

CAQ

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Whose AIDS Conspiracy?

Demonstrating the falseness of minority-accepted theories that government-created and disseminated *infectious* agents cause AIDS, David Gilbert's "AIDS: Conspiracy or Unnatural Disaster" (CAQ #58) urges acceptance instead of official AIDS doctrine. He asserts that it is an infectious disease caused by HIV ("AIDS-HIV") best combated by clean needles, safe sex, and early treatment. But his article glosses over the major role of *chemicals*, including street-drugs, rather than *infection*, in causing AIDS and its deaths.

Heroin and cocaine were known to destroy the immune system long before AIDS. Malnutrition, chronic disease, antibiotics, blood transfusions and a host of chemicals cause similar destruction. Official HIV propaganda hides how malnutrition and chronic local illnesses — malaria, parasites — cause African "AIDS," half of whose victims are women — as opposed to 10 percent here: the fraction of female drug users.

My article, "Is AIDS Non-Infectious?" (CAQ #28, 1987) focused on the work of Berkeley professor Peter Duesberg, the leading critic of official doctrine. This prize-winning retrovirus investigator pointed out that these organisms *as a class* are too weak to cause human illness. Continuing to question official doctrine, he and other scientists have emphasized the extent to which chemicals — street and recreational drugs, antibiotics for treating sexually transmitted diseases, and highly toxic anti-AIDS drugs such as AZT — *harm* the immune system, and how that system often recovers following cessation of drug use and institution of exercise, good diet, and hygiene.

Duesberg's new book, *Inventing the AIDS Virus*, was so viciously savaged in the April 7 *New York Times Book Review* that it published his lengthy reply. In its June issue, *Reappraising AIDS*, the invaluable publication of the Group for Scientific Reappraisal of the HIV/AIDS Hypothesis described, for example, the *Wall Street Journal's* May 1 front page account of the deliberate exaggerations — conscious lies — by the Centers for Disease Control about the heterosexual transmission of AIDS, the theoretical basis for official support of "safe sex" — condom use — for youngsters.

Journalist Bob Lederer's "Origin and Spread of AIDS" (CAQ #28 and #29, 1987) is a major source of Gilbert's ideas. While this long article touched briefly on possible non-infectious causes of AIDS, Gilbert mentions neither them nor my article, which appeared in the same issue as Lederer's. This omission is additionally surprising since my article examined and demolished the Segal hypothesis of a synthetically created AIDS virus, on which Gilbert spends a full page.

Gilbert, like so many other honest "AIDS educators," has been conned. His support of official AIDS doctrine, while ignoring fundamental still-unanswered questions about it,

leads to his endorsing "safe sex" and the administration of dangerously toxic, but not accepted, drugs to clinically healthy HIV seropositive people. In so doing, he fails totally to recognize that by aiding the distribution of some of those chemicals — street drugs (by the CIA) and toxic anti-AIDS medications in particular — the government is actually facilitating the spread of AIDS.

NATHANIEL S. LEHRMAN, M.D., LFAPA
Clinical director (ret.), Kingsboro Psychiatric Center, Brooklyn, NY

What AIDS Is and Isn't

Gilbert's article left out the two most important books on the subject: *The AIDS War*, by John Lauritsen, and *Inventing the AIDS Virus*, by Peter Duesberg. Considering Gilbert is sitting in prison, it is understandable that he does not have access to all sources, but you do and should have verified Gilbert.

"AIDS" is a phony construct of 30-year-old diseases, including TB and varieties of VD and cancer which the Centers for Disease Control calls "AIDS" if HIV, one of many viruses in our system, happens to be there. TB is always TB, no matter which of the many viruses that are always in our system happen to be there. This is not science; this is outright lying by a genocidal government. Kaposi's sarcoma, a form of cancer, was on the list, but was taken off in December 1994. KS was the signature disease of "AIDS." The cancer rate is rising in our society because of the increased chemical and nuclear pollution in the air, water, earth, and food.

"AIDS" in Africa is mostly malnutrition and curable diseases such as cholera and VD, which became fatal among starving people. All foreign visitors are told all medical problems are "AIDS" so the African people can receive the charity money for hospitals, schools, etc., denied them by imperialism.

The cause of the current medical crisis called "AIDS" is a lack of a national health care system that guarantees health care from cradle to grave, in other words, socialized medicine. It is no accident that the US has the biggest "AIDS" crisis in the industrialized world; we are the only industrialized country without a serious health care system. Added to that lack is a drug epidemic and its accompanying poor eating habits and unhealthy lifestyles, problems common to both the gay male community and the poor, non-gay communities. Hemophiliacs are dying from hemophilia, which is fatal, although during the first 15 years of the "AIDS" crisis, their life expectancy increased from 12 to 27 years. If one takes AZT, a poison, one will surely die, regardless of whether one has "AIDS," hemophilia, or anything else. The gay community now knows that AZT is poison, but it was actively promoted to increase longevity just a few years ago.

It is a shame that an excellent magazine like yours published such a backward article. I

look forward to a discussion of the research of Dr. Peter Duesberg and John Lauritsen.

LEE HELLER
San Francisco

David Gilbert Replies:

My article very explicitly stated that it makes no attempt to solve the origins of AIDS and does not even review the range of theories. I analyzed just one set of beliefs, and only because of its dire public health and political implications.

Dr. Nathaniel Lehrman and Lee Heller's position that HIV is not a cause of AIDS stands in contradiction to the view I examined that HIV was deliberately engineered as a weapon of genocide. What these two opposite, wrong theories have in common is the dangerous practical result of deprecating prevention programs.

Lehrman and Heller are certainly right in emphasizing the importance of such issues as street drugs, malnutrition, the lack of guaranteed health care, and chronic diseases. But this valid point is hardly a critique of my article, which was all about how "AIDS and other epidemics and health hazards flow most easily along the contours of social oppression," and which concluded by stressing "mutually reinforcing (social and health) crises." It is true that official doctrine has downplayed the possible co-factors with HIV (Drs. John Sonnabend, Luc Montagnier, and Shyh-Ching Lo are credible researchers in this area). Where I emphatically part company with Lehrman and Heller is in their promotion of Professor Peter Duesberg's theory that HIV is not a cause of AIDS, a position totally rejected by the overwhelming majority of scientists in the field.

The non-HIV theories were still plausible in 1987 when CAQ ran Lehrman's article. Now, there is compelling evidence for blood borne transmission and for HIV as a primary agent:

- There are AIDS patients (such as the wives of hemophiliacs) with HIV but without the deleterious lifestyle and environmental factors that Lehrman and Heller stress.
- In 1995, two different laboratories discovered the internal "epic war" raging between proliferating HIV and the body's effort to replace lost T-4 cells.
- Researchers have recently found people who, despite all the lifestyle and transmission risks, did not get AIDS due to a rare genetic resistance to HIV.
- Studies published this year show a very high correlation between the level of HIV in the blood and the speed of the onset of AIDS. The correlation with the level of HIV is even stronger than with the T-4 cell count.

Lehrman charges me with "endorsing" toxic drugs (such as AZT) and more generally with "support" for government policy. My article never discusses such treatments, and the heart of my essay is a scathing indictment of "official criminal negligence." More importantly, in dismissing the transmission of HIV through unprotected sex and shared

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PUBLISHERS
Ellen Ray
William Schaap
Louis Wolf

EDITOR
Terry Allen

ASSISTANT EDITOR
Jeffrey Udin

STAFF
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Anne Paxton
Phillip Smith
Jane Teller
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Louis Wolf (on leave)

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1500 Massachusetts Ave.,
NW, #732, Washington, DC
20005, 202/331-9763,
(fax) 202/331-9751.
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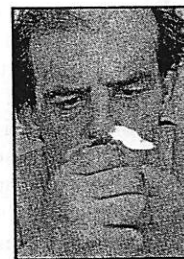
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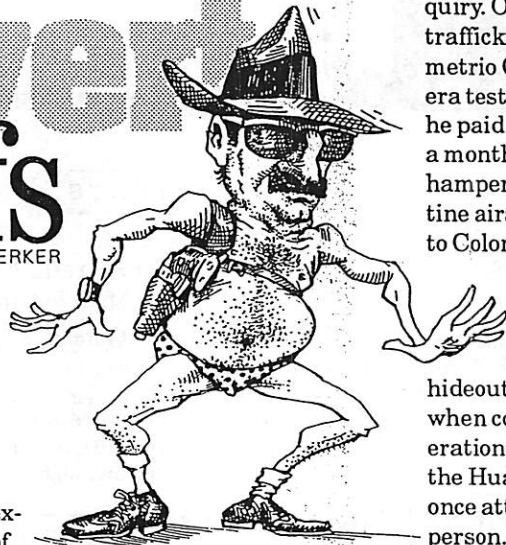
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The Good Student

Russia may not have long experience with the niceties of Western-style democracy, but some of its leaders are catching on fast. In September, after the US launched a missile attack on Iraq — supposedly to protect the Kurds, but in good part to protect a CIA operation to overthrow Saddam Hussein — Russian strongman Aleksandr Lebed was impressed: “This is the essence of democracy. You send in the planes and drop the bombs. Then you gather the journalists and tell them to applaud. We need to study that.”

CIA and Drugs, Our Man in Peru

In late October, while the CIA was vigorously denying complicity with narcotraffickers here at home, drug czar Gen. Barry McCaffrey traveled to Peru and met with Vladimiro Montesinos, the head of that country's National Intelligence Service (SIN, in its ironic Spanish initials). Montesinos has links to both the CIA and international drug traffickers, as well as a history of human rights abuses. McCaffrey went not to bury Montesinos but, according to the Peruvian press, to praise him as an “outstanding and knowledgeable strategist.” It was the first time in six years that Montesinos, the second most powerful man in Peru

after President Fujimori, was seen in public. He had been forced into a shadow role because of a particularly unsavory past: While in the army during the 1970s, he was caught spying and passing state secrets to the US and was convicted of desertion. After being released from prison, he became the lawyer-of-choice for Peru's drug kingpins, and used his army and political connections to work his way back to the back rooms of power.

It is widely assumed that he maintains a relationship with both the CIA and drug traffickers. Human Rights Watch/Americas and the Washington Office on Latin America also charge him with human rights abuses: “A death squad composed of members of the SIN and military agents and organized under Montesinos' direction has been responsible for some of the most serious rights violations attributed to the armed forces under Fujimori's administration, including disappearances, torture and illegal executions.”

McCaffrey's public endorsement of Montesinos came at a crucial time: New allegations against Peru's “Rasputin” were prompting

demands for a public inquiry. On trial for cocaine trafficking, drug lord Demetrio Chávez Peñaherrera testified in August that he paid Montesinos \$50,000 a month during 1991 for unhampered use of a clandestine airstrip to export drugs to Colombia. Chávez also said Montesinos had communicated with him by radio at his remote hideout, had warned him when counternarcotics operations were scheduled for the Huallaga valley, and once attended a payoff in person. “I saw him; his group arrived in two black cars,” Chávez said. “I saw how they gave him the money.”

