do You Do III," December 1984.

8. *Packaging the Contras: A Case of CIA Disinformation*, Edgar Chamorro, Monograph Series No. 2 published by the Institute for Media Analysis, New York, 1987, p. 51.

9. August 22, 1988 interview with Sara Diamond.

10. *New York Times*, March 15, 1986.

conduit for U.S. financial support of the Nicaraguan newspaper, *La Prensa*, a U.S. psychological warfare asset. The *La Prensa* funding came from the National Endowment for Democracy, an "independent" foundation created by the U.S. government to engage in overt and covert operations. PRODEMCA was part of Oliver North's illegal lobbying network and received funding from convicted North co-conspirator Carl "Spitz" Channell's National Endowment for the Preservation of Liberty.<sup>11</sup>

### Selling Star Wars

The WWWC's involvement with government propaganda programs goes beyond Central America into Outer Space for Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative (Star Wars.) The WWWC postures as an objective, critical promoter of debate on important issues, but its performance on the subject of SDI is just as poor as on Central America. Essentially pro-SDI, the WWWC claims that detractors' "technical attacks (e.g. Union of Concerned Scientists) have been vigorously rebutted as scientifically inaccurate. Factual material, it appears, was selected and distorted to serve a preconceived political position."<sup>12</sup> The unstated implication of the WWWC over the "political position" of those opposed to SDI is a propaganda technique that recurs in WWWC publications and statements. This tactic is a far cry from the open debate called for by the WWWC.

Pickus and Weigel submitted a draft pro-SDI Reagan speech proposal to Max Kampelman, a chief U.S. negotiator in Geneva.<sup>13</sup> In an accompanying memo to Kampelman, Pickus and Weigel offer their services: "In any event, we shall shortly be sending you two further (and briefer) memoranda on the public diplomacy side of things."

The WWWC and Pickus in particular are closely associated with Kampelman and a group of veteran psychological warfare operators. In the 1960s, Kampelman, who has appeared at numerous WWWC events, was an officer of Operations and Policy Research, Inc. which the CIA paid for contract research. Kampelman proclaimed his pride for the work done by OPR, Inc. even after the disclosure of its CIA backing. An overt function of OPR, Inc. in the late 1950s was assisting the USIA (U.S. Information Agency) in the selection of books to be used in U.S. propaganda overseas.<sup>14</sup> Kampelman's partner in OPR, Inc. was Evron Kirkpatrick, Jeane Kirkpatrick's husband.<sup>15</sup>

11. *The Chronology*, Scott Armstrong, ed. (New York: Warner Books, 1987), pp. 233, 358.

12. *op. cit.*, n. 7.

13. Before Kampelman became Reagan's Geneva negotiator he had been working with an NED project. Exchange, a project of Freedom House, has received more than \$375,000 from the NED for a propaganda operation that sends out neoconservative articles to journalists in 50 countries. Kampelman originally helped select the journalists to receive the mailings from the project. Exchange also was assisted by Melvin Lasky, who had been the editor during the 1960s of *Encounter*, a CIA-funded publication. (*The Nation*, May 24, 1986, p. 720); for more on *Encounter's* ties to the CIA see *The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence*, Victor Marchetti and John Marks (New York: Knopf and Co., 1975).

14. *The Higher Circles*, G. William Domhoff (New York: Vintage Books, 1971), p. 270; *The Nation*, November 11, 1978. See also footnote 13 on Kampelman and Exchange, an NED project.

15. Evron Kirkpatrick held various positions in the Office of Strategic

### The American Initiatives Project

The WWWC-managed American Initiatives Project (AIP) is involved in a variety of foreign policy programs. The AIP claims:

...resources will be brought to bear in the main arenas in which U.S. foreign policy is shaped: with leaders of public affairs organizations in the world affairs field; with media, both electronic and the major opinion journals; with government, in both the legislative and executive branches. A program undertaken in cooperation with the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA) and several intellectual centers is planned.<sup>16</sup>

The AIP meets the needs of the U.S. government for SDI public diplomacy. Kenneth Adelman, director of ACDA states that the agency is making a push to reach out to "religious groups and civil groups." These activities are exactly the sort of items that Pickus lists when he describes his plan for working with the ACDA.

Pickus boasts that he performs some sort of "consultations" for the "Department of State (Bureau of Public Affairs, Bureau of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, and the Office of the Undersecretary for Political Affairs), the Office of Long-Range Policy Planning, and the USIA." For the James Madison Foundation end of the Pickus organization, George Weigel is an advisor to the United States Information Agency.<sup>17</sup> But Weigel performs a much more important service for the State Department's Senior Seminar program. He helps in a nine month training program for high-level State Department staff being considered for advanced appointments. Weigel provides a course in what Pickus calls "political geology"—information on the origins, ideologies and current manifestations of major U.S. political movements.<sup>18</sup>

### U.S. Intelligence Linked Think Tank

The AIP is most directly linked to the U.S. intelligence establishment through its advisory board member, Professor Paul Seabury. Seabury is a political science professor at the University of California at Berkeley, a longtime intelligence

Services (OSS) and in State Department intelligence work from 1945 to 1954, including Deputy Director of the Office of Intelligence and Research. He was directly involved in 1948 with Operation Bloodstone, one of the first of many U.S. covert schemes to bring Nazi war criminals into U.S. intelligence operations.

In 1952, Kirkpatrick participated in top secret meetings with General Walter Bedell Smith, then Director of the CIA, and others, to plan the "national psychological warfare program for cold war operations" and "ideological warfare against the USSR." Kirkpatrick is now a board member of the James Madison Foundation and the publisher of George Weigel's immodest newsletter *American Purpose*. Kirkpatrick's Heldref Publications is one of the largest publishers of academic social science research in the United States.

16. WWWC AIP project outline, undated; distributed by WWWC along with an advisory board list dated January 1984.

17. WWWC-Seattle annual report 1984; Pickus interview, August 22, 1988. The WWWC has also worked directly with the U.S. Information Agency; as early as 1980 the WWWC received a grant of \$2000 for work related to exchange programs. Hearings before the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, March 2 and 9, and April 27, 1983, pg. 91.

18. Pickus interview, August 22, 1988.

## WWWC and the Churches

Perhaps the most disturbing of the WWWC's projects is a new effort to arouse hawkish sentiments among clergy. The WWWC works directly with at least two major politico-religious organizations, the Institute for Religion and Democracy and the Peace, Freedom and Security Studies project of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE).<sup>1</sup>

The Institute for Religion and Democracy formed in 1981 for the express purpose of attacking the National Council of Churches. The IRD grew out of an effort the year before when AFL-CIO staffer and Methodist David Jessup circulated a provocative document at the Methodist General Conference. The document charged that the Methodists were giving money to guerrillas in the Third World. According to Pickus, Jessup worked with the WWWC during the 1960s.<sup>2</sup> Jessup's charges were later picked up by "60 Minutes" and the *Reader's Digest*, in a massive propaganda blitz. The IRD got small amounts of funds from the Oliver North network.

Pickus is senior consultant to the National Association of Evangelicals' Peace, Freedom, and Security Studies (PFSS) Program. According to *Christianity Today*, the PFSS was started "partly out of concern that the loudest Christian voices on arms-related issues were coming from the political Left."<sup>3</sup> There are about 5 million members of NAE affiliated churches in the U.S. According to the Guidelines published by the program, Weigel is also a consultant for the PFSS program.

Pickus claims his goal in working with NAE "is to find people who want to make part of their portfolio the understanding of these problems." He intends to recruit evangelical college students and help promote their careers. Pickus recruited the current PFSS project supervisor Brian O'Connell as WWWC intern from the University of Washington. After training, O'Connell would go to the NAE to work on the program which attempts to "frame the debate" for the member churches of the NAE. The WWWC is helping to raise \$11,000 to finance the project. A long term plan to recruit and train Cold Warriors in religious circles is much more dangerous than the IRD which served mainly as a propaganda outlet. Given Pickus's connections to the State Department and other U.S. agencies, mainline churches must recognize the serious loss of separation between church and State. ●

1. As far back as 1978, the WWWC of Greater Seattle held an "International Human Rights Conference" attended by various religious figures. Pickus scored the World Council of Churches (WCC) for action it "has taken with regard to the struggle in Rhodesia today." WWWC of Greater Seattle International Human Rights Conference October 28, 1978, Special Report.

2. August 22, 1988 interview.

3. "Weaving a Seamless Web out of Peace, Freedom and Security," *Christianity Today*, May 15, 1987, pp. 42-44.

booster and a former member of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board (PFIAB). The PFIAB is an elite group of sixteen U.S. citizens that advises the president on the quality, but not the legality, of U.S. intelligence efforts.

The AIP advisory board also includes a number of recipients of U.S. government funds:

- Allen Weinstein, got a \$300,000 grant from the U.S. Agency for International Development for a project of the American Political Foundation. The APF project helped design the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) with the help of the WWWC's George Weigel. Weinstein is also the president of the Boston-based Center for Democracy which was granted a total of \$300,000 in 1986-87 by the NED.
- AIP Advisory board member Seymour Martin Lipset is the editor of *The China Intellectual*, which received \$285,000 from NED over the same period.
- AIP advisory board members Eugene Rostow and Paul Seabury were granted \$124,000 and \$23,000, respectively, for "fellowships" by the U.S. Institute for Peace in 1987.

All told, U.S. government funding of persons working with the WWWC has totalled at least \$1,000,000 in the last 5 years.