The drug lord said that he left Peru for Colombia soon after Montesinos demanded that he double the monthly bribe to \$100,000. When Chávez was finally arrested, it was not for trafficking, but for collaborating with terrorists. This charge pushed his case into the secretive military justice system, which was able to hold him in isolation, thus spurring complaints that the military was trying to shut him up.

When he finally appeared at the trial, Chávez dropped the bombshell kickback charges against Montesinos. A week later, in a barely coherent statement, Chávez recanted, saying he had been “confused.” His lawyer, Pablo Castro, suspected that the retraction and the quick deterioration in his client's mental and physical health were the result of mistreatment by SIN.

The Chávez affair is the latest in a series of drug-related incidents that have embarrassed the Peruvian government but done nothing to dampen US enthusiasm and support. In one

incident, more than 380 pounds of coca paste were found in a former presidential plane. Soon after, more than 200 pounds were found on-board two navy ships, one in the Canadian port of Vancouver.

Officially, the police are in charge of antidrug operations. In fact, it is the military that plays the key role, blending counterinsurgency and counternarcotics in a potent cocktail of corruption. Up to 300 military personnel have been investigated or charged in connection with drugs since 1990. Regional commanders overseeing clandestine airstrips allegedly got a \$10,000 kickback per shipment of drugs loaded by soldiers under their command onto Colombia-bound planes. The airstrip from which Chávez's drug cargoes were flown to Colombia was only a few kilometers from a counterinsurgency base in the upper Huallaga Valley.

In this case of military involvement in narcotrafficking, as in many others, the runway leads to Montesinos. According to Ricardo Soberon, a narcotics expert at the Andean Commission of Jurists, “He controls the military establishment for Fujimori.”

McCaffrey's visit to bestow Washington's seal of approval on Fujimori and Montesinos was preceded by US praise for Peru's human rights record and by a personal letter to Fujimori from Pres. Clinton, praising Peru's admirable progress in the war on drugs. While the two top Peruvians basked in McCaffrey and Clinton's warm approval, some Peruvian officials suggest that US leniency reflects the fact that Montesinos may still be on the US payroll.

Meanwhile, CIA Director John Deutch continues to deny US complicity in narcotrafficking.

Funding Drug Dealers and Human Rights Abusers

That same confusion of the role of the police with that of the military, and of counterinsurgency with counter-narcotic strategies, has pervaded US policy in Colombia, where some 20,000 civilians have been killed since 1986. According to Amnesty International (AI) and the military's own paper trail, US aid allocated for counternarcotics has been diverted to fund counterinsurgency and used by units implicated in human rights abuses.

On August 18, 1991, for example, members of the XIII Brigade, tasked with counterinsurgency, burst into the home of political activist Antonio Palacios Urea, murdered him and three of his children, and tortured other family members. US military documents, leaked to AI via journalist Frank Smyth, confirm that counternarcotics funding was going to this unit. US Defense Department (DoD) documents confirmed that all but one of the brigades that AI implicated in gross human rights violations turned out to have received US aid. The paper trail also shows that the Clinton administration knew of the violations and repeatedly told Congress and the public that it was not funding and arming units implicated in atrocities.

The administration insists that US aid funds anti-drug not counterinsurgency efforts, but US Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) documents reveal that attempts to separate the two operations are farcical. Col Warren D. Hall — staff judge advocate to Gen. Barry McCaffrey (then SOUTHCOM commander and now Clinton's drug czar) — admitted as much in an internal memo: "It is unrealistic to expect the military to limit use of the equipment

to operations against narco-traffickers. ... The light infantry skills US special operations forces teach during counterdrug deployments ... can be used by the Colombian armed forces in their counterinsurgency as well." Hall also admitted that US-supplied equipment "may be used in counterinsurgency operations during which human rights violations might occur."

SOUTHCOM worried about being "vulnerable to criticism because of the similarities inherent in counter-drug [CD] and counter-insurgency [CI] efforts in Colombia." But since "disengaging from the CD effort in Colombia is not a viable option," a DoD memo noted, "... USSOUTHCOM must adhere to policies that minimize the possibility of US culpability for human rights violations" — as opposed to minimizing the violations themselves.

In 1996, Congress banned aid to any military unit about which there is credible evidence of human rights violations. Since DoD admits that those violations will likely continue, and since confusion between CI and CD roles is unavoidable, we can look forward to an immediate cessation of aid to Colombia. Or not.

Familyvalues Bobdole and the Myth of the Liberal Media

It is probably true, as conservatives charge, that more reporters are Democrats than Republicans; it is also largely irrelevant. And the usual jump — that US media have a liberal agenda — is just plain silly. First, the current Democratic party is so far from liberalism that it makes Richard Nixon look pink around the edges. But more importantly, the political perspective of individual reporters is a relatively unimportant factor in the final shakedown

of what events are covered and how. In the same way that choices about what kind of cars Ford produces are made in the board room, rather than on the factory floor, decisions about what goes on the air and into print are made by publishers and editors, not by lowly hacks or even lofty anchors.

A case in point: During much of the stupifyingly dull campaign, one juicy story was an open secret among reporters. From 1968 to 1970, Bob Dole had an affair with Meredith Roberts — while he was married to his first wife. *Time* and the *Washington Post* knew about it and concluded, at the highest levels, that the adultery was not newsworthy. The Dole campaign, which had been frenetically drum beating the senator's integrity to the point of universal migraine, was in a cold sweat lest the news break. Dole's communications director, John Buckley, paid a little visit to *Time*'s Managing Editor Walter Isaacson to argue against publishing the story; meanwhile Dole press secretary Nelson Warfield and adviser Mari Will sat down with top *Post* editors to request they sit on the story. After Elizabeth Dole called

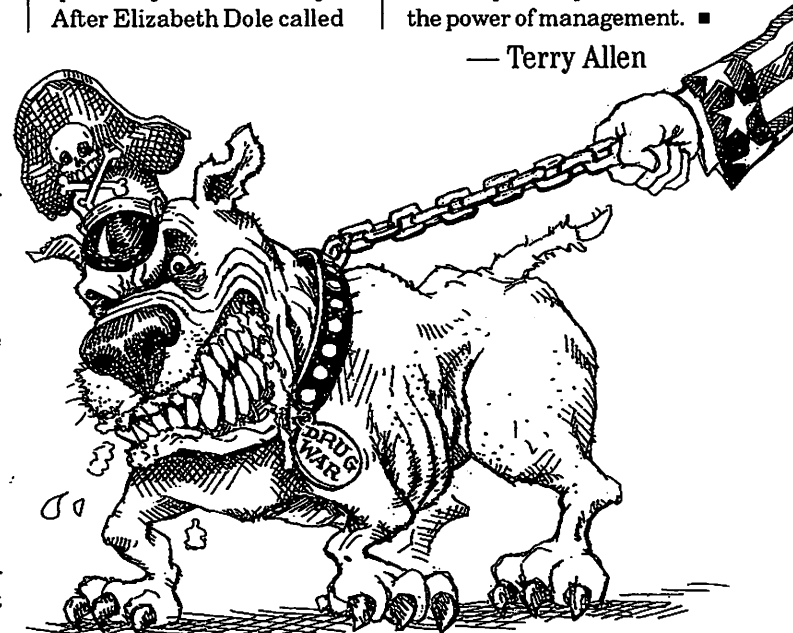
Post publisher Donald E. Graham to plead her husband's case, Graham said that he had merely notified the paper's executive editor, Leonard Downie Jr., of the call. Even after the *National Enquirer* broke the story, the *Post* and *Time* held it until after the election.

Downie later explained that the scandal had not met his longtime standard for newsworthiness. "The fact that it was 28 years ago ... played a role, and also it did not involve in any way his use of public office," he said. Andrew Rosenthal, Washington editor of the *New York Times*, joined the corporate chorus: "This was a story about an alleged affair that happened 30 years ago. Big deal."

He has a point, but neither Downie's "standards" nor Rosenthal's dismissal ruled during the 1992 election when the media emphasized Clinton's 1969 use of marijuana, his avoidance of the draft, and his 1969 student visit to Moscow.

The point is not that the corporate media favored one candidate over the other — both were acceptable to big business — but that the politics of reporters pales before the power of management. ■

— Terry Allen



The Poverty Profiteers Privatize Welfare

by Mark Dunlea

"This is one of the biggest corporate grabs in history,"

charges Sandy Felder, public sector coordinator for SEIU, a union representing public employees.¹ She is referring to the aftermath of the welfare "reform" passed by the 104th Congress. While the bipartisan coalition that pushed through the legislation raked political hay by scapegoating the poor, the jobless, single mothers, and children, corporations preferred their profits in cold cash. They understand that one consequence of the downsizing of "big government" is the upsizing of big corporations.

The privatization of welfare-related social services now underway will mean a massive handoff from government to the private sector. According to an industry survey, 49 states have already privatized some welfare functions and

Mark Dunlea is executive director of Hunger Action Network of NY, a statewide coalition of emergency food programs, low income individuals, and advocacy groups working to end hunger in the state. For more information, contact HANNYS, 278 Clinton Ave, Albany, NY 12210, (tel.) 518-434-7371.

1. This and other quotes not otherwise identified are from interviews conducted by the author in Oct. 1996.

many are considering further outsourcing. "Obviously, [firms] are not going into it with altruistic motives and the intent of losing money. The profit motive is foremost," said John Hirschi, a state legislator in Texas, where the first major contract is on the block.² The corporations believe Texas "will be a model for the rest of the country," said Bruce Bower, a lawyer who specializes in welfare issues at the Texas Legal Services Center. "They're licking their chops."³

And the feast they are anticipating is tempting indeed. The recent federal legislation mandating block grants to states to replace the welfare system is the biggest overhaul of a federal program since the New Deal. Up for grabs is much of the \$28 billion a year that governments now spend nationwide to distribute \$250 billion to welfare recipients.⁴ With welfare comprising 6-30 percent of state budgets, the changes will be radical. The new legislation, in addition to opening the door to corporate profiteers, will — by conservative estimate — push an additional 1.5 million adults and 1.1 million children into

poverty. Most of the children affected live in families with a working parent.⁵

It will also offer unprecedented opportunities for corporate profitmaking as major firms engage in high-stakes bidding for the potentially lucrative contracts. One of the most aggressive is Lockheed Martin, the \$30 billion defense contractor which made billions selling weapons to the very "big government" it is now trying to supplant. Ironically, although Lockheed has little experience in the social services, it does know welfare from the inside. In the 1970s and '80s, Congress approved a massive bailout for the failing weapons manufacturer. Also trying to win contracts are: Electronic Data Systems (EDS), the \$12.4 billion information-technology company founded by presidential candidate Ross Perot; Andersen Consulting, a \$4.2 billion sister company of Arthur Andersen, the accounting firm; Unisys; and IBM.