The nature of AIP programs is obscure but the WWWC does disclose the names of the contacts for each subproject. These contacts include a number of former intelligence operatives and officers and rightwing academics:

- The program listed as Youth Exchange Initiative names John Richardson as its contact. Richardson, currently chairman of the NED, has a long career with USIA programs. He was head of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty from 1961-68. During that time, RFE/RL were funded and controlled by the CIA.
- AIP sub-project contact Lincoln Bloomfield once headed a politico-military "game" playing project, CONEX, whose players included the CIA and military intelligence officials.<sup>19</sup>
- Hans Mark, an AIP contact for a project on satellite monitoring of Third World crises, was formerly head of the super-secret U.S. Air Force National Reconnaissance Office.<sup>20</sup>

### Conclusion

The WWWC will not do much direct damage to progressive organizations because most have little trouble seeing through the thin veneer of the WWWC. But they are not the primary target for the WWWC. The WWWC seeks to defuse a growing criticism of U.S. policies in mainstream liberal organizations like the National Council of Churches (NCC). By adopting a patina of non-violence that appeals to liberals, the WWWC hopes to vaccinate them against progressive ideas. This is a form of domestic low intensity conflict which will be increasingly waged through such compromised outfits as the USIP. ●

19. *Dirty Work II: The CIA in Africa*, Ellen Ray, et. al., eds. (Secaucus, NJ: Lyle Stuart Publishing, 1980), p. 165.

20. *Deep Black*, William Burrows (New York: Random House, 1986), p. 266.

## Touting for South Africa:

# International Freedom Foundation

By David Ivon\*

The recently launched International Freedom Foundation (IFF) with offices in Washington, Johannesburg, and London, has rapidly gained a reputation as a most reactionary and aggressive rightwing think tank. Closely associated with South Africa, IFF is establishing an office in Tel Aviv, and claims representatives in Paris, Brussels, Bonn, and Montevideo.

Within a month of its incorporation in Washington, IFF joined the World Anti-Communist League (WACL) as an officially recognized organizational participant at its twentieth annual Conference in Taiwan in August 1987.<sup>1</sup>

IFF sent Jeffrey L. Pandin and Martin Yuill to the conference as observers.<sup>2</sup> Yuill is the Assistant Editor of *Southern African Freedom Review*, of the Johannesburg branch of IFF.<sup>3</sup> Pandin, IFF Communications Director in Washington, is an editor of its *International Freedom Review*.<sup>4</sup>

By early 1986 Pandin was already familiar with WACL operatives as project director of the Young Conservative Alliance (YCA) and Vice President, when it changed its name to the Conservative Action Foundation (CAF) that summer. YCA/CAF was headed by WACL activist David Finzer, a protégé of former WACL Chairman Gen. John Singlaub.<sup>5</sup>

Singlaub played a leading role in coordinating "Contragate" projects for Lt. Col. Oliver North. One of North's closest collaborators in the "private sector" was Jack Abramoff, the founder, former International Chairman, and current member of the Board of Directors of IFF.

### Abramoff's Background

Abramoff served as Chairman of the College Republican National Committee (CRNC) from 1981 to 1985. Charged with coordinating campus organizing for the Republicans, CRNC has recently been led by enthusiasts well to the right

of mainline Republicans, and Abramoff supported the most hard-line aspects of the Reagan agenda.

In 1983, Abramoff went to South Africa for CRNC to begin a relationship with the extreme right National Student Federation (NSF). NSF called this a "grand alliance of conservative students...an alliance that would represent the swing to the right amongst the youth in America and Western Europe."<sup>6</sup>

In 1982 Abramoff became the first Executive Director of the political action committee (PAC) of The Conservative Caucus (TCC), a post he maintains today. TCC and the related TCC Research, Analysis & Educational Foundation (TCC Foundation) and TCC PAC have long been considered a leading part of the South Africa lobby in the U.S. and are led by WACL Advisory Board member Howard Phillips.<sup>7</sup>

In October 1984 Abramoff and Pandin (also with CRNC) coordinated demonstrations commemorating the first anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Grenada. Abramoff was then chairman of the Heritage Foundation-based USA [United Students of America] Foundation, founded the previous year by members of CRNC. The *Washington Post* pointed out that tax-exempt foundations like USA Foundation were legally barred from partisan politics; Pandin replied that Abramoff, "wears two hats. When he has his College Republican hat on, he's partisan. When he has his USA hat on, he's nonpartisan."<sup>8</sup>

According to the *Post*, the USA Foundation got \$250,000 in 1984 from individuals, corporations, and groups such as the Adolph Coors Foundation, whose Joseph Coors became a major contributor to North's "Contragate" schemes.

### Citizens for America

In 1983, Joseph Coors had worked with Ed Meese, Reagan "kitchen cabinet" leader Jack Hume, and such conservative operatives as Louisiana State Representative Louis "Woody" Jenkins and Robert Kriebel to set up a nationwide conservative lobby called Citizens for America (CFA), with plush offices at Heritage headquarters, and Lewis Lehrman, a Heritage trustee, became CFA Chairman.<sup>9</sup>

CFA launched a massive propaganda campaign on behalf of the Nicaraguan *contras* and other pet Reagan programs, and soon Abramoff became CFA's Executive Director, replacing Marc L. Holtzman who left CFA in November 1984

\* David Ivon is the pseudonym of a freelance researcher who specializes in the international right wing.

1. *Asian Outlook*, August 1987.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *South African Freedom Review's* editors are Warwick Davies-Webb and Wim J. Booyse. Its Editorial Advisory Board includes: Jack Abramoff, Charles Lichenstein, Jay A. Parker, Prof. Dirk Kunert (University of Witwatersrand, R.S.A.), Congressman Philip M. Crane, Prof. Florent Peeters (University of Ghent, Belgium), and Prof. Peter Duignan (Hoover Institution, Stanford University).

4. The *International Freedom Review* Advisory Board includes: Charles Lichenstein (Chairman), Senator Jesse Helms, Congressmen Phillip M. Crane, Robert Dornan, James M. Inhofe, and Donald E. Lukens, as well as Dr. Myron Kuropas, who attended the August 1987 WACL Conference as an observer-member of the U.S. delegation led by Gen. Singlaub.

5. YCA was a project of Finzer's Young Conservative Foundation which was funding The Secretariat of the World Youth Freedom League (WYFL), WACL's youth arm. Finzer had joined the WACL Executive Board by September 1986 and attended the August 1987 Conference as a WYFL delegate.

6. Russ Bellant, *Old Nazis, the New Right, and the Reagan Administration* (Cambridge, Mass.: Political Research Associates, 1988), p.56.

7. Phillips was a founder of Young Americans for Freedom (YAF) and Director of the Office of Economic Opportunity under Nixon.

8. *Washington Post*, October 4, 1984.

9. Coors, Kriebel, and Lehrman are Trustees of Heritage.

to pursue his own political aspirations.<sup>10</sup>

Abramoff appeared with North, Singlaub, Lehrman, and others on the confidential January 1, 1985 list of the Board of Governors of another Coors project, the Council for National Policy (CNP). The CNP had been established as a secretive rightwing alternative to the New York Council on Foreign Relations, and Jenkins served as its Executive Director. Abramoff also joined the Council of Advisers of the Committee for a Free Afghanistan, with extensive ties to WACL.<sup>11</sup>

At CFA Abramoff worked closely with Oliver North.<sup>12</sup> In a March 20, 1985, memorandum from North to Robert McFarlane regarding "Timing and the Nicaraguan Resistance Vote" Abramoff and CFA were assigned responsibility for organizing briefings by *contra* speakers, telephone phone-trees "to targeted congressional offices encouraging them to vote for aid to the freedom fighters in Nicaragua," and supporting "rallies throughout the country."<sup>13</sup>

In June 1985, CFA planned a conference in southern Africa which brought together leaders from the CIA's Afghan, Nicaraguan, Laotian, and Namibian paramilitary entities.<sup>14</sup>

But Abramoff was apparently uncomfortable with CFA's support for Reagan administration positions on South Africa, arms control, and other issues, which the Right increasingly considered too moderate. In the May 1985 issue of *Conservative Digest*, as President of the USA Foundation, Abramoff signed an appeal sponsored by the delicately named National Coalition of Americans Committed to Rescuing Africa from the Grip of Soviet Tyranny, asking Reagan "Why is Chester Crocker trying to sell 20 Million Black Africans into Communist Slavery?" It included a defense of UNITA and RENAMO, and opposed SWAPO and UN-sponsored elections in South Africa-occupied Namibia; it was co-signed by Gen. Singlaub, Howard Phillips, and Paul Weyrich, among others. The coalition was based at TCC's Virginia office.

#### IFF and South Africa

On July 15, 1985 Abramoff resigned from CFA,<sup>15</sup> and incorporated IFF in Washington, D.C., with Colleen Morrow (IFF Executive Director) and Duncan Sellars. The three served on the original Board of Directors along with Russell Crystal, Executive Director of the Johannesburg-based Southern African Branch of IFF, and Warwick Davies-Webb, one of the

two editors of the IFF's South Africa journal. Abramoff served as International Chairman for three years, succeeded by Sellars; he has remained on the Board and works on rightwing propaganda films. His company, Scorpion Film Productions, is currently based at IFF's headquarters.<sup>16</sup>

Sellars had been Executive Director of the TCC Foundation from 1985, overlapping Abramoff's tenure at TCC PAC.<sup>17</sup> Before that, Sellars worked for several years in Denver, Colorado with another one of South Africa's most ardent defenders, Don McAlvany, a Trustee of TCC Foundation and a signer of the May 1985 *Conservative Digest* appeal.<sup>18</sup>

McAlvany, a contributing editor of the John Birch Society magazine *The New American*, works to boost gold sales, supporting the South African economy while making a nice profit for himself. He edits the *McAlvany Intelligence Advisor (MLA)*, billed as "explicitly Christian, conservative and free market in its perspective," largely a forum for pro-gold economic analysis.<sup>19</sup>

On his most recent trip to South Africa, McAlvany urged that Archbishop Desmond Tutu be silenced "by any means possible." He demanded, "Somebody ought to do something to stop [Tutu] doing what he is doing. This man is a traitor." On South African state radio and television McAlvany insisted that "apartheid is not the problem in South Africa. If you removed apartheid tomorrow, the Soviets would still try to conquer South Africa." He also urged his audience to subscribe to the Aida Parker's pro-apartheid newsletter.<sup>20</sup>

16. Abramoff's most publicized film project was "Red Scorpion," based on the life of Jonas Savimbi, leader of the South African puppet UNITA forces in Angola. Produced by "Moonrose Productions," it used two active-duty South African army officers as consultants, and was backed by U.S. and South African funders. *The Namibian* (Windhoek), December 4, 1987; *New York Times*, January 9, 1988. Abramoff worked on his film projects with Peter Roff who then left to work on the Bush campaign and Americans for Tax Reform.

17. It is not known what role Phillips may have had in sponsoring his two protégés. Charles Lichenstein, who sits on the National Advisory Board of Phillips's TCC, is Chairman of IFF's Advisory Board as well as Chairman of the International Advisory Board of the International Security Council, a front for the Moon network; he is also Senior Fellow at Heritage.

18. The 1985 Council on National Policy Board of Governors roster included Sellars, identified as editor of the *African Intelligence Digest*, in Denver, Colorado, where he worked for several years under McAlvany's supervision. The TCC Secretary is "Woody" Jenkins, of CFA and CNP. The other trustees of TCC Foundation while Sellars was Executive Director in 1987 were: Michael A. Valerio (Vice President), J. Alan MacKay (Treasurer), Jack Abramoff, Milton Copulos, Edward E. McAteer, Kathryn McDonald, Jay Parker, Gen. John K. Singlaub, and Helen Marie Taylor.

19. *MLA* and the newsletter of McAlvany's International Collectors Associates (*Precious Metals Brokerage and Consultation*), both have advertised tours to South Africa he has organized through his Council on Southern Africa. McAlvany, Phillips, and Sellars continue to work closely together. In May 1987, *MLA* advertised McAlvany's forthcoming November tour as co-hosted by Phillips and Sellars, along with Congressman Mark Siljander, and Dr. Mark Skousen. The trip included an optional stop in London with a meeting with "the former Commander of NATO, Sir General Walter Walker." Walker attended the 1984 WACL Conference in Luxembourg; see *Searchlight* (UK), January 1984 at p.7. An ad for the tour was placed in the September 21, 1987, issue of Moon's *Insight* magazine.

20. *The New Nation* (Johannesburg), July 14-20, 1988. According to *The New Nation*, his expenses were paid by Eileen Louvet, leader of the rightwing Trusas (True South Africans). McAlvany has also served as foreign policy advisor to Denis Peacocke, one of the most militant operatives of the most extreme wing of the U.S. Christian Right. *On Target*, August 11, 1988, publication of the ultra-right Canadian Intelligence Service. Both Sellars and Phillips have spoken at Peacocke's seminars. On Peacocke, see Sara Diamond, "Shock Troops of the Christian Right," *CAIB*, Number 27 (Spring

10. On Holtzman see *Washington Post*, December 26, 1985.

11. See discussion of the Committee for a Free Afghanistan and its connections to WACL in Sayid Khybar, "The Afghan Contra Lobby," *CAIB*, Number 30 (Summer 1988), pp. 61 ff.

12. The *Washington Post* reported that North "has been particularly close to the leadership of Citizens for America (CFA)...in almost daily touch with...CFA executive director Jack Abramoff." North helped CFA select *contras* for a U.S. speaking tour during April 1985 congressional debates. *Washington Post*, August 11, 1985. IFF vigorously marketed videotapes of North's *contra* slide show.

13. Declassified "NSC Intelligence Document," Exhibit OLN-217.

14. *New York Times*, June 6, 1985; *Washington Post*, June 6, 1985; *Newsweek*, June 17, 1985; *The Star* (Johannesburg), June 6, 1985. The meeting was coordinated with the South African military and, after flying an array of delegates and press to Johannesburg, a press conference was staged in Jamba, the headquarters of UNITA in South Africa-occupied Namibia.

15. Lehrman claimed he fired Abramoff and his closest associates from the leading positions at CFA for lavish spending and financial mismanagement. *Washington Post*, July 27, 1988; personal comments by Lehrman.

On June 25, 1987, as Sen. Edward F. Kennedy (Dem.-Mass.) held hearings on the repression of children by the South African government, IFF sponsored hearings on alleged repression of children by the ANC, before the House Republican Study Committee, chaired by Rep. Dan Burton, a member of the National Advisory Board of TCC. One witness before the Study Committee was Alan Keyes, the Black Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs, who opposed sanctions.<sup>21</sup> IFF published two tracts, "The Role of Youth in Revolutionary Warfare" and "Suffer the Children," the latter with an appendix attacking the anti-apartheid group TransAfrica, citing "researchers at the eminent Lincoln Institute" who called TransAfrica "a spokesman for Soviet and Cuban supported terrorist groups."<sup>22</sup>

### IFF in London

IFF's London branch is run by Marc Gordon, working closely with David Hoile, whose anti-sanctions monograph "Understanding Sanctions" was published by IFF in early 1988.<sup>23</sup> In 1983, Hoile attended a National Union of Students conference wearing a badge with the slogan "Hang Nelson Mandela," and claimed he had been a member of Rhodesia's security forces.<sup>24</sup>

Hoile was formerly Vice Chairman of the Federation of Conservative Students (FCS), a group like the College Republican National Committee which operated within the extreme right wing of the Tory party; Gordon was Chairman of its West Midlands branch. In August 1987 they both attended a West Berlin conference of the Moonie front, CARP (Collegiate Association for the Research of Principle), along with Gideon Sherman, a leading member of the FCS and a member of the Board of Directors of Western Goals (UK).<sup>25</sup>

1987). Phillips's TCC includes such leading lights of the Christian Right as Jerry Falwell, Ron Godwin, D. James Kennedy, Gary North, and R. J. Rushdoony on its National Advisory Board.

21. Another witness was Leon Louw, the Executive Director of the Johannesburg-based Free Market Foundation, who authored an article in the first issue of the *Southern African Freedom Review*. Keyes was lauded in an article by Bruce Rickerson, a "former Senior Policy Analyst, South Africa Working Group, U.S. Department of State," in IFF's monthly *Freedom Bulletin* (Number 4 of 1988) titled "More South African Sanctions?" Rickerson is now a consultant to IFF's D.C. and London branches. Other *Freedom Bulletins* have included attacks on the Arias Plan and on the Democratic Party by the assistant editor of Heritage's *Policy Review*, Michael Johns (who doubles as Foreign Policy Editor of Jerry Falwell's *Liberty Report*).

22. The head of the Lincoln Institute, Jay A. Parker, is on the Editorial Advisory Board of IFF's *Southern African Freedom Review*, a member of the Board of Directors of the U.S. branch of WACL, and a Trustee of the Conservative Caucus Foundation while associated with at least two of Rev. Moon's front groups, The American Freedom Coalition and CAUSA.

23. Hoile is identified in the publication as "educated in Zambia, The Netherlands and Zimbabwe... [who] has worked both as a Parliamentary and free lance researcher."

24. *National Student* (U.K.), Late April 1985, p.3.

25. *Searchlight* (U.K.), November 1987. Gideon's father, Sir Alfred Sherman, a member of the International Advisory Board of Moon's *World & I* magazine, has been Director of the reactionary Centre for Policy Studies in London, and addressed a January 10, 1987 meeting of Western Goals (UK). The month following the Berlin conference Sir Alfred invited Jean-Marie Le Pen, the fascist and anti-Semitic leader of the French National Front, to speak in London. *Times* (London), September 22, 1987. Speakers at the Berlin conference included Pierre Ceyrac, a close collaborator of Moon's and a top member of the French National Front and Le Pen's son-in-law. West German CARP President Dieter Schmidt addressed the crowd. *New York City Tribune*, August 10, 1987. Information made available to CAIB indicates

### IFF and the Contras

Hoile and Gordon share a special affinity for the Nicaraguan *contras*. In June 1985 Hoile, then Vice Chairman of the FCS, accompanied by J. Michael Waller,<sup>26</sup> toured *contra* camps for the Heritage-based National Center for Public Policy Research (NCPPR), directed by Amy Moritz, an important center for organizing rightwing youth.<sup>27</sup>

By Spring 1987 Hoile had become the "Editor in Great Britain" of *Freedom Fighter in Central America*. Published by the Coalition for Democracy in Central America, it was largely a front for YAF, edited by Waller, with Amy Moritz, Mike Boos, and Les Csorba on its Board of Advisors, along with David Miner, a fanatical rightist who followed Abramoff as Chairman of the CRNC.

In December 1986, Gordon organized a secretly-funded pro-*contra* conference in London which launched the Committee for a Free Nicaragua (CFN). According to *Searchlight*, funds for the expensive two-day conference may have come from Heritage, which had recently received a dozen FCS members on an expense-paid trip to Washington to study modern fund-raising and newsmaking skills. The conference, said *Searchlight*,<sup>28</sup> "fits closely with a CIA plan to persuade Western governments and media that the *contras* are 'freedom fighters,' not terrorists.... The conference is believed to have been the idea of David Hoile."

Speakers included Waller, then National Secretary of YAF; Waller's boss at the Council for Inter-American Security, Francis Bouchey; Charles Lichenstein; Britain's CIA asset Brian Crozier; and *contra* representative Arturo Cruz.

The prominent role of Crozier in Hoile and Gordon's CFN project suggests further funding connections to IFF as Crozier's International Freedom Fund Establishment reportedly received well over \$100,000 from Heritage, where Crozier has been an adjunct scholar since the mid-1970s.<sup>29</sup>

### Conclusion

Thus, after only a year and a half, the International Freedom Foundation is well-established, well-funded, tied to the international extreme Right and the intelligence community, and actively supporting the government of South Africa and the Nicaraguan *contras*. It is an organization to watch. ●

that a Dieter Schmidt, Director of the Institute for Foreign Relations at the Hans Seidel Stiftung in Munich, has been in contact with both Bruce Rickerson and Russell Crystal. In the mid-1980s the Hans Seidel Stiftung maintained an office at Heritage.

26. Waller subsequently became editor of *West Watch*, the newsletter of Lynn Francis Bouchey's Council for Inter-American Studies, which sponsored the infamous "Santa Fe Report," a blueprint for the Reagan administration's offensive against progressive movements in Latin America.