Gatekeepers and Revolving Doors

One strategy the corporations are using to gain an inside edge is to aggressively recruit federal and state welfare officials, especially from states where contracts are up for bid.⁶ In October, the Texas State Employees Union asked for an investigation of eight high-ranking state officials who took jobs with companies bidding for the state's contract.⁷

5. *Urban Institute Study Confirms That Welfare Bills Would Increase Child Poverty*, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (Washington, D.C.), July 26, 1996.

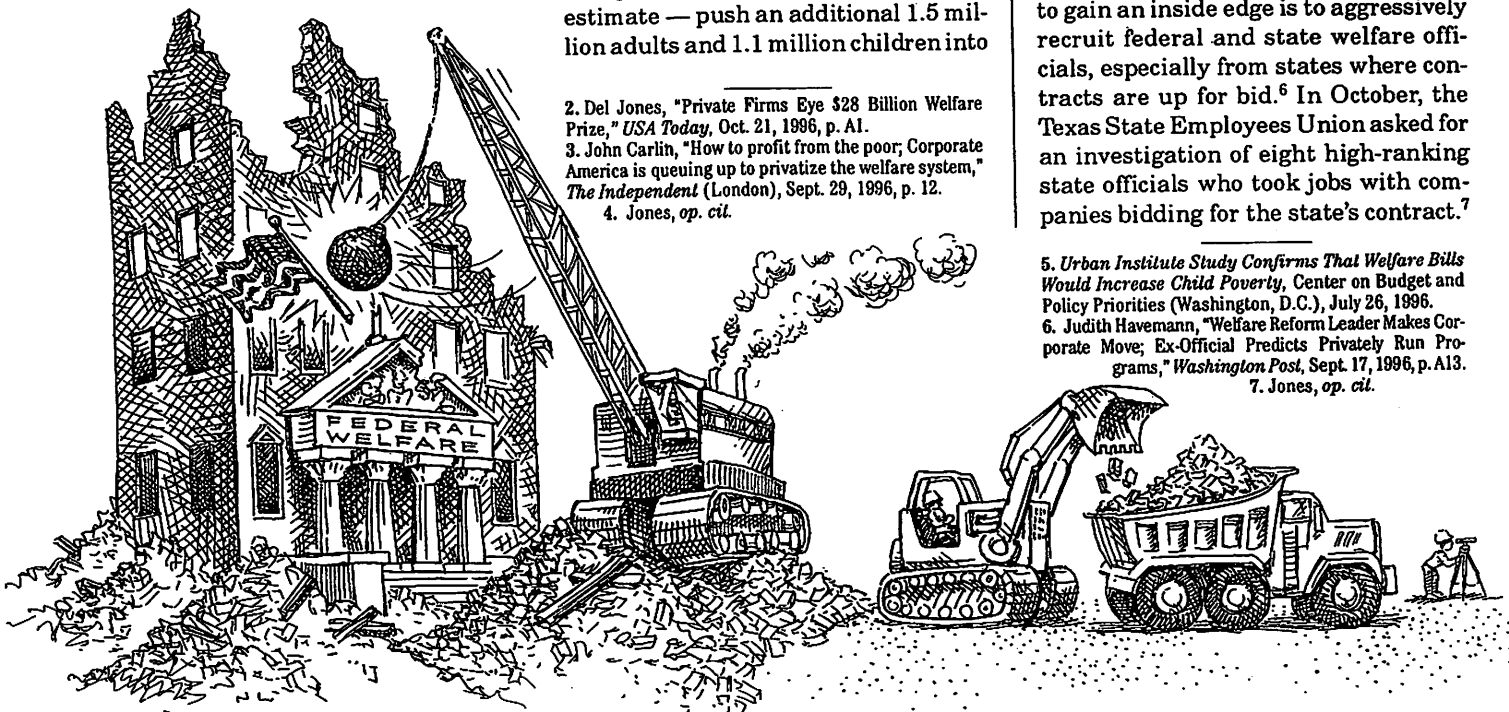
6. Judith Havemann, "Welfare Reform Leader Makes Corporate Move; Ex-Official Predicts Privately Run Programs," *Washington Post*, Sept. 17, 1996, p. A13.

7. Jones, *op. cit.*

2. Del Jones, "Private Firms Eye \$28 Billion Welfare Prize," *USA Today*, Oct. 21, 1996, p. A1.

3. John Carlin, "How to profit from the poor, Corporate America is queuing up to privatize the welfare system," *The Independent* (London), Sept. 29, 1996, p. 12.

4. Jones, *op. cit.*



Another man who stepped through the revolving door is Gerald Miller, former director of Michigan's welfare program. As Lockheed's new head of "welfare initiatives" division, he quickly predicted that "[t]he private sector will ultimately run these programs, the era of big government is over."⁸

The initial areas of welfare privatization are child support collections and job placements. Lockheed already has more than 200 state and municipal clients. It collects delinquent child support payments in 30 states and gets about 19 cents from the government for each of the \$1.15 billion it recovers annually.⁹ The new law expands the opportunities for business by allowing states to: contract out the administration of the block grants program (now renamed Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, or TANF); contract with charitable, religious, or private organizations to provide TANF services;

Lockheed's head of "welfare initiatives" division predicted: "The private sector will ultimately run these programs, the era of big government is over."

and contract out the administration of child care funds. Private companies are also seeking to take over eligibility and benefit determinations, thus becoming the new gatekeepers to welfare services.

Many politicians around the country are eager to cooperate. While elected officials at all levels of government have long called for the overhaul of the system, the reality is that few are willing to get involved in the day-to-day details of moving low-income households — which often present a wide range of economic, educational, and social challenges — from welfare into jobs. Nor are they eager to take the consequences for failure. When Congress transferred responsibility for the design and operation of these welfare programs, it also imposed financial penalties for states

8. Russell Baker, "Except for the Pentagon," *New York Times*, Sept. 24, 1986.
9. Jones, *op. cit.*

that fail to meet such targets as the number of welfare participants engaged in "work" activities. An attractive solution for local politicians is to pass the buck by awarding a low-bid contract and letting private industry worry about making the system work.

Or Toll Booth Operators

This handover of sensitive social issues to corporations is raising concerns. "As companies like Lockheed adjust to the end of the Cold War," said union spokesperson Sandy Felder,

they're looking around to see where they can grab some extra money. You really need the individuals who are making decisions about who receives government benefits to be held accountable to the taxpayers, not to some private company whose main concern is its profit margin. A public employee is more likely to be

concerned about moving a welfare participant into a long-term employment situation, because that will save the most tax dollars in the long run. A worker for a private company is going to focus on how

to get individuals off welfare in the shortest time, no matter what happens to them later, since that is what increases their company's profits and keeps the worker employed.

If profits increase when companies reduce caseloads, they will have a high incentive to deny or terminate assistance. "It's the same problem we are seeing with health maintenance organizations," said Henry Freedman, executive director of the Center on Social Welfare Policy and Law. "While the com-

panies contend they can save money through increased efficiency, they can also do it by reducing services, which is much easier. We need to examine how the contracts are structured, so that profits are tied to increases to long-term employment. Unfortunately, it's usually simpler to measure performance by reduction in caseloads."

"Traditionally," even under public administration, which has less incentive to deny benefits, "many low-income individuals have had a difficult time obtaining the public benefits they are entitled to," said Rachel Leon, who works for the Hunger Action Network, a statewide anti-hunger organization in New York.

Legal aid attorneys and advocates constantly plead with, cajole, and sue state and local officials to force compliance. When these services are contracted out to a private agency, not only is there another layer of bureaucracy to contend with, but for-profit companies have no experience with anti-poverty law or negotiations. I don't look forward to arguing on behalf of a client in front of a hearing officer on Lockheed's payroll.

Involving private companies also threatens to further erode client privacy. "The welfare system asks far more personal questions than the average American would tolerate," stated Ron

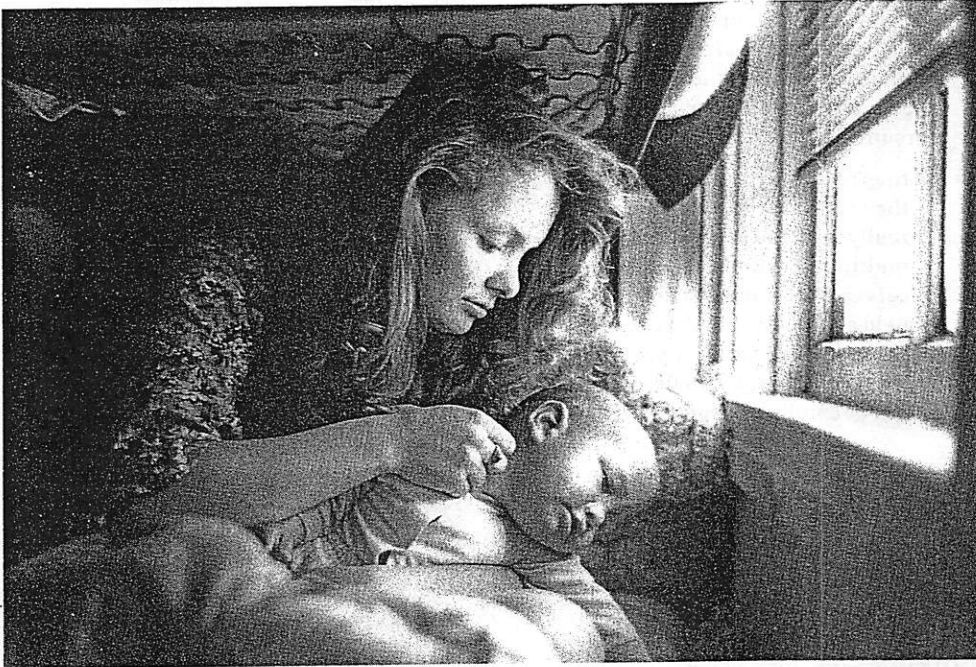


Deutsch, associate director of the State-wide Emergency Network for Social and Economic Security, an economic justice organization based in New York State. Once collected, the information "can also be used in paternity suits, abuse and neglect cases, and custody cases. The more entities that have ac-

you improve the training or replace the people who aren't performing. At least you already own the hardware and infrastructure. It will be much more difficult for the government to start from scratch if the private company walks away with everything when their contract is terminated."

strong populist movements, but historically they targeted the powers of robber barons and corporations.¹² However, one of the legacies of Barry Goldwater's failed presidential election — besides paving the way for Ronald Reagan — was to enable conservatives to redirect anger away from corporations and onto government. With ever-increasing corporate ownership of the media, it may be a long time before corporations replace government as the focus of populist enmity.