27. *National Policy Watch* (NCPPR newsletter), Summer 1985. The newsletter featured a photo of Hoile in camouflage visiting a "Freedom Fighter" camp. The NCPPR Central American director was Rafael Flores, a Guatemalan close to death squad leader and WACL delegate Mario Sandoval. Flores left NCPPR to work with Finzer and the youth branch of WACL, later becoming press relations director for Carl Russell ("Spitz") Channell, who had taken over the American branch of Western Goals and was playing a major role in coordinating the "private" aid network for Oliver North.

28. *Searchlight* (London), December 6, 1986.

29. See *The Digger* (U.K.), February 12, 1988; *The Nation*, June 6, 1987, p. 761; and the *Observer* (London), October 9, 1988. The *Observer* article wrote of Gordon's role in lobbying the Tories on behalf of South Africa's puppet RENAMO death squads.



# LeMoyne and the Times on the Murder of Herbert Anaya:

## Disinformation as News Fit to Print

by Edward S. Herman\*

Disinformation in the form of forged "captured documents," "intercepted cables," and "confessions" of tortured prisoners are important ingredients of government propaganda. They permit useful propaganda themes to be disseminated in dramatic fashion at government discretion, and they allow press space and air time to be preempted at the expense of news the government finds inconvenient.

If the U.S. government wants to direct attention away from a Nicaraguan election it is striving to discredit, it can claim that MIG aircraft are on their way from Moscow to Managua, threatening U.S. "national security." If it wants to bomb Libya, it can allege that it has "irrefutable" proof in the form of intercepted cables that a bombing of a German discotheque was done under Libyan direction. If it wants to justify attacks on Vietnam or Nicaragua, it finds captured weapons or documents that expose the nefarious plans for "revolutionary terror" by these enemy states.<sup>1</sup>

### Disinformation and the Media

Disinformation enters the news and has its effect only with the cooperation of a controlled and biased media. In the United States, while the government does not control the media directly, it exercises great influence by its importance as a news source, its prestige and power, and its interlocking relationships with the media. The mass media are also large corporations, controlled by wealthy people, dependent on advertising revenue, and closely networked with and sharing the values of the rest of the corporate community, as well as top government officials. This control structure dominates policy and news choices, which filter down through the layers of media personnel, so that lower echelon reporters are subject to powerful channeling processes and sharp constraints on what they can do and say. Furthermore, the reward systems are biased toward those who will look at the world through establishment lenses, so that a Raymond Bonner will pass from the scene and a James LeMoyne will prosper.<sup>2</sup>

In the United States, disinformation thrives because the mass media censor themselves, in accord with biases that

reflect government and corporate power and which are built into media structures. The MIG crisis of November 1984 drove the Nicaraguan election off the front pages because the mass media allowed themselves to be manipulated. The dissident press described with clarity the manipulative game being played by the government; the mass media's playing dumb was voluntary, gullibility by design. And their refusal to reflect and reconsider after the revelation that the MIGs "weren't there" was an essential part of the self-censoring process which allowed a government propaganda effort to have its impact.

In the case of the 1986 bombing of Tripoli, also, the mass media took very convenient government propaganda claims at face value, despite the fact that they had been taken in by the "hit squads" of 1981 that also "weren't there," as well as a further series of fabrications on Libya, and simply abandoned interest in the rules of evidence. They did not insist on seeing the alleged intercepted cables; and when, shortly after, claims were made of Syrian involvement in the discotheque bombing attack, no reconciliation of the stories was deemed necessary. The fact that a 100-person West German police investigative team was unable to establish Libyan involvement was of little interest to the U.S. media. Their government had needed a rationale for bombing Libya, and the mass media had agreed that the evidence on Libyan direction of the bombing was definitive *because their government said it was*.<sup>3</sup> No further inquiries were necessary then or later, and incompatible claims and facts were essentially ignored or suppressed.

It may be that some day in a future Freedom of Information Act disclosures will show that the government knowingly lied. If so, the media may then say, "gee whiz, the government shouldn't lie like that!" What they will not do is: (1) admit that they had been extremely gullible and an important part of a disinformation campaign; (2) reflect on their own perfor-

3. The *Times*, in an editorial entitled "The Terrorist and His Sentence" (April 15, 1986), states that "The Reagan administration has now *proved* [emphasis added] he [Qaddafi] really deserved what he got." As proof, the administration "...can cite intercepted reports from his agents in East Berlin informing him the day before of the planned bombing." Note, first, that the *Times* doesn't claim to have seen these intercepted reports, only that the government "can cite them," i.e., the government asserts that they exist and that it has properly interpreted them. Of course it could cite fabricated documents or misinterpret actual ones. But a propaganda agency does not insist on examining the evidence of its principal.

We may note, also, that the *Times's* own statement of what the message contained is ambiguous. It doesn't say that the message proved that Qaddafi ordered the bombing, merely that his agents informed him that it was going to occur. If Qaddafi knew that others were going to do the bombing, but failed to do anything about it, would he richly deserve his punishment? If the CIA intercepted his message and also did nothing about it, what would Washington deserve?

\*Edward S. Herman teaches in the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. His book on the mass media, with Noam Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*, was just published by Pantheon.

1. Stephen Kinzer recently featured a document circulating in Managua, which described an alleged Sandinista plan for "revolutionary terror" in 1988. "Sandinista 'Strategy': Real or Bogus?" *New York Times*, April 7, 1988.

2. A model of how the U.S. mass media are driven by mainly market forces to serve a state propaganda function is spelled out in Herman and Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent*, chapter 1.

mance, apologize to their readers for their failure as watchdogs, and discuss the consequences of their gullibility and propaganda service; and, most important, (3) learn a lesson and not jump on the bandwagon with the next piece of government disinformation.<sup>4</sup>

An earlier case study showed how the *New York Times* and the rest of the mass media treated the "confession" of Mehmet Ali Agca that he had been hired by the Bulgarians to shoot the Pope.<sup>5</sup> As that confession was useful to Reagan's anti-Soviet campaign, the *Times* accepted it at face value and failed to ask the questions which would have been pressed if Agca's confession were not so helpful to interests of the state. The *Times* also ignored documents and evidence that would have cast doubts on the propaganda theme.<sup>6</sup> This was self-censorship in the service of system-supportive propaganda, and yielded a result as dishonest as any system of direct censorship.

This paper will describe how James LeMoyne and the *New York Times* did the same thing with another serviceable but fraudulent confession, in this case, in El Salvador. Further, it will show how the manipulation of evidence is patterned, so that one can trace a system of principles that allow useful disinformation to have its effect.

### The Murder of Herbert Anaya and the Confession of Jorge Miranda

Herbert Ernesto Anaya Sanabria, head of the Human Rights Commission of El Salvador (CDHES), was shot and killed in San Salvador in the early morning of October 26, 1987. He was the ninth CDHES murder victim since 1979, all recognized in El Salvador as having been assassinated by the army and its affiliated security forces and death squads. CDHES has focused on the extensive state-organized murder and abuse of civilians, which makes the killing of CDHES personnel entirely understandable in the Salvadoran context.

Herbert Anaya had been arrested by the police in May 1986 for alleged links to the rebels and was held until February 1987; he was then released along with 99 other political prisoners in exchange for a military officer taken hostage by the FMLN. Subsequently, he was subjected to phone threats, denunciations and warnings in the rightwing media and in army and police press releases, and constant surveillance by the Treasury police. At least eight other officials of CDHES and COMADRES, another human rights organization, were arrested and interrogated between May 1986 and December 1987, actions closely coordinated with an official propaganda

4. For a beautiful illustration of these points, see the *New York Times's* editorial following the disclosures released by Congressman Lee Hamilton that the Reagan administration knew almost immediately that the Soviets had not recognized KAL 007 as a civilian airliner ("The Lie That Wasn't Shot Down," January 18, 1988). The editorial gently berates the government for lying, but says nothing about the *Times's* hysterical outpouring, its own failure to investigate, and its complete absence of reflections or retrospectives on the incident as a propaganda stunt.

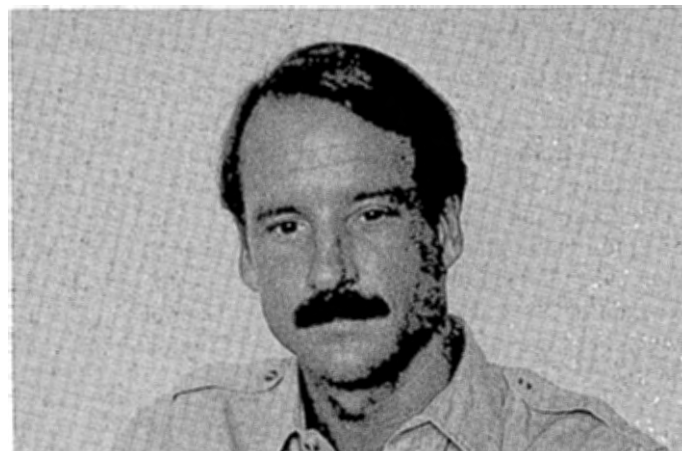
5. Edward S. Herman and Frank Brodhead, *The Rise and Fall of the Bulgarian Connection* (New York: Sheridan Square Publications, 1986).

6. On this point, see Edward S. Herman and Frank Brodhead, "The *New York Times* on the Bulgarian Connection: 'Objective' News as Systematic Propaganda Part II," *CovertAction Information Bulletin*, Number 27, Spring 1987.

campaign against these organizations as subversive.<sup>7</sup> Even the head of the governmental Human Rights Commission of El Salvador was shot in the back of the head and killed in December 1987, very possibly in retaliation for the Duarte attempt to pin the murder of Archbishop Romero on Roberto D'Aubuisson.