Big business, which has benefited mightily from the shrinking of government, has not been a passive bystander. Unlike welfare moms, corporations have the resources to lobby legislators and to feed the campaign coffers that are the way to many a politician's vote. The pattern of their buying influence and shaping legislation is well documented.¹³ A few years ago, for example, an advocate on welfare issues for the Hunger Action Network of New York state was startled when she ran into lobbyists for Shea & Gould at the state legislature. The powerful New York law firm was pushing for the expansion of fingerprinting of welfare participants. Previously, the fine details of welfare policy had only attracted the interest of government officials and a few underpaid and overworked advocates. Even the utility companies, landlords, and supermarkets that receive almost all of



MARK LUDAK/IMPACT VISUALS

A single mother of two, Twana lost her job removing asbestos. She lives in a shelter waiting for welfare and tries to juggle job searches with child care.

cess to this data, the more difficult it is to ensure confidentiality."

Another area of potential abuse is the increased possibility of political corruption; lucrative contracts often attract patronage, kickbacks, and bribes. It was such corruption scandals earlier in the century that led efforts to professionalize the public workers in the 1920s, enabling them to perform services that were previously contracted out.¹⁰

Those who favor the transfer contend that benefits will outweigh problems since privatization saves money by bringing cost-cutting and efficiency and allows government to take advantage of innovations and expertise developed by the private sector. Critics counter that savings are often illusory or short-term, with costs rising after the private companies have established themselves. And once they get in, argues Freedman, "a lot of these private companies will have a stranglehold. ... When a public agency doesn't perform,

10. *Passing the Bucks: The Contracting Out of Public Services* (Washington, D.C.: AFSCME, 1996) pp. 8-9.

And finally, those adding up the advantages of privatization fail to factor in related costs such as contract preparation, administration, and monitoring as well as the frequent free use of government facilities, equipment, and materials. They also completely ignore long-term social costs such as reduced salaries for workers and smaller staffs.

Plague of Privatization

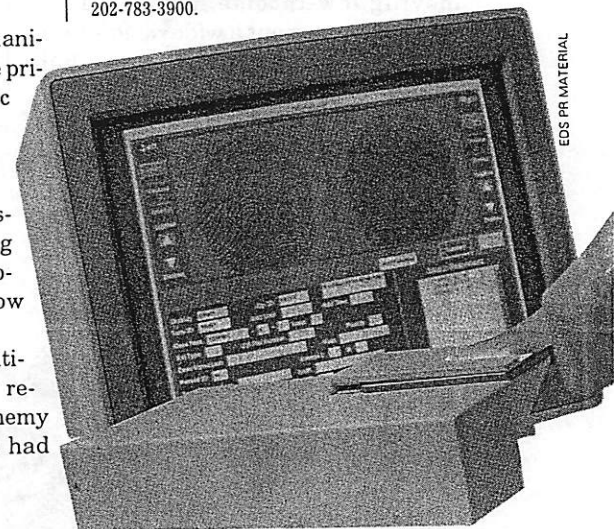
Welfare "reform" is only the latest manifestation of a major trend toward the privatization of formerly public functions. Elected officials of both major parties are rushing to outsource everything from social security, to trash collection, to dispensing fines for delinquent parking tickets, to fire, ambulance, and policing services. Private prisons now house almost 80,000 people.¹¹

This drive to privatize gained political currency as "big government" replaced big corporations as public enemy number one. The US has always had

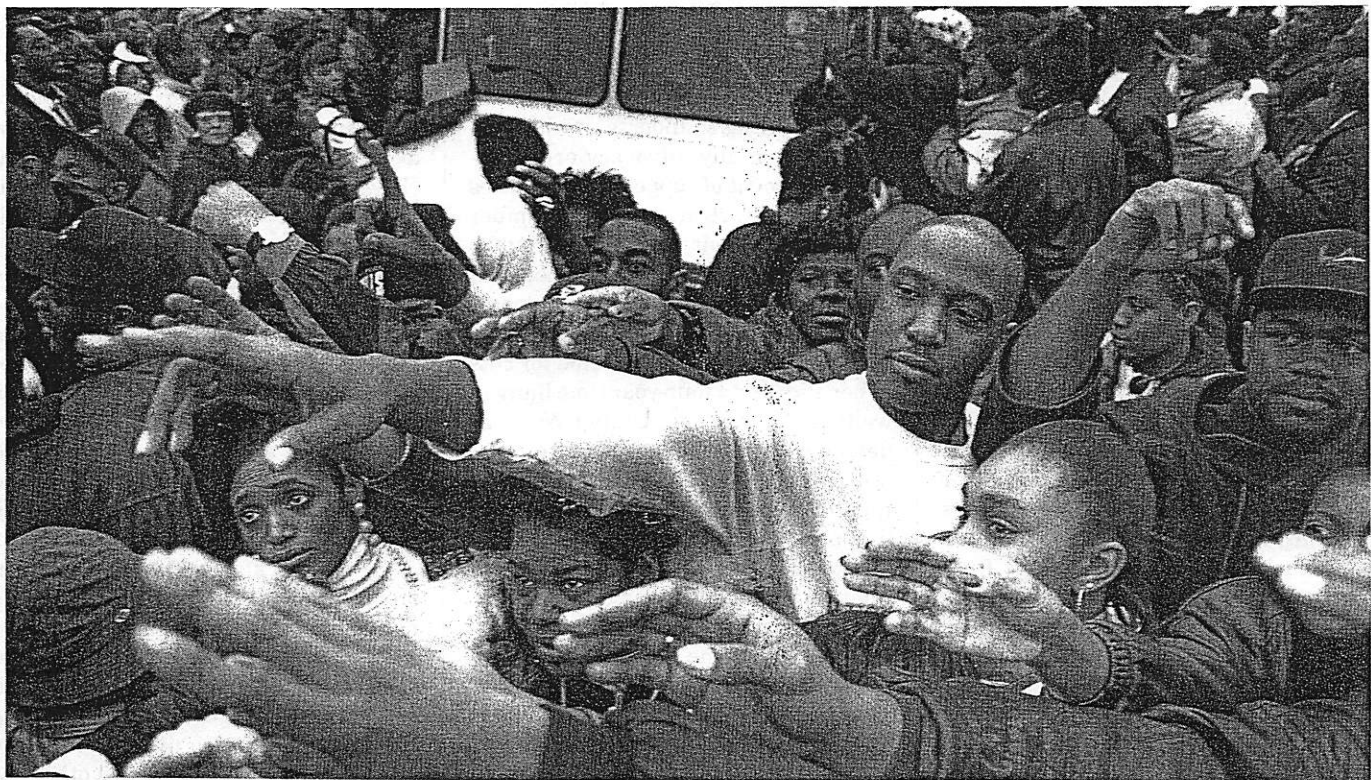
11. Jones, *op. cit.*

12. "The banks and railroads were the focus of the populist movement that began in the 1880s," wrote Ralph Nader. "This reform movement was probably the most basic and deeply rooted in the country's history, though it failed to stem the tide of big business. Four other challenges this century have had limited success in curbing some of the more egregious excesses of these large industrial and financial companies." (Mark Green and Robert Massie, Jr., eds., *The Big Business Reader: Essays on Corporate America* (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1980.)

13. For reports documenting these abuses, contact: The Center for Public Integrity, 202-783-3900.



EDS PR MATERIAL



JIM WEST/IMPACT VISUALS

Some 5,000 unemployed arrived in the first two hours for job applications distributed at the Detroit post office.

the welfare payments seldom paid much attention to the annual fight over benefit levels. Why then was one of the highest priced law firms in the state suddenly involved? Shea & Gould was representing one of the companies interested in the “fingerprinting technology” designed to prevent fraud — even though there was no documented evidence that there was a problem with individuals using multiple identities to cheat the system. (The welfare system already had one of the most rigorous application and documentation processes of any government benefit program.)¹⁴ The manufacturer had invested in the lobbyists with the expectation that once welfare participants had been used as the guinea pigs to develop a statewide system, fingerprinting technology could be sold for wider commercial applications, such as hotel rooms, car rentals, and automated teller machines.

Pain in the Gluteus Maximus

Maximus Inc., one of the largest private company’s involved in running welfare systems, is represented by two major PR firms well-known for lobbying in state capitols and in Washington: the Jefferson Group and Wexler

Group.¹⁵ With \$100 million in various government consulting contracts, Maximus has welfare-related contracts with a dozen states and the District of Columbia, including a \$10 million contract in California to recruit Medicaid recipients into HMOs and \$7 million in job placement contracts in Boston; Fairfax, Virginia; and two California counties.¹⁶

“As the government moves to restrict welfare for poor people, they’re expanding it for the corporations.”

Maximus also takes advantage of the revolving door. Its founder and president, David V. Mastran, served as acting director of research for the Department of Health, Education and Welfare under Presidents Nixon and Ford. Several other company officials have strong governmental backgrounds, including John A. Svahn, its former chair, who worked for Ronald Reagan for more than 18 years. He was instrumental in securing Maximus’ first big welfare contract from Los Angeles County in the late 1980s.¹⁷

The company has had a history of problems with its contracts. In West Virginia, Kenneth Roberts, a former project director at the Department of Health and Human Services, was jailed in 1996 for illegal activities involving Maximus’ bid on a child welfare services contract. Maximus lost the contract to Lockheed.¹⁸ In 1993 in Arizona, after child support workers charged that Maximus had made data entry errors, the state had to return \$250,000 in incorrectly assessed child support payments. In Nebraska, in June 1995, following a dispute over the company’s fees and a debate over privatization, the state legislature terminated its contract.¹⁹

America Works, Not

America Works, another major player, specializes in job placement and related services for welfare participants. It bills itself as the “first private company dedicated to the public cause of putting people to work.” Founded in 1984, it lost several of its contracts in Buffalo and Ohio in its early years after complaints about excess costs.²⁰ The company, which now receives generally positive

14. Jacques Steinberg, “Coming Soon: Fingerprints at Many Fingertips,” *New York Times*, Jan. 10, 1993. The fingerprinting technology had been pioneered by EDS, which has long been involved in developing computer systems for the welfare and Medicaid systems.

15. Interview, Oct. 1996, Kevin McCauly, editor of *O’Dwyer’s PR Services Report*, Oct. 1996.

16. *Privatization: The Safety Net for Sale* (Washington, D.C.: AFSCME Public Policy Department, Aug. 1996), and Nina Bernstein, “Giant Companies Entering Race to Run State Welfare Programs,” *New York Times*, Sept. 15, 1996.

17. Bernstein, *op. cit.*

18. *Ibid.*

19. *Ibid.*

20. *Privatization*, AFSCME.

media coverage, focuses on finding entry-level positions such as receptionist, secretary, mail-room clerk, word processor, cashier, security, or warehouse worker. A typical annual salary is supposed to range from \$15,500 to \$18,000.²¹ Advocacy and watchdog groups have accused it of working only with people who require little more than help polishing their résumés and job leads while summarily weeding out those in most need. For example, a worker who has a family emergency and fails to comply with an attendance policy — far stricter than in most workplaces — is typically kicked out of the program.