CDHES member Maria Victoria Hernandez Gonzalez, interrogated by the police only a week or so before Anaya's death, was told by her interrogators that Anaya was scheduled to be killed.<sup>8</sup>

These attacks, arrests, and murders were part of a larger campaign of repression that included not only human rights organizations, but also unions, churches, refugee centers and



Credit: *New York Times*

### James LeMoyne.

relocated groups, and assorted dissidents. The Salvadoran "body count" was down from the many thousands in the early 1980s, but it increased in 1986-87 in response to a deepening crisis, military stalemate, and activation of popular forces. As *El Rescate* notes, "low intensity warfare" has been paralleled by a "low intensity violation of human rights."<sup>9</sup>

According to Maria Julia Hernandez, Director of the Human Rights Office of the Catholic Church, "The death squads always appear when opposition increases and the government cannot control it." The pattern is one of massive propaganda against human rights organizations, unions, and other sources of possible organized resistance, army and death squad killing of members of these groups, and government inaction and silence, reflecting the link between the death squads and government.

The number of political murders by the state and paramilitary forces was running between 12 and 30 per month in the last quarter of 1987, "a drastic reduction by Salvadoran standards," as pointed out by the Council on Hemispheric Affairs, but it "nevertheless...demonstrates contempt for the

7. Human Rights Watch, *The Persecution of Human Rights Monitors, December 1986 to December 1987*, New York, 1988, pp. 44-46.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 46.

9. El Rescate Human Rights Department, *Chronology of Human Rights Violations in El Salvador, 1987, 1988*, p. ii.

provisions of the Esquipulas II agreement and is hardly an indicator of 'significant progress' in the area of basic guarantees."<sup>10</sup> As noted by Americas Watch,<sup>11</sup>

A number that would matter for the future of democratic development in El Salvador is the number of officers tried and convicted for human rights abuses against civilians. To date that number is zero. The Armed Forces have not yet considered it their duty to investigate and punish officers who commit crimes against civilians, and the civilian government lacks the will and the authority to act. The ranks of the officer corps hold tight; their solidarity protects them against any examination of their role in the murder of tens of thousands of their fellow citizens. The enforcers of the law remain above the law.

When official and paramilitary force murders have struck down notables, generating a certain amount of adverse publicity, the Salvadoran government has sometimes produced individuals who, after a stay in prison, confess to having committed the inconvenient crime. One such extrajudicial confession, described by Amnesty International (AI),<sup>12</sup> followed the murder of U.S. military adviser, Lieutenant Commander Albert Schaufelberger, shot and killed on May 25, 1983. On August 25, 1983, an incarcerated student, Pedro Daniel Alvarado Rivera, confessed to this crime, and reiterated his guilt before a judge and invited foreign journalists.

The FBI, however, based on its own polygraph tests of Alvarado, along with the physical evidence it had collected, asserted that Alvarado could not have committed the crime. The FBI concluded that Alvarado had confessed after five days of torture by the Treasury police, including beatings and electric shocks. He continued to maintain his guilt only as long as he was in the hands of the police. Following the collapse of the Alvarado confession, the government promised to look into the case, which it never did.

The Salvadoran government was criticized both within El Salvador and abroad for the Anaya murder, which was viewed as an indication of its continued qualities as a terrorist state and, more particularly, its inability or unwillingness to comply with the Central American Peace Plan. On January 4, 1988, however, the government produced Jorge Alberto Miranda Arevalo, a 19-year-old student who had been arrested on December 23 while trying to damage a soft drink truck. He had been held incommunicado by the police for 12 days, although Salvadoran law requires that such a prisoner be brought before a judge within 72 hours of arrest.

After the 12 day incarceration, Miranda confessed to a judge that he had been the lookout while two of his comrades murdered Anaya, under instructions from the FMLN. Miranda's full confession was shown on national TV — in AI's

words, "an example of the Salvadoran practice which Salvadoran and international human rights groups refer to as 'trial by television.'"

There were obvious problems with the Miranda confession: the convenience, the similarity to the Alvarado case, the blatant illegalities in the 12 day incarceration and trial by television. An American who saw Miranda on TV said that he looked listless and disoriented. His family, who saw him during his stay in jail, when he accompanied the police looking for an alleged cache of weapons in his home, also claimed that he looked completely distraught. When they had a brief few minutes to speak with him on January 3, he told them that he had been interrogated continuously and was not permitted to sleep. His family claims that he had been home in bed at the time of the shooting, having stayed up late to study for an examination that he took on the very day of Anaya's murder.

The family claims to have been forced to sign a statement that arms were found in the house, and that they were offered money to cooperate in supporting Miranda's confession. Miranda was injected with drugs in jail by a doctor who told him he was suffering from a bad throat, although he was unaware of having had a bad throat. He was also given \$2,400 as a reward for his services and a promise that he would eventually be released. The reason for the murder, according to Miranda's confession, was because Anaya had given information to the security forces during his detention, and to discredit the government.

#### **LeMoyne and the New York Times on the Miranda Confession**

After Miranda was released, it took him very little time to recant his confession and to indicate what was obvious to anybody with the slightest interest in the truth: that he had confessed, as had Alvarado, under torture. James LeMoyne and the *Times* had taken the confession seriously, however. Two articles were devoted to the confession in which it was given both publicity and substantial credence. However, Miranda's release and statement that the confession had been extracted by drugs and torture, did not interest LeMoyne. The *Times* offered its readers a muted AP dispatch noting the retraction, with minimal details.

A closer look at the two LeMoyne articles offers some insight into the methods by which a reporter allows disinformation to be used for propaganda purposes.

1. **Push the propaganda claims front and center.** The first article, which appeared on January 6, 1988, is entitled "Salvadoran President Says Rebels Killed Rights Organization's Head." Duarte's charges are given great prominence in the title and first two paragraphs, including the standard formula that the rebels "wanted the government blamed for the killing." LeMoyne does mention that the Salvadoran police have a "long history of forcing confessions from prisoners," but this is immediately offset by the apologetic note that "political killings have fallen dramatically in recent years." He does not give details, including the current level of killings.

He picks his time frame carefully, thereby avoiding mention of the increase in death squad activity in the period im-

10. Council on Hemispheric Affairs (COHA), "The Record of Compliance," Washington, DC, undated, early 1988, p. 2.

11. Americas Watch, *The Civilian Toll 1986-1987*, New York, August 30, 1987, p. 2.

12. Amnesty International, "El Salvador: Investigation Into Killing of Herbert Anaya: New Developments," London, February 1988, pp. 4-5.

mediately before Anaya's murder. He fails to mention that Miranda was detained by the police for more than 72 hours, in contravention of the law, and that he had been subject to "trial by television." LeMoyné does not mention the Alvarado case.

He does not point out that the police and army are *still* entirely above the law, and have yet to be subjected to any penalty for any crime against civilians. He says nothing about the history of murders of human rights workers in El Salvador, or about the frequent arrests, harassments and threats directed to CDHES personnel in the preceding year. He does not cite the views of any member of CDHES, or any but a Salvadoran official source, in violation of the rules of nominal "balance." He does not discuss the record of Duarte and Salvadoran officials as information sources on past murders.<sup>13</sup> This selectivity and refusal to provide meaningful context makes the article straightforward propaganda under the guise of news.

LeMoyné had a second article on January 8, "Salvadoran, in Jail Talk, Tells of Assassination," based on an interview with Miranda arranged by the police. The police knew what they were doing in fixing an interview with LeMoyné.<sup>14</sup> The allegation of guerrilla involvement in the murder is once again featured in the title and first paragraph, and the *Times* pulls out of the text and sets off in larger type Miranda's statement "The guerrillas did the killing, not the government," a formula used also for the first main heading. LeMoyné's emphasis in the article is on Miranda's "calm voice," speaking "without hesitation," and giving many details.

LeMoyné does not claim that the Miranda confession was valid, but he gives it substantial credence, implying in both articles that the confession was possibly if not surely true. He does this by twisting and suppressing evidence (see below), but it is important to recognize how perfectly he and his paper serve the propaganda function merely by featuring the confession so heavily and allowing it plausibility.

**2. An alternative frame: a terrorist government manipulates evidence once again.** An alternative frame that would have cast the Miranda confession in a different light would feature the history of state murder of human rights monitors, the absence of any rule of law applicable to the armed forces and police, earlier frameups, and the circumstances surrounding the Anaya murder, which taken together made the Miranda confession ludicrously implausible.

Although LeMoyné acknowledges that the Salvadoran police have a long history of extracted confessions, he made no effort to determine whether this might apply to the Miranda case—even to the point of ascertaining whether the police had adhered to the law in bringing the prisoner to court within 72 hours. In neither of his articles does he mention that Miranda's court appearance followed 12 days, isolation with the police.

13. On Duarte as a consistent apologist and liar in connection with official murders, see Herman and Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent*, chapter 2; also, Dennis Hans, "Duarte: The Man and the Myth," *CovertAction Information Bulletin*, Number 26, Summer 1986, pp. 42-47.

14. After the Salvadoran government had successfully gotten LeMoyné into the prison to do his work, access to Miranda to other members of the press was closed down, according to one reporter, who was not permitted to see Miranda.

LeMoyné never interviewed Miranda's family, who had spoken to Miranda twice while he was in police custody and might perhaps have given him useful information on Miranda's prison conditions and the basis of his confession. Did he actually take an examination at the University on the day of Anaya's murder, as Miranda's family claimed? This is a point that a serious investigator would have looked into. LeMoyné never mentions the Alvarado case. He doesn't discuss whether the police are under tighter discipline now than in the past when they regularly tortured prisoners. In brief, the Salvadoran government couldn't ask for more from a journalist.

**3. Downplaying the stage-managed character of the confession.** If the Miranda confession had been put forward in Poland, after the Polish police had illegally kept the prisoner under their control for 12 days, LeMoyné and the *Times* would have had a lot of fun with the cynical manipulations of the "totalitarians." But as the stage management was carried out in a U.S. client state, the "theatre" frame is ignored and the evidence that would support it is suppressed. Thus, LeMoyné fails to mention that Miranda's confession was put on national television, which would have pointed up its propaganda role.