America Works receives fees from two sources. It charges the welfare agency approximately \$5,000 for each client, and it keeps a significant portion of the salary its clients earn during their first four months on the job. During this time, while monitoring performance, America Works reaps \$6-9 an hour from the employer, which pays the trainee minimum wage. It further boosts profits by collecting various government incentives and tax credits for hiring welfare participants. Because of a three-stage funding contract, New York state has paid America Works more than \$1 million for people who never found jobs and for placements that never became permanent.²²

Non-Profits Join the Feeding Frenzy

Non-profit organizations are also lining up for a piece of the welfare pie. United Way, one of the country's oldest philanthropies, is playing a key role in Mayor Giuliani's plans to privatize much of New York City's welfare system.²³ Since 1993, it has been under contract to the city's welfare agency to provide data on a wide range of social, health care, and neighborhood issues. In 1995, United Way completed a quarter-million dollar study on how the city could privatize income support centers where people apply for benefits and meet with caseworkers. The plan, based on the HMO model, would base payment to agencies on the number of people they got off public assistance.

In late 1995, after United Way of New York state joined with the Busi-

21. America Works literature.

22. *Privatization*, AFSCME.

23. James Bradley, "Divided Way, A Charitable Giant Angers Old Friends By Helping to Advance Rudy Giuliani's Welfare Plans," *City Limits* (New York), Aug./Sept. 1996, p.16.

ness Council and several large human service agencies to endorse a welfare reform plan, many advocacy organizations accused it of supporting measures that would hurt many of its member agencies and their clients. After public employee unions threatened to boycott payroll deduction programs, the charity was forced to back off from supporting the scheme — which called for cuts in benefits and a four-year time limit on welfare. At the time, United Way was desperate for new sources of money. Following a 1992 scandal involving its national president, donations had dropped by \$8 million in NYC alone.

Nor are non-profits immune from the temptations of patronage and graft. Earlier this year, NYC signed a \$43 million deal with the Hellenic American Neighborhood Action Committee to supervise Home Relief recipients and try to move them off welfare. The FBI investigated the committee after learning that it had submitted the highest bid and had several well-connected former city employees on its payroll. After the publicity, the mayor canceled the contract. The city also terminated a \$3.4 million welfare contract with United Way when the city comptroller charged that it should have gone to the lowest bidder.²⁴

Workfare or Slave Labor?

As the clock ticks, states are scrambling to put people to work — any work. Under the new law, 25 percent of adults must be in a "work" program by August 1997; within five years the quota rises to 50 percent. With about 10 million Americans out of work, no money in the welfare legislation allocated to job creation, and a system that does not even aspire to full employment, welfare participants are far more likely to end up in these workfare positions than in a real job. In these publicly subsidized jobs (New York, for example, puts up \$3,500 a year for each slot), former welfare recipients perform low-level, dead end labor, "working off" their welfare and food stamp checks for the minimum wage or less. They do not qualify for unemployment and Social Security and lack the grievance and organizing rights of other workers.

Previously, federal law limited workfare to public sector or non-profit positions that provided community service. New York City, for example, replaced

24. Bradley, *op. cit.*

many parks department employees with workfare participants and is now looking for slots in the subway system. Now, the new law removes the community service restriction. Facing the federally imposed deadline, states and cities are increasingly looking to the private sector, both to accept workfare participants and to participate in wage subsidy and on-the-job training programs. Workfare participants can now be placed in fast food restaurants, home health care agencies, and janitorial services. President Clinton is also pushing for expansion of wage subsidy programs for welfare participants.²⁵

So far, workfare's rate of success in moving people into real employment is not good; it is about 8 percent in New York state. The program is rapidly creating a large subclass of workers with subminimum wages and poor working conditions. It is also pitting desperate former welfare clients against other low paid workers in a job market which cannot sustain them both.

Meanwhile, corporations are rushing in to bid on newly privatized services and profit from the misery. They are unlikely to be disappointed by any lack of entrepreneurial opportunity. "The new welfare law has many corporate welfare provisions. The changes open up new markets for companies to sell their services, while providing a pool of free labor. As the government moves to restrict welfare for poor people, they're expanding it for the corporations," stated Cecilia Perry, public policy analyst for AFSCME. The dangers are substantial. Despite the inefficiency and opaque bureaucracies that mark most government-run programs, they provide mechanisms for accountability and public input; they also weigh the public good when designing and assessing success. The private sector, on the other hand, looks only to the bottom line. ■

25. Under this program, which is another form of corporate welfare, the president is proposing more than \$200 million over three years to create a new tax subsidy for employers of welfare recipients which would pay up to 50 percent of the first \$10,000 paid for wages, education, and training. (Nancy Ebb and Deborah Weinstein, "Implementing the New Welfare Law," Children's Defense Fund, Sept. 20, 1996.)

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Exposing the Global Surveillance System

In the late 1980s, in a decision it probably regrets, the US prompted New Zealand to join a new and highly secret global intelligence system. Hager's investigation into it and his discovery of the ECHELON Dictionary has revealed one of the world's biggest, most closely held intelligence projects. The system allows spy agencies to monitor most of the world's telephone, e-mail, and telex communications.



by Nicky Hager

For 40 years, New Zealand's largest intelligence agency, the Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB) — the nation's equivalent of the US National Security Agency (NSA) — had been helping its Western allies to spy on countries throughout the Pacific region, without the knowledge of the New Zealand public or many of its highest elected officials. What the NSA did not know is that by the late 1980s, various intelligence staff had decided these activities had been too secret for too long, and were providing me with interviews and documents exposing New Zealand's intelligence activities. Eventually, more than 50 people who work or have worked in

Nicky Hager is author of *Secret Power: New Zealand's Role in the International Spy Network* (Nelson, NZ: Craig Potton, 1996). This article was adapted from the book, which is available through CAQ. See back page.

intelligence and related fields agreed to be interviewed.

The activities they described made it possible to document, from the South Pacific, some alliance-wide systems and projects which have been kept secret elsewhere. Of these, by far the most important is ECHELON.

Designed and coordinated by NSA, the ECHELON system is used to intercept ordinary e-mail, fax, telex, and telephone communications carried over the world's telecommunications networks. Unlike many of the electronic spy systems developed during the Cold War, ECHELON is designed primarily for non-military targets: governments, organizations, businesses, and individuals in virtually every country. It potentially affects every person communicating between (and sometimes within) countries anywhere in the world.

It is, of course, not a new idea that intelligence organizations tap into e-mail and other public telecommunications networks. What was new in the material leaked by the New Zealand intelligence staff was precise information on where the spying is done, how the system works, its capabilities and shortcomings, and many details such as the codenames.

The ECHELON system is not designed to eavesdrop on a particular individual's e-mail or fax link. Rather, the system works by indiscriminately intercepting very large quantities of communications and using computers to identify and extract messages of interest from the mass of unwanted ones. A chain of secret interception facilities has been established around the world to tap into all the major components of the international telecommunications

networks. Some monitor communications satellites, others land-based communications networks, and others radio communications. ECHELON links together all these facilities, providing the US and its allies with the ability to intercept a large proportion of the communications on the planet.

The computers at each station in the ECHELON network automatically search through the millions of messages inter-

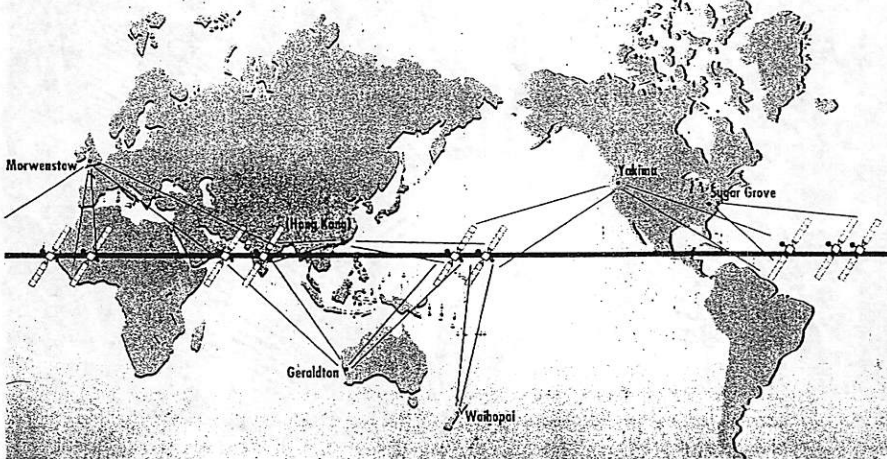
cepted for ones containing pre-programmed keywords. Keywords include all the names, localities, subjects, and so on that might be mentioned. Every word of every message intercepted at each station gets automatically searched — whether or not a specific telephone number or e-mail address is on the list.

The thousands of simultaneous messages are read in “real time” as they pour into the station, hour after hour, day after

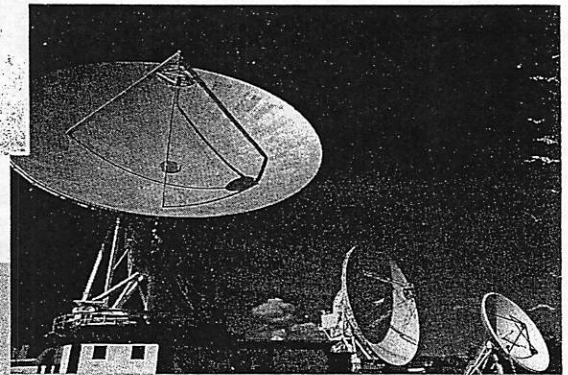
day, as the computer finds intelligence needles in telecommunications haystacks.

Someone Is Listening

The computers in stations around the globe are known, within the network, as the ECHELON Dictionaries. Computers that can automatically search through traffic for keywords have existed since at least the 1970s, but the ECHELON system was designed by NSA to interconnect all these computers and allow the stations to function as components of an integrated whole. The NSA and GCSB are bound together under the five-nation UKUSA signals intelligence agreement. The other three partners — all with equally obscure names — are the Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) in Britain, the Communications Security Establishment (CSE) in Canada, and the Defense Signals Directorate (DSD) in Australia.



Six UKUSA stations target Intelsat satellites used to relay — and to intercept — most of the world’s e-mail, fax, and telex communications.



NSA’s Business Plan: “Global Access”

by Duncan Campbell

Nicky Hager’s research has confirmed news reports from eight years ago: The NSA had begun ECHELON and designed it to provide immediate access to all the world’s communications networks, with computers scanning what was intercepted, catching those communications mentioning subjects or parties of interest to intelligence analysts and their customers, and passing them on. The information Hager gathered with his own eyes, and with the help of insider sources, sheds light on where NSA is heading in the 21st century.