Questions might also be raised about a system of justice in which Duarte announces the confession and guilt prior to a trial and conviction (which Duarte also did regularly in connection with the National Guardsmen finally convicted of murdering the four American women).

Similarly, by failing to discuss the Alvarado case, and then the release of Miranda and his retraction, LeMoyné and the *Times* avoid evidence of a pattern of stage management: incarceration and confession, display before the press, and subsequent collapse of the case and revelation of its fraudulent character.

Furthermore, if Miranda had been party to a serious murder, is it not extraordinary that he was given money, then released without trial or punishment? This suggests that part of the "deal" for the confession was release, with the hope (unfulfilled) that fear would keep Miranda quiet thereafter. In short, although the "show" quality of the Miranda confession and its display was obvious and blatant, LeMoyné and the *Times* suppressed the information that would highlight this.

**4. Stressing the "calmness" of the imprisoned terrorist; downplaying the evidence of delays, threats, interrogation procedures and bribery.** As noted, LeMoyné confines his story to reiterating the government charges and to reporting what Miranda told him while in prison. He mentions repeatedly that Miranda spoke "quietly," spoke "in a clear voice," "appeared to speak without hesitation" and "calmly answered detailed questions," which for LeMoyné gave credence to the account. Why calmness instead of passion adds credence is not explained.

Although Miranda told LeMoyné even while still in prison that he was "blindfolded and deprived of sleep for one night of interrogation," and "a doctor gave him pills and an injection for an infection" [sic], and that he confessed because "he was 'afraid' for his future," LeMoyné observes that "he said he was not *otherwise* [emphasis added] mistreated." When a

man in prison, still under the control of police who regularly torture, tells a reporter that he was blindfolded and injected with drugs for a night of interrogation, and that he feels his life is in danger, an honest reporter would understand that he is being given a powerful message, although necessarily understated.

LeMoyne plays dumb. He never suggests that Miranda's still being in police custody might affect his ability to speak out. Instead, he takes Miranda's statements at face value, and then minimizes the already significant information Miranda gives him about an all-night interrogation, blindfolded, and with an injection for an "infection," by use of the phrase "he was not otherwise maltreated."

LeMoyne also failed to pursue obvious leads with Miranda. He did not ask him whether he actually *had* an infection justifying an injection. He did not ask "from whom does he fear for his life and why?" He does not raise a question in his article about how a man who has confessed to participation in a murder can be promised his freedom and given \$2,400.

Upon release Miranda indicated that he had no infection and had been given a drug that made him feel disoriented, and that he had been interrogated and threatened for more than one night. These were points that LeMoyne could have established by a serious inquiry, but that would have been incompatible with his purpose.

**5. Selective use of evidence.** Although an objective media is supposed to offer "balance" in the use of sources, and to explore and report on all relevant documents, LeMoyne and the *New York Times* did not do this in the Miranda case. Their primary and almost exclusive sources were Duarte, the Salvadoran police, and the words of the imprisoned Miranda. LeMoyne does not discuss the past record of factual assertions in important murder cases by his primary source Duarte.

In LeMoyne's two articles, he never cites evidence from: (1) members of CDHES; (2) Anaya's family and friends; (3) Miranda's family; (4) rebel spokespersons; or (5) western human rights organizations close to the Salvadoran scene in general and the Anaya case in particular.

The suppression of alternative sources facilitates LeMoyne's staying within the framework of Salvadoran government propaganda. For example, CDHES members and Anaya's family would have stressed the continuous surveillance and threats and past murders of CDHES personnel, which would have injected evidence incompatible with the propaganda line.

Propagandists must also ignore inconvenient documents. Both AI and CDHES put out investigative reports on the Anaya murder in February 1988. Human Rights Watch also issued an important and highly relevant document, *The Persecution of Human Rights Monitors, December 1986 to December 1987* in December 1987. The CDHES report focused on the internal inconsistencies in the Miranda confessions, plus the violation of the Salvadoran law which required the police to present Miranda to a court within 72 hours of his apprehension. Human Rights Watch provides many details on the escalation of arrests and attacks on human rights monitors in El Salvador during 1987.

AI's extensive report on the Anaya case stressed the background of harassment of CDHES by the state prior to the murder, the illegalities of the police handling of Miranda, the "trial by television," the evidence from Miranda's family that he had been maltreated, and the analogous Alvarado case. Each of these documents would have provided the basis for a powerful article on the Anaya murder, but they did not fit the propaganda needs of LeMoyne, the *New York Times*, and the Duarte-Reagan team and their information and messages were duly suppressed.

**6. Miranda retracts his confession; LeMoyne is not interested.** Soon after his confession and statements to the press, Miranda was released, and quickly retracted his confession, as Alvarado had done earlier. The *New York Times* was not interested in the fact that a confessed participant in a murder had been released, nor were they concerned about his retraction. For the latter, they relied on a succinct AP dispatch. LeMoyne did not check again with Miranda, to see if he was still "calm" and to ask if he had misunderstood what he had said in jail (he had, but this was the knowing gullibility of the propagandist).

The case was complete, and the *Times* did what it had done in the case of earlier disinformation claims that they had disseminated aggressively and uncritically--the Bulgarian Connection, the Libyan hit squad, the Libyan discotheque bombing, the Soviet's deliberate destruction of a civilian airliner, etc.--they played down or suppressed the evidence that the claims they had featured so generously and uncritically were pure disinformation. They had served up disinformation fit to print in the service of state propaganda, and they were not going to undermine it and admit their own culpability by featuring and reflecting on its exposure as a fraud on the public.

## Conclusion

The LeMoyne articles on the Miranda confession utilize all of the techniques by which the media serve the needs of state propaganda. These include, most notably, working strictly within a narrow propaganda framework, using words and juxtaposition of phrasing which support the preferred version of events, selectively using evidence and sources, and failing to follow up on the eventual collapse of a piece of disinformation that the propaganda agent had taken seriously.

It may be noted that LeMoyne's methodology in these articles violates many generally accepted principles of journalistic objectivity, such as the requirement that a reporter engage in the minimal pursuit of relevant investigative leads and provide balance in the use of sources. The reporter may violate the principles egregiously, however, if he follows the state party line (LeMoyne and Kinzer on Central America, John Tagliabue on the Bulgarian connection, Paul Lewis on UNESCO). If, on the other hand, he conflicts with the party line, as did Ray Bonner on Central America, David Halberstam and Harrison Salisbury on Vietnam, and Sydney Schanberg on New York City politics, failure to adhere to the principles of objectivity become a very serious matter. ●

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# Manhattan Project for the Mind:

## A Tale of Two Memos

by Bob Spiegleman\*

Strategic disinformation reached unprecedented depths with the inception of the Cold War under the Truman administration. Its task, then as now, was nakedly repressive: to institutionalize permanent Cold War and the Arms Race as a means for achieving global dominion.<sup>1</sup> Its calculated use against the American people as a weapon of state terrorism became particularly acute and widespread starting in 1950. Yet the propaganda campaigns of the early 1950s remain cloaked in government secrecy. Indeed, the scale and intensity of its state-coordinated psychological warfare operation against us have still not been grasped.

Nonetheless, two overlooked, extraordinary memoranda penetrate that secrecy to tell us how we became the way we are. Written in 1950 by Edward W. Barrett, the State Department's top propaganda officer,<sup>2</sup> they are a "smoking gun" exposé of the Big Lie that launched the Cold War/Arms Race which still plagues us. And they alert us to the fact that massive disinformation was part of the war plan.

### Historical Background

The twin "disasters" of 1949—the U.S. loss of its nuclear weapons monopoly along with millions of Chinese to ascendant communism—threatened the "American Century."<sup>3</sup> The success of its postwar global ambitions meant an enduring empire that required the extensive re-militarization of foreign policy. This decision, to rearm and remobilize, dictated a radical political agenda. Its success mandated the complete destruction of the short-lived, "post-war" climate. This meant overcoming the public's desire for peace, and radicalizing increasing the \$13.5 billion peacetime defense budget.<sup>4</sup> It

also meant preparing the material base for a pre-emptive war against the Soviets, most likely in 1954.<sup>5</sup>

As of late 1949, the major goals of this agenda included:

- Create a permanent supply of military manpower drawn from all men 18 years of age for 10 years compulsory service. This was called Universal Military Service (UMS).
- Station a standing military in a globe-spanning network of U.S.-controlled bases, in readiness for local intervention.
- Expand the military budget by an immediate 300-400%.<sup>6</sup>
- Send at least one division of American troops to Europe and garrison it with troops under U.S.-controlled NATO command.
- Re-arm Germany as a bulwark/launching pad against the Soviets.

This agenda required a strategic synthesis of people and resources on a total war-fighting scale. The Universal Military Training commission put it starkly: "The challenge to the United States is total. It is conducted on every plane of existence."<sup>7</sup>

### NSC-68

With a world to win, the rearmament agenda required visionary ideological packaging as a crusade for freedom and democracy. This was provided by the top-secret document, NSC-68:<sup>8</sup> a monumental manifesto written by former Dillon, Reed banker, Paul Nitze in support of that agenda.<sup>9</sup> Nitze offered both a rationalization for empire and a generalized

\*Bob Spiegleman is a free-lance writer who is a frequent contributor to the *Guardian* newspaper.

1. Postwar empire was planned for from 1939 on by State Department/Council on Foreign Relations study groups representing Eastern, internationalist capital. See L.H. Shoup, "Shaping the Postwar World," *The Insurgent Sociologist*, Spring 1975. Wall Street domination of the Truman administration is thoroughly documented by Sen. Homer Capehart, in the *Congressional Record*, U.S. Senate, 5/20/52, pp. 5555-61. Its plans for the Cold War/Arms Race are fully exposed in Carl Marzani's *We Can Be Friends*, Albert Kahn's *High Treason*, and James S. Martin, *All Honorable Men* (all out of print).

2. In 1950, Barrett served as Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs and was Chairman of the interdepartmental Psychological Strategy Board. At State he coordinated the massive, anti-communist media campaign, "Project Truth." During World War II, Barrett served in the Office of War Information under psychological warrior supreme, C.D. Jackson. Prior to that he served as a Foreign Affairs editor at *Newsweek*.