In Britain three years ago, peace campaigners at the Menwith Hill Station in Yorkshire obtained a huge haul of NSA documents. Among them, the valedictory dispatch to NSA staff from the outgoing director of NSA, Adm. William Studeman. With startling clarity, Studeman confessed his anxieties about NSA’s future. He testified to the organization’s inner fears as the end of the Cold War swept away much of the agency’s previous *raison d’être*. He warned:

Budget cuts and NSA’s relative piece of the intelligence resource pie will likely diminish. Target technology will

be tough, and many outsiders will want to rationalize a reduced threat dimension in order to further decrement intelligence for alternative agendas. ... We must plan and act out ahead of our targets and our business contemporaries. ... Our efforts must be focused on important payoff projects. Marginal business must be killed off.

Studeman explained how to do this: “NSA must constantly demonstrate its operational and technical prowess to deliver in all business areas. ... The military account is basic to NSA as a defense agency and lack of utter faithfulness to this fact will court decline. At the same time the demands for increased global access are growing.” According to Studeman, two factors stood out above all others in NSA’s plan to protect its turf in the 21st century — “global access” and “SMO” (support for military operations).

These are the “twin pillars” of NSA’s future. *Secret Power* reveals that global access has arrived. When we talk or e-mail across international frontiers, we are not alone. ■

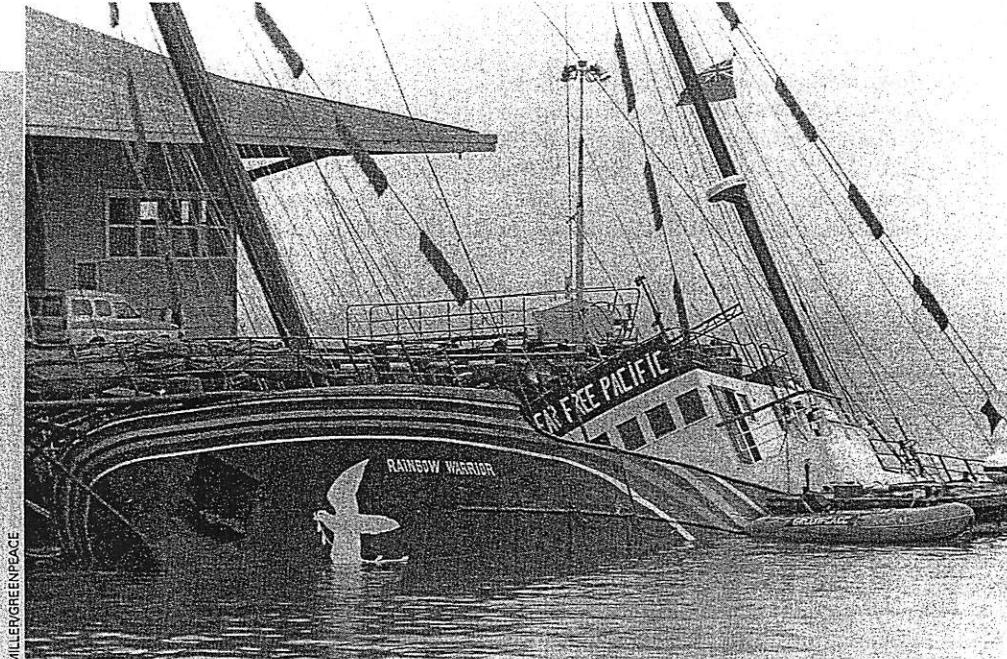
Duncan Campbell is a leading British investigative journalist who has specialized in signals intelligence for 20 years. He has been waiting 3 years for NSA to process a FOIA request for his files — a task the NSA says will take “some time.” Meanwhile, Liberty (the British equivalent to ACLU) has taken a case to Europe’s Court of Human Rights based on NSA’s actions against him. Their suit alleges that the conduct by the US of intelligence surveillance operations against European citizens in Europe is a breach of the European convention on human rights.

Greenpeace Warrior: Why No Warning?

In spite of all the official rhetoric about intelligence sharing, New Zealand's allies have not always been forthcoming. On July 10, 1985, a bomb ripped through the hull of the boat used by the Greenpeace environmental group. The act of terrorism sank the ship and killed Fernando Pereira, a Dutch photographer. The *Rainbow Warrior* was docked in Auckland, NZ, in preparation for a voyage to the French nuclear testing area at Moruroa in the South Pacific.

In February 1985, while the GCSB received up-to-the-minute reports on the Iran-Iraq war, Soviet troops in Afghanistan, and screeds of information on international terrorism — nothing came from the UKUSA intelligence agencies on the French agents who were then en route to New Zealand to blow up the activists' ship.

The lack of intelligence warning about the first act of terrorism on New Zealand's soil is surprising. Either the massive UKUSA intelligence system actually gathered no information or, as was suggested in news stories at the time,



the US and British intelligence authorities may have withheld some information to punish New Zealand for its nuclear-free stand earlier that year. Either way, "not one scrap of intelligence" came from the UKUSA, according to intelligence staff.

In the case of New Zealand and Australia, I found that the intelligence agencies have been so secret and insulated from democratic oversight that they frequently pursue private policies completely at odds to the publicly stated policies of their governments. There are many examples of governments simply not being told about important operations and developments. ■

— N.H.

The alliance, which grew from cooperative efforts during World War II to intercept radio transmissions, was formalized into the UKUSA agreement in 1948 and aimed primarily against the USSR. The five UKUSA agencies are today the largest intelligence organizations in their respective countries. With much of the world's business occurring by fax, e-mail, and phone, spying on these communications receives the bulk of intelligence resources. For decades before the introduction of the ECHELON system, the UKUSA allies did intelligence collection operations for each other, but each agency usually processed and analyzed the intercept from its own stations.

Under ECHELON, a particular station's Dictionary computer contains not only its parent agency's chosen keywords, but also has lists entered in for other agencies. In New Zealand's satellite interception station at Waihopai (in the South Island), for example, the computer has separate search lists for the

Every word of every message intercepted at each station gets automatically searched — whether or not a specific telephone number or e-mail address is on the list.

NSA, GCHQ, DSD, and CSE in addition to its own. Whenever the Dictionary encounters a message containing one of the agencies' keywords, it automatically picks it and sends it *directly* to the headquarters of the agency concerned. No one in New Zealand screens, or even sees, the intelligence collected by the New Zealand station for the foreign agencies. Thus, the stations of the junior UKUSA allies function for the NSA no differently than if they were overtly NSA-run bases located on their soil.

The first component of the ECHELON network are stations specifically tar-

geted on the international telecommunications satellites (Intelsats) used by the telephone companies of most countries. A ring of Intelsats is positioned around the world, stationary above the equator, each serving as a relay station for tens of thousands of simultaneous

phone calls, fax, and e-mail. Five UKUSA stations have been established to intercept the communications carried by the Intelsats.

The British GCHQ station is located at the top of high cliffs above the sea at Morwenstow in Cornwall. Satellite dishes beside sprawling operations buildings point toward Intelsats above the Atlantic, Europe, and, inclined almost to the horizon, the Indian Ocean. An NSA station at Sugar Grove, located 250 kilometers southwest of Washington, DC, in the mountains of West Virginia, covers Atlantic Intelsats transmitting

down toward North and South America. Another NSA station is in Washington State, 200 kilometers southwest of Seattle, inside the Army's Yakima Firing Center. Its satellite dishes point out toward the Pacific Intelsats and to the east.¹

The job of intercepting Pacific Intelsat communications that cannot be intercepted at Yakima went to New Zealand and Australia. Their South Pacific location helps to ensure global interception. New Zealand provides the station at Waihopai and Australia supplies the Geraldton station in West Australia (which targets both Pacific and Indian Ocean Intelsats).²

Each of the five stations' Dictionary computers has a codename to distinguish it from others in the network. The Yakima station, for instance, located in desert country between the Saddle Mountains and Rattlesnake Hills, has the COWBOY Dictionary, while the Waihopai station has the FLINTLOCK Dictionary. These codenames are recorded at the beginning of every intercepted message, before it is transmitted around the ECHELON network, allowing analysts to recognize at which station the interception occurred.

New Zealand intelligence staff has been closely involved with the NSA's Yakima station since 1981, when NSA pushed the GCSB to contribute to a project targeting Japanese embassy communications. Since then, all five UKUSA agencies have been responsible for monitoring diplomatic cables from all Japanese posts within the same segments of the globe they are assigned for general UKUSA monitoring.³ Until New Zealand's integration into ECHELON with the opening of the Waihopai station in 1989, its share of the Japanese communications was intercepted at Yakima and sent unprocessed to the GCSB headquarters in Wellington for decryption, translation, and writing into UKUSA-format intelligence reports (the NSA provides the code-breaking programs).

1. Few people have visited these stations. Directions on how to find Sugar Grove and other stations are included in Hager, *op. cit.*, p. 267.

2. Currently, in the Pacific, Waihopai targets Intelsat 701 at 174 degrees, Geraldton targets Intelsat 703 at 177 degrees, and Yakima targets the eastern transmissions from both of these, apparently in addition to the Inmarsat-2, which provides mobile communications for shipping in the Pacific region.

3. New Zealand is assigned the South Pacific, from French Polynesia to the Solomon Islands, Australia from Papua New Guinea to Southeast Asia, and so on.

"Communication" Through Satellites

The next component of the ECHELON system intercepts a range of satellite communications not carried by Intelsat. In addition to the UKUSA stations targeting Intelsat satellites, there are another five or more stations homing in on Russian and other regional communications satellites. These stations are Menwith Hill in northern England; Shoal Bay, outside Darwin in northern Australia (which targets Indonesian satellites); Leitrim, just south of Ottawa in Canada (which appears to intercept Latin American satellites); Bad Aibling in Germany; and Misawa in northern Japan.

A group of facilities that tap directly into land-based telecommunications systems is the final element of the ECHELON system. Besides satellite and radio, the other main method of transmitting large quantities of public, business, and government communications is a combination of water cables under the

All five UKUSA agencies have been responsible for monitoring diplomatic cables from all Japanese posts.

oceans and microwave networks over land. Heavy cables, laid across seabeds between countries, account for much of the world's international communications. After they come out of the water and join land-based microwave networks they are very vulnerable to interception. The microwave networks are made up of chains of microwave towers relaying messages from hilltop to hilltop (always in line of sight) across the countryside. These networks shunt large quantities of communications across a country. Interception of them gives access to international undersea communications (once they surface) and to international communication trunk lines across continents. They are also an obvious target for large-scale interception of domestic communications.

Because the facilities required to intercept radio and satellite communications use large aerials and dishes that are difficult to hide for too long, that network is reasonably well documented. But all that is required to in-

tercept land-based communication networks is a building situated along the microwave route or a hidden cable running underground from the legitimate network into some anonymous building, possibly far removed. Although it sounds technically very difficult, microwave interception from space by United States spy satellites also occurs.⁴ The worldwide network of facilities to intercept these communications is largely undocumented, and because New Zealand's GCSB does not participate in this type of interception, my inside sources could not help either.