3. Term coined by Henry Luce in a February 1941 *Life* magazine editorial call for a global epoch dominated by American power.

4. Defense Secretary Louis Johnson was the principal opponent of NSC-68 within the administration. As of early 1950, Truman sided with Johnson in opposing defense increases. See Charles R. Morris, *Iron Destinies, Lost Opportunities* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988), p. 65.

5. The history of World War III planning to the present is convincingly documented by Michio Kaku's and Dan Axelrod's *To Win a Nuclear War* (Boston: South End Press, 1983). Pentagon contingency planning for World War III against the Soviets was well under way by 1946. Actual operational plans were first drawn up in 1948. In 1950, the year of Barrett's memos, the Joint Chiefs of Staff stated that the U.S. and Russia were "to all intents and purposes engaged in war—except for armed conflict." (Dept. of State, FR, 1950, "Korea," pp. 73-74). Their deadline for launching World War III kept shifting due to unforeseen political and technological developments. According to Kaku and others, the target date as of 1950 was set for 1954.

6. This would (and did) restore and expand the lucrative system of government war contracts controlled by the largest industrialists/bankers during World War II, and create a permanent war economy on their behalf. See Albert Kahn, *High Treason*.

7. "The Price of Liberty," (Condensed) Report to Congress by the National Security Training Commission, December 1951, p. 4.

8. Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950, Volume I, "Korea." NSC-68 was declassified in 1977.

9. Nitze was chief presidential adviser on arms negotiations to Ronald Reagan. He is also co-founder and Chairman of Policy Studies for the current Committee on the Present Danger, which successfully lobbied to defeat SALT II.

strategy for relentless confrontation with the Soviets. As an alternative to Armageddon, he proposed an all-out arms race to force a Soviet collapse from within. This, of course, would establish a permanent war economy at home and place contingency planning for World War III on the front burner.<sup>10</sup>

Adoption of NSC-68 as national policy faced two major obstacles—its enemies within the government, and the American public. The first was defeated in 1950 by Secretary of State Dean Acheson. His faction<sup>11</sup> used the document to force a bitter executive branch debate and “bludgeon the mass mind of ‘top government’”<sup>12</sup> into accepting it as policy. As for the second obstacle, crushing it was Edward A. Barrett’s task. As he well knew, any policy based on NSC-68 could succeed only by “bludgeoning the mass mind” of the American people. And as his extraordinary, overlooked memos show, he did his job.

#### Barrett Memo I

The first Barrett memo,<sup>13</sup> written before the Korean war, was part of the internal government debate of 1950. Intended for Acheson’s eyes only, it warmly endorses NSC-68 and fully exposes its ominous implications for the American public. As State’s principal information strategist, Barrett’s main concern is how in peacetime to sell NSC-68’s militarist agenda both here and abroad. Barrett explains NSC-68:

My most important point: the whole paper seems to me to point to a gigantic armament race, a huge buildup of conventional arms that quickly become obsolescent [sic], a greatly expanded military establishment in being.

He then cites three potentially “massive” obstacles to its success: informed opinion leaders, public apathy/resistance, and democratic traditions:

I think that, however much we whip up sentiment, we are going to run into vast opposition among informed people to a huge arms race. We will be warned that we are heading toward a ‘garrison state.’ Moreover, even if we should sell the idea, I fear that the U.S. public would rapidly tire of such an effort. In the absence of real and continuing crises, a dictatorship can unquestionably outlast a democracy in a conventional armament race.

The last sentence is no mere statement of fact. Restated, it

10. NSC-68 openly discussed a likely nuclear showdown with the Soviets. This would happen if U.S. strategy failed to force either the internal collapse of Soviet socialism or its “voluntary” re-structuring by the leadership. The year 1954 was seen by insiders as a watershed. See n. 5.

11. Using a State-Defense team under the joint control of former Wall Street insiders Nitze (Dillon, Reed) and Robert Lovett (Brown Bros., Hariman). Nitze wrote the document as director of State’s Policy Planning Staff.

12. Dean Acheson, *Present at Creation* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1969), p. 374.

13. Department of State, *op.cit.*, n. 8, pp. 225-26.

**“My most important point: the whole paper seems to me to point to a gigantic armament race, a huge buildup of conventional arms that quickly become obsolescent [sic] ...”**

archly prescribes the cure for the democratic malaise—the presence of “real and continuing crises.” And to administer this cure a permanent crisis atmosphere—a

centrally-coordinated Cold War—was required.

Knowing the vast media resources at his disposal, Barrett is “confident that the American people could be sold and be kept sold on a massive program of developing new weapons...” Intentions for this campaign were already announced to insiders by Wall Street banker and soon-to-be defense undersecretary Robert Lovett: “We must have a much vaster propaganda machine to tell our story at home and abroad.”<sup>14</sup> And Barrett would coordinate the plan:

The first step in the campaign is obviously building up a full public awareness of the problem. This might take three months or it might require no more than ten days. My hunch is that it will be nearer ten days!

Together with Lovett’s statement, Barrett’s supremely confident time estimate suggests the existence of a state/media apparatus for massive disinformation already in place.<sup>15</sup>

Primed for crisis-management, Barrett’s focus is tactical:

We must be sure that the Government is in a position to come forward with positive steps to be taken just as soon as the atmosphere is right. It is imperative for both domestic and overseas reasons, that there should not be too much of a time lag between the creation of a public awareness of the problem and the setting forth of a positive Government program to solve that problem.

And with NSC-68 at stake, any lingering pretense of democratic decisionmaking is abolished:

In other words, we should have at least the broad proposals for action well in hand before the psychological “scare campaign” is started.

#### A Crisis-Opportunity: “Thank God for Korea”

Barrett’s first memo shows that rearmament plans were well underway prior to the outbreak of war on June 25th. North Korea’s crossing the 38th parallel gave NSC-68 planners a golden opportunity. The invasion of Korea<sup>16</sup> provided “a convenient pretext for legitimating a military buildup already planned and in search of a threat to set it in motion.”<sup>17</sup>

14. Jerry Sanders, *Peddlers of Crisis* (Boston: South End Press, 1983), p. 51

15. See, for example, Carl Bernstein, “The CIA and the Media,” *Rolling Stone*, October 20, 1977. Also Sanders, *ibid.*

16. The gospel of the North’s unprovoked aggression has been challenged in many sources. Some are I.F. Stone’s *Hidden History of Korea* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1952) and James Aronson’s *The Press and the Cold War* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970).

17. Jerry Sanders, “Shaping the Cold War Consensus,” *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, Volume 24, 1980, p. 67.

Grasping its immediate propaganda benefits, Barrett held a press conference and greeted the "invasion" news with unmasked delight:

We can really go to town on this now... The one and only benefit from the whole occurrence is that it shows up to intelligent people on both sides of the Iron Curtain the rank hypocrisy of the Kremlin's so-called peace offensive."<sup>18</sup> The "invasion" was used to produce an atmosphere of apocalyptic crisis. Kremlin-directed World Communism, in all its treachery, was on the march! This proved so effective that within the first three months alone, Truman's Executive Branch could launch America's first undeclared war,<sup>19</sup> extend its first peacetime draft by two years, double the defense budget, establish a Civil Defense Administration, and bury the World War II alliance by initiating German re-armament!

While the Korean "invasion" proved a propaganda windfall, this protracted yet "limited war" posed a serious dilemma for NSC-68 planners. First, the public might (and did) tire of a war without end. Even worse, it could end too soon to justify the permanent war economy now waiting in the wings. Indeed, the success of NSC-68 could not depend on Korea. It required a long-range solution — terrorize the public into abandoning all hope for peace and accept, if not demand, a military-industrial complex as the price of protection.

Lightning struck again at the end of November when "an entirely new war"<sup>20</sup> broke out. Provoked by MacArthur's "end the war" drive to its borders, the Chinese entered the war and were now rolling back his troops. Acheson called it "...a fresh and unprovoked aggressive act, even more immoral than the first."<sup>21</sup> Yet as he well knew, China's "treachery" had provided NSC-68 planners with their foremost "crisis-opportunity." Barrett rose to the occasion.

#### Barrett Memo II: "The Current Emergency"

Barrett recognized NSC-68 faced a "psychological crisis" and in another remarkable memo<sup>22</sup> he spelled it out. It was the U.S. public — not the Chinese — that posed the real threat:

Public opinion in this country and abroad is in a very serious condition. In the absence of a strong, positive leadership in Washington, the situation is ripe for mountebanks of various sorts to move in and fill the void.

No mountebank he, Barrett prescribes corrective action against those Americans and Europeans whose unrest and terror of World War III threaten the plan. In true Orwellian style, Dr. Barrett prescribes the medicine for their own good in their own name, "we believe they would welcome a firm U.S. position to the effect that we are going into a gigantic mobiliza-

tion in the belief that it is the one way of preserving the peace."

His key tactical point is take immediate action and use the retreat of American soldiers to launch an all-out psychological warfare campaign against the American public:

...we do feel that if there ever is a time when psychological factors are enormously important, that time is now. Moreover, we know we are bound to embark on a huge mobilization program; hence it should be quite possible to use that fact in a way that will meet the psychological crisis we face.

For the final step, a single, decisive presidential act must be taken which both raises the crisis atmosphere to a screaming pitch and sets forth the NSC-68 agenda as the only relief. Barrett's prescription — a nationally broadcast declaration of a state of emergency.

The content of that message should be along the following lines:

(1) An analysis of the situation we face and the gravity of it (coupled with whatever grave announcement it may at that time be appropriate to make regarding Korea). (2) A brief statement of the world situation we face, based on the concept of NSC-68. (3) A clear and forceful statement to the effect that we are calm and resolute, determined to meet the grave world situation, but also determined not to be rushed into any shortsighted or unwise international moves. (4) A statement that the President is today declaring a state of national emergency...

Ten days later, the great scare campaign went into high gear and on December 15, Truman declared the state of emergency in a nation-wide address. He announced the massive rearmament program and appointed a War Mobilizer, General Electric president Charles E. Wilson, to direct it. But this was only the beginning.

Deeply alarmed by the imminent threat to both peoples, *Pravda* quoted the *Wall Street Journal* as saying the effect of the declaration would be "the last step before war actions."<sup>23</sup> U.S. pollsters announced "...over 50% of the people thought that World War III was imminent."<sup>24</sup> And the "permanent emergency" found an immediate home in the new Civil Defense Administration (CDA), always eager to remind us of the impending Soviet sneak attack.

In this climate, the NSC-68 protection racket thrived.<sup>25</sup> Immediately, the original (FY1951) \$13.5 billion defense budget was pushed to \$53 billion. Between 1950 and 1953, the annual rate of defense spending rose 400%. In the first year of the

23. Quoted in the *New York Times*, December 16, 1950, p. 2.

24. Rees, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

25. This was especially lucrative for New York City's banking giants. To them, Korea meant an "extraordinary expansion in bank credit" as business and industrial loans to privileged customers. (See Report of the N.Y. State Banking Board, 1950). Of those, by mid 1951, only 50 companies controlled 2/3 of the dollar volume of war contracts, with Wilson's General Electric in 7th place commanding \$500 million.

18. James Aronson, *op. cit.*, n. 16, p. 104.

19. It was fought as a U.N. police action under U.S. command.

20. Quotation from Gen. MacArthur from Truman Memoirs, p. 384.

21. Acheson, State Department Bulletin, December 18, 1950.

22. Department of State, *op. cit.*, n. 8, pp. 423-24.

Korean war, \$15.2 billion in new defense contracts were awarded to the top 50 defense giants. An alarmed Senate committee regarded the awarding of military contracts so top-heavy in favor of the industrial giants that unless "immediately reversed," it would "entrench monopoly beyond hope of dislodgement in our time." And finally, though Congress rejected UMS, it approved a peacetime draft which by 1953 increased the military 300% to 3.6 million people. In sum, the "state of national emergency" launched the postwar military-industrial-banking complex.

### Situations Wanted: A Permanent State of Mind

Barrett knew that NSC-68 dictated a permanent state of mind and the people must be "kept sold." This meant tight coordination between national security managers and the mass media and this relationship was cemented between February and April 1951. Barrett, who was appointed Chairman of Truman's Psychological Strategy Board (PSB) in August 1950, would help coordinate much of it.

The blitzkrieg began in February when the powerful Committee on the Present Danger (CPD)<sup>26</sup> launched a three month scare campaign starting with its chairman's nationwide alert over General Sarnoff's NBC network.<sup>27</sup> Every Sunday night, CPD luminaries used the Mutual Broadcasting System's 550 stations to alert the nation to "the present danger" and the need for NSC-68's agenda.<sup>28</sup>

In April, War Mobilizer Wilson repeatedly instructed the nation's eager media elites in their role. Top editors were told: "...the task of the press is to create and sustain a state of mind in the people which is vital to the nation's mobilization effort..."<sup>29</sup> Publishers first were thanked for the "millions of words laying down the premise...that the free world is in mortal danger;" and then assured of their importance in the new order:

If the people were not convinced of that it would be impossible for Congress to vote the vast sums now being spent to avert that danger....With the support of public opinion as marshalled by the press, we are off to a good start.<sup>30</sup>

Accordingly, the level of the propaganda campaign had to escalate. Civil Defense chief Caldwell enlisted the help of the media for this end. The media giants were asked to combat "the crisis of crises" and vanquish "...the most vicious enemy of America today, the shocking apathy of the American people to the very real dangers of atomic attack on their cities

26. The CPD was formed in 1950 by top eastern establishment luminaries as a "citizen's lobby" to alert the nation to the Soviet "present danger," and the need to adopt the NSC-68 agenda to survive. Its "outsider" strategy for NSC-68 was coordinated through "insiders" Lovett and Nitze.

27. Sanders, *op.cit.*, n. 14, p. 90.

28. CPD speakers included top educator J.B. Conant, top scientists Bush and Oppenheimer, former Secretaries of State and of War, Clayton and Patterson, and OSS hero "Wild Bill" Donovan.

29. American Society of Newspaper Editors, proceedings from annual meeting, *Problems in Journalism*, 1950, pp. 84-85.

30. Fred J. Cook, *The Warfare State* (New York: MacMillan, 1962), p. 125.

and themselves."<sup>31</sup> Though the Soviets had no long-range bombers,<sup>32</sup> the people must be taught to fear an imminent first-strike!

This is the pre-attack period. There may be little time left to educate our people in the simple steps of personal survival. The only way to do it is to get the facts and print them day after day and to drum them into the consciousness of the people of America... You must agree it is vital that the people of this country acknowledge those facts and act in the light of them.<sup>33</sup>

The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) contributed a top secret April 1 recommendation to "recruit" the public into a "propaganda crusade" based on "...a large-scale program of psychological warfare, including special operations, comparable in scope to the Manhattan District project of World War II."<sup>34</sup> This offended Barrett! As Chairman of the PSB,<sup>35</sup> he monitored and knew the full extent of current operations, and felt criticized by the JCS call for a "Manhattan Project of the Mind." Defending his program in a memo to Nitze, he listed seven key operations which he boasts "...in sum constitute a propaganda 'crusade' of no small dimensions."<sup>36</sup>

Barrett's list is revealing. First, it shows that programs under central coordination were domestic as well as foreign. Second, it exposes a domestic program that is most likely the CPD/State-Defense coordinated scare campaign launched that February, "an extensive coordinated program already under way of keeping the people of the United States informed as to the nature of the peril in which they stand and the measures required to avert it."<sup>37</sup> For Barrett, of course, keeping the people "informed" meant keeping them "sold." And it was this devotion to "selling" permanent crisis that made him the ideal appointee to perpetuate the craft as Dean of Columbia's premier School of Journalism from 1956 to 1968.

### Conclusion

Barrett's memos unveil a psychological warfare campaign used by the U.S. government to launch the Cold War. These startling memos are proof that those in high office actively plotted and worked to psychologically terrorize the U.S. public. As these memos show, the warfare state requires permanent crisis and constant disinformation to compel the consent of the governed. It targets the U.S. public as well as those it brands enemies. The campaign is relentless and we should always remember the words of CIA Deputy Director Robert Gates: "Whether Gorbachev succeeds, fails or just survives, a still long competition and struggle with the Soviet Union lies before us." Indeed, people like Gates will see to that. ●

31. American Society of Newspaper Editors, *op.cit.*, n. 29, p. 42.

32. See Morris, *op.cit.*, n. 4, p. 90; and Kaku/Axelrod, *op.cit.*, n. 5, p. 103.

33. American Society of Newspaper Editors, *op.cit.*, n. 29, p. 42.

34. Department of State, *op. cit.*, n. 8, pp. 73-74.

35. William E. Daugherty and Morris Janowitz, *A Psychological Warfare Casebook* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1958), p. 138.

36. Department of State, *op. cit.*, 1951, Volume I, pp. 920-21.

37. *Ibid.*

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## Book Review:

# The U.S. War Against Nicaragua

Eight years ago, the Reagan administration began its war against the people of Nicaragua, a massive and illegal operation has been marked by government lies, cover-ups, and scandal. To help us through this intricate maze of executive branch, CIA, State Department, Defense Department, and private sector conspiracy is a new book entitled *David and Goliath: The U.S. War Against Nicaragua* by William Robinson and Kent Norsworthy (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1987; 400 pp., \$11.00).

*David and Goliath* provides an excellent description and analysis of U.S. policy and practice in Nicaragua from its theoretical beginnings in the Reagan Doctrine to the downing of the plane carrying Eugene Hasenfus and the start of the Iran/contras affair.

The book carefully describes the CIA's role in conducting the war, including propaganda, training, and supply. However, the book also makes an important and useful qualification about the role of the CIA in the *contra* war. According to Alan Francovich, a filmmaker who has researched the CIA for decades,

Looking at the war against Nicaragua in its political context, many people misconstrue the CIA as an executive agency responsible for every phase. The CIA does not really *run* anything; it coordinates all the elements, tries to put all the pieces in place.

The authors point out that the "real nerve center of the U.S. war, however, is the National Security Council," an important distinction. The key actors thus include Elliot Abrams and Thomas Enders of the State Department, General Paul Gorman and Nestor Sanchez from the Department of Defense, Oliver North from the NSC, Jeane Kirkpatrick from the U.N.,

as well as William Casey and Dewey Clarridge from the CIA.

As *David and Goliath* shows, blame for the war against Nicaragua is often placed solely on the CIA, when many other branches of government are equally involved. For example, the importance of propaganda made the United States Information Agency (USIA), via the Voice of America, and the State Department's Office for Public Diplomacy, pivotal actors in the war.

This book also features an analysis of the behind-the-scenes political workings of the counterrevolution, describing in detail the ascent to power of most of the important *contra* leaders, and describes the evolution of, and splits within, the various *contra* groups. *David and Goliath* also provides a good description of the Nicaraguan civilian counterrevolutionary agenda and the importance in furthering U.S. objectives of the Superior Council of Private Enterprise (COSEP), *La Prensa*, and the hierarchy of the Catholic church lead by Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo.

Finally, the book demonstrates how the Nicaraguan revolutionary process has provided the resources and the inspiration to allow the Nicaraguan people to meet the extreme adversity of the war, fight against the counterrevolution, and win.

The authors bring special insight to their material. Bill Robinson lived in Nicaragua for many years while covering the war for the Nicaraguan News Agency (ANN). Kent Norsworthy also has lived in Nicaragua for a long period of time and works for the monthly *Pensamiento Propio*.

The U.S. war against Nicaragua has taken a terrible toll—thirty thousand dead, immeasurable pain and suffering, and billions of dollars in economic destruction. *David and Goliath* will give any reader greater understanding of this debacle and help teach us how to better struggle against it in the future.●

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