No One Is Safe From a Microwave

A 1994 exposé of the Canadian UKUSA agency, *Spyworld*, co-authored by one of its former staff, Mike Frost, gave the first insights into how a lot of foreign microwave interception is done (see p. 18). It described UKUSA "embassy collection" operations, where sophisticated receivers and processors are secretly trans-

ported to their countries' overseas embassies in diplomatic bags and used to monitor various communications in foreign capitals.⁵

Since most countries' microwave networks converge on the capital city, embassy buildings can be an ideal site. Protected by diplomatic

privilege, they allow interception in the heart of the target country.⁶ The Canadian embassy collection was requested by the NSA to fill gaps in the American and British embassy collection operations, which were still occurring in many capitals around the world when Frost left the CSE in 1990. Separate sources in Australia have revealed that the DSD also engages in embassy collection.⁷ On the territory of UKUSA nations, the interception of land-based

4. Because of the curvature of the earth, a signals intelligence satellite out in space can be directly in the line of a microwave transmission. Information from Jeffrey T. Richelson, a leading authority on US intelligence.

5. Mike Frost and Michel Gratton, *Spyworld* (Toronto: Doubleday, 1994).

6. Frost helped arrange a series of these operations, including investigating the microwave routes through some cities while assessing the suitability of the local Canadian embassy. He described installing desktop antennae and NSA processing equipment called Oratory, which automatically broke down transmissions into individual voice, fax, and telex messages and picked out all those containing keywords and recorded the results.

7. Leaks in the 1980s described installation of "extraordinarily sophisticated intercept equipment, known as Reprieve," in Australia's High Commission in Papua New Guinea and in the embassies in Indonesia and Thai-

NZ's PM Kept in the Dark

“In the mid-1980s, we bucked the system ... [and became] aware that we were part of an international intelligence organization which had its roots in a different world order and which could command compliance from us while withholding from us the benefits of others' intelligence.

“Life at the time was full of unpleasant surprises. State-sponsored terrorism was a crime against humanity as long as it wasn't being practiced by the allies, when it was studiously ignored. But it was not until I read this book that I had any idea that we had been committed to an international integrated electronic network.

Nicky Hager has long been a pain in the establishment's neck. Unfortunately for the establishment, he is engaging, thorough, unthreatening, with a dangerously ingenuous appearance, and an astonishing number of people have told him things that I, as Prime Minister in charge of the intelligence services, was never told.

“There are also many things with which I am familiar. I couldn't tell him which was which. Nor can I tell you. But it is an outrage that I and other ministers were told so little, and this raises the question of to whom those concerned saw themselves ultimately answerable.” ■

David Lange, from the foreword to Hager, *op. cit.*



David Lange, prime minister of New Zealand, 1984-89.

COURTESY EMBASSY OF NEW ZEALAND

telecommunications appears to be done at special secret intelligence facilities. The US, UK, and Canada are geographically well placed to intercept the large amounts of the world's communications that cross their territories.

The only public reference to the Dictionary system anywhere in the world was in relation to one of these facilities, run by the GCHQ in central London. In 1991, a former British GCHQ official spoke anonymously to Granada Television's *World in Action* about the agency's abuses of power. He told the program about an anonymous red brick building at 8 Palmer Street where GCHQ secretly intercepts every telex which passes into, out of, or through London, feeding them into powerful computers with a program known as "Dictionary." The operation, he explained, is staffed by carefully vetted British Telecom people: "It's nothing to do with national security. It's because it's not legal to take every single telex. And they take everything: the embassies, all the business deals, even the birthday greetings, they take everything. They feed it into the Dictionary."⁸ What the documentary did not reveal is that Dictionary is not just a British system; it is UKUSA-wide.

land. The operations are said to occupy an entire room in the embassy buildings, allowing local telephone calls to be listened to at will. Brian Toohey and Marion Wilkinson, *The Book of Leaks* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1987), p. 139.

8. Nick Davies, reporter, on *World in Action*, Granada TV, shown in an abridged form on TVNZ's Foreign Correspondent, Aug. 29, 1991.

Similarly, British researcher Duncan Campbell has described how the US Menwith Hill station in Britain taps directly into the British Telecom microwave network, which has actually been designed with several major microwave links converging on an isolated tower connected underground into the station.⁹

The NSA Menwith Hill station, with 22 satellite terminals and more than 4.9 acres of buildings, is undoubtedly the largest and most powerful in the UKUSA network. Located in northern England, several thousand kilometers from the Persian Gulf, it was awarded the NSA's "Station of the Year" prize for 1991 after its role in the Gulf War. Menwith Hill assists in the interception of microwave communications in another way as well, by serving as a ground station for US electronic spy satellites. These intercept microwave trunk lines and short range communications such as military radios and walkie talkies. Other ground stations where the satellites' information is fed into the global network are Pine Gap, run by the CIA near Alice Springs in central Australia and the Bad Aibling station in Germany.¹⁰ Among them, the various stations and operations making up the ECHELON network tap into all the main components of the world's telecommu-

9. Duncan Campbell, *The Unsinkable Aircraft Carrier* (London: Michael Joseph Ltd., 1984), p. 168.

10. For a full description of these "overhead" systems, see Jeffrey T. Richelson, *The US Intelligence Community* (Cambridge: Ballinger, 1989).

nications networks. All of them, including a separate network of stations that intercepts long distance radio communications, have their own Dictionary computers connected into ECHELON.

In the early 1990s, opponents of the Menwith Hill station obtained large quantities of internal documents from the facility. Among the papers was a reference to an NSA computer system called Platform. The integration of all the UKUSA station computers into ECHELON probably occurred with the introduction of this system in the early 1980s. James Bamford wrote at that time about a new worldwide NSA computer network codenamed Platform "which will tie together 52 separate computer systems used throughout the world. Focal point, or 'host environment,' for the massive network will be the NSA headquarters at Fort Meade. Among those included in Platform will be the British SIGINT organization, GCHQ."¹¹

Looking in the Dictionary

The Dictionary computers are connected via highly encrypted UKUSA communications that link back to computer data bases in the five agency headquarters. This is where all the intercepted messages selected by the Dictionaries end up. Each morning the specially "indoctrinated" signals intelligence analysts in Washington, Ottawa, Chel-

11. James Bamford, *The Puzzle Palace: A Report on NSA, America's Most Secret Agency* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1982), p. 102.

tenham, Canberra, and Wellington log on at their computer terminals and enter the Dictionary system. After keying in their security passwords, they reach a directory that lists the different categories of intercept available in the data bases, each with a four-digit code. For instance, 1911 might be Japanese diplomatic cables from Latin America (handled by the Canadian CSE), 3848 might be political communications from and about Nigeria, and 8182 might be any messages about distribution of encryption technology.

They select their subject category, get a "search result" showing how many messages have been caught in the ECHELON net on that subject, and then the day's work begins. Analysts scroll through screen after screen of intercepted faxes, e-mail messages, etc. and, whenever a message appears worth reporting on, they select it from the rest to work on. If it is not in English, it is translated and then written into the standard format of intelligence reports produced anywhere within the UKUSA network — either in entirety as a "report," or as a summary or "gist."

Information Control

A highly organized system has been developed to control what is being searched for by each station and who can have access to it. This is at the heart of ECHELON operations and works as follows.

The individual station's Dictionary computers do not simply have a long list of keywords to search for. And they do not send all the information into some huge database that participating agencies can dip into as they wish. It is much more controlled.

The search lists are organized into the same categories, referred to by the four digit numbers. Each agency decides its own categories according to its responsibilities for producing intelligence for the network. For GCSB, this means South Pacific governments, Japanese diplomatic, Russian Antarctic activities, and so on.

The agency then works out about 10 to 50 keywords for selection in each category. The keywords include such things as names of people, ships, organizations, country names, and subject names. They also include the known telex and fax numbers and Internet addresses of any individuals, businesses, organizations, and govern-

ment offices that are targets. These are generally written as part of the message text and so are easily recognized by the Dictionary computers.

The agencies also specify combinations of keywords to help sift out communications of interest. For example, they might search for diplomatic cables containing both the words "Santiago" and "aid," or cables containing the word "Santiago" but not "consul" (to avoid the masses of routine consular communications). It is these sets of words and numbers (and combinations), under a particular category, that get placed in the Dictionary computers. (Staff in the five agencies called Dictionary Managers enter and update the keyword search lists for each agency.)

The whole system, devised by the NSA, has been adopted completely by the other agencies. The Dictionary computers search through all the incoming messages and, whenever they encoun-

"We feel we can no longer remain silent regarding that which we regard to be gross malpractice and negligence within the establishment in which we operate."

— *British intelligence operatives*

ter one with any of the agencies' keywords, they select it. At the same time, the computer automatically notes technical details such as the time and place of interception on the piece of intercept so that analysts reading it, in whichever agency it is going to, know where it came from, and what it is. Finally, the computer writes the four-digit code (for the category with the keywords in that message) at the bottom of the message's text. This is important. It means that when all the intercepted messages end up together in the database at one of the agency headquarters, the messages on a particular subject can be located again. Later, when the analyst using the Dictionary system selects the four-digit code for the category he or she wants, the computer simply searches through all the messages in the database for the ones which have been tagged with that number.

This system is very effective for controlling which agencies can get what

from the global network because each agency only gets the intelligence out of the ECHELON system from its own numbers. It does not have any access to the raw intelligence coming out of the system to the other agencies. For example, although most of the GCSB's intelligence production is primarily to serve the UKUSA alliance, New Zealand does not have access to the whole ECHELON network. The access it does have is strictly controlled. A New Zealand intelligence officer explained: "The agencies can all apply for numbers on each other's Dictionaries. The hardest to deal with are the Americans. ... [There are] more hoops to jump through, unless it is in their interest, in which case they'll do it for you."

There is only one agency which, by virtue of its size and role within the alliance, will have access to the full potential of the ECHELON system — the agency that set it up. What is the system used for? Anyone listening to official "discussion" of intelligence could be forgiven for thinking that, since the end of the Cold War, the key targets of the massive UKUSA intelligence machine are terrorism, weapons proliferation, and economic intelligence. The idea that economic intelligence has become very important, in particular, has been carefully cultivated by intelligence agencies intent on preserving their post-Cold War budgets. It has become an article of faith in much discussion of intelligence. However, I have found no evidence that these are now the primary concerns of organizations such as NSA.

Quicker Intelligence, Same Mission

A different story emerges after examining very detailed information I have been given about the intelligence New Zealand collects for the UKUSA allies and detailed descriptions of what is in the yards-deep intelligence reports New Zealand receives from its four allies each week. There is quite a lot of intelligence collected about potential terrorists, and there is quite a lot of economic intelligence, notably intensive monitoring of all the countries participating in GATT negotiations. But by far, the main priorities of the intelligence

alliance continue to be political and military intelligence to assist the larger allies to pursue their interests around the world. Anyone and anything the particular governments are concerned about can become a target.

With capabilities so secret and so powerful, almost anything goes. For example, in June 1992, a group of current "highly placed intelligence operatives" from the British GCHQ spoke to the London *Observer*: "We feel we can no longer remain silent regarding that which we regard to be gross malpractice and negligence within the establishment in which we operate." They gave as examples GCHQ interception of three charitable organizations, including Amnesty International and Christian Aid. As the *Observer* reported: "At any time GCHQ is able to home in on their communications for a routine target request," the GCHQ source said. In the case of phone taps the procedure is known as Mantis. With telexes it is called Mayfly. By keying in a code relating to Third World aid, the source was able to demonstrate telex "fixes" on the three organizations. "It is then possible to key in a trigger word which enables us to home in on the telex communications whenever that word appears," he said. "And we can read a pre-determined number of characters either side of the keyword."¹² Without actually naming it, this was a fairly precise description of how the ECHELON Dictionary system works. Again, what was not revealed in the publicity was that this is a UKUSA-wide system. The design of ECHELON means that the interception of these organizations could have occurred anywhere in the network, at any station where the GCHQ had requested that the four-digit code covering Third World aid be placed.

Note that these GCHQ officers mentioned that the system was being used for telephone calls. In New Zealand, ECHELON is used only to intercept written communications: fax, e-mail, and telex. The reason, according to intelligence staff, is that the agency does not have the staff to analyze large quantities of telephone conversations.

Mike Frost's exposé of Canadian "embassy collection" operations described the NSA computers they used, called Oratory, that can "listen" to telephone calls and recognize when key-

12. John Merritt, "UK: GCHQ Spies on Charities and Companies — Fearful Whistleblowers Tell of Massive Routine Abuse," *Observer* (London), June 28, 1992.

words are spoken. Just as we can recognize words spoken in all the different tones and accents we encounter, so too, according to Frost, can these computers. Telephone calls containing keywords are automatically extracted from the masses of other calls and recorded digitally on magnetic tapes for analysts back at agency headquarters. However, high volume voice recognition computers will be technically difficult to perfect, and my New Zealand-based sources could not confirm that this capability exists. But, if or when it is perfected, the implications would be immense. It would mean that the UKUSA agencies could use machines to search through all the international telephone calls in the world, in the

Britain's GCHQ intercepted the communications of at least three charitable organizations, including Christian Aid and Amnesty International.

same way that they do written messages. If this equipment exists for use in embassy collection, it will presumably be used in all the stations throughout the ECHELON network. It is yet to be confirmed how extensively telephone communications are being targeted by the ECHELON stations for the other agencies.

The easiest pickings for the ECHELON system are the individuals, organizations, and governments that do not use encryption. In New Zealand's area, for example, it has proved especially useful against already vulnerable South Pacific nations which do not use any coding, even for government communications (all these communications of New Zealand's neighbors are supplied, un-screened, to its UKUSA allies). As a result of the revelations in my book, there is currently a project under way in the Pacific to promote and supply publicly available encryption software to vulnerable organizations such as democracy movements in countries with repressive governments. This is one practical way of curbing illegitimate uses of the ECHELON capabilities.

One final comment. All the newspapers, commentators, and "well placed

sources" told the public that New Zealand was cut off from US intelligence in the mid-1980s. That was entirely untrue. The intelligence supply to New Zealand did not stop, and instead, the decade since has been a period of increased integration of New Zealand into the US system. Virtually everything — the equipment, manuals, ways of operating, jargon, codes, and so on, used in the GCSB — continues to be imported entirely from the larger allies (in practice, usually the NSA). As with the Australian and Canadian agencies, most of the priorities continue to come from the US, too.

The main thing that protects these agencies from change is their secrecy. On the day my book arrived in the book

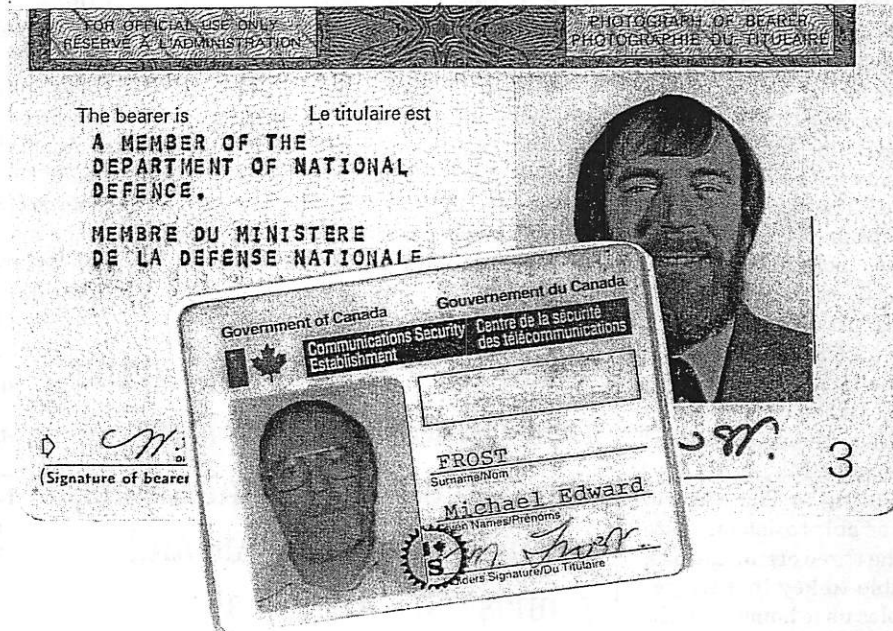
shops, without prior publicity, there was an all-day meeting of the intelligence bureaucrats in the prime minister's department trying to decide if they could prevent it from being distributed. They eventually concluded, sensibly, that the political costs were too high. It is understandable that they were so agitated.

Throughout my research, I have faced official denials or governments refusing to comment on publicity about intelligence activities. Given the pervasive atmosphere of secrecy and stonewalling, it is always hard for the public to judge what is fact, what is speculation, and what is paranoia. Thus, in uncovering New Zealand's role in the NSA-led alliance, my aim was to provide so much detail about the operations — the technical systems, the daily work of individual staff members, and even the rooms in which they work inside intelligence facilities — that readers could feel confident that they were getting close to the truth. I hope the information leaked by intelligence staff in New Zealand about UKUSA and its systems such as ECHELON will help lead to change. ■

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Inside the US-Canada Spyworld

by Mike Frost



I was a spy. For almost two decades, I spied for Canada and the US on domestic and foreign soil. My employer was Canada's Communications Security Establishment (CSE), the most secret and least known branch of National Defense. But although my paycheck came from the Canadian government, more often than not, my orders, assignments, and much of my training — like those of many other CSE operators — came from the National Security Agency (NSA) in Fort Meade, Maryland.

Over the 12 years I spied for CSE, it came increasingly to resemble the NSA.¹ Both specialize in providing secure communications and signals intelligence (SIGINT); both operated for years with little public knowledge or legislative oversight until they were exposed by the media. CSE, which grew out of Canada's World War II espionage service, operated until 1975 as the Communications Branch of the National Research Council and hid behind a facade of scientific research. In 1975,

when its existence and real purpose were exposed by a CBC-TV documentary,² an embarrassed government shifted it to the Defense Department and adopted the current name. Now, whatever government is in power can more easily raise the flag of national security to shield CSE from public and media scrutiny. The existence of NSA and the extent of its operations were only revealed in 1982 by investigative journalist James Bamford.³

When the US Says "Jump..."

Despite the similarities, CSE is treated more like a subsidiary than an equal partner. US military and economic clout, as well as NSA's vastly superior technical capabilities and near unlimited funds, allow Washington to dominate. And while CSE has only 1,000 employees and a \$200-300 million budget, NSA employs 20,000 and has an estimated annual budget of almost \$4 billion.⁴

But the relationship is not without mutual benefits. CSE, NSA, and Britain's Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) use each other's facilities and personnel to spy on friend and foe alike and, more alarmingly, to

Mike Frost is the author, along with Michel Gratton, of *Spyworld: Inside the Canadian and American Intelligence Establishments* (Toronto: Doubleday, 1994) and speaks often on the topic of intelligence. Assistance for this article was provided by Dan Frost.

1. I was recruited by CSE and transferred to its Ottawa headquarters after 15 years in the Canadian Navy as an Electronic Intercept Operator. By 1988-90, my last two years at CSE, I was on the "embassy collection" operation,

was in charge of upgrading the information processing lab at CSE, was Canadian representative for the NATO Advisory Committee for Special Intelligence (NACSI), and served on another international committee, SIGDASYS, where intelligence is selectively shared with allies such as Finland and Sweden which are not members of NATO.

2. Adrienne Clarkson, *Fifth Estate*, CBC-TV, 1975.

3. James Bamford, *The Puzzle Palace: A Report on NSA, America's Most Secret Agency* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1982).

4. John Pike is co-director of the Intelligence Reform Project at the Federation of American Scientists. This information is from the FAS web site <<http://www.fas.org/irp/>>.

circumvent domestic laws and spy on their own populations.

Overt and Covert Functions

CSE's current functions, according to senior parliamentary analyst Phillip Rosen, are twofold: It "provides government institutions with advice and guidance on the security of their electronic communications; this part is largely defensive and uncontroversial," implying — somewhat inaccurately, it turns out — that the agency makes sure that government communications are not intercepted by *hostile* countries.

Its second function is "more intrusive and controversial": CSE's authority to "intercept and process foreign communications between Canada and other countries ... has the potential for violating the rights and freedoms of Canadians."⁵

In addition to these acknowledged roles, CSE has at times been given a mandate by the Canadian Departments of Justice and Foreign Affairs, and possibly others, without Parliamentary approval or scrutiny, to bend and even break Canadian and international law and to violate standards of democratic accountability. I either participated in or had direct knowledge of operations in which CSE operated alone or joined with NSA or GCHQ to:

- intercept communications in other countries from the confines of Canadian embassies around the world with the knowledge of the ambassador;
- aid politicians, political parties, or factions in an allied country to gain partisan advantage;
- spy on its allies;
- spy on its own citizens; and
- perform "favors" that helped its allies evade domestic laws against spying.

Embassy Ops

Since 1972, in operations I participated in, CSE has used Canadian embassies to spy on the USSR, Romania, Venezuela, India, Morocco, Ivory Coast, Italy, Costa Rica, and others. As recently as 1995, and after I left, CSE ran an operation in Japan. The information gathered is not only used in Canada, but is routinely shared with NSA and GCHQ. The program probably would have remained somewhat low key had it not been for pressure put on the Canadian government by the NSA or the cooperation of Britain's GCHQ.

5. Phillip Rosen, *The Communications Security Establishment: Canada's Most Secret Intelligence Agency*, background paper, BP-343E, Sept. 1993, pp. 6, 10, 12.

The operation began in earnest in the early 1980s under the codename, "Project Pilgrim," as President Ronald Reagan cranked up the Cold War. His NSA director, Bobby Inman, insisted that CSE initiate extensive operations to use embassies around the world as bases of operations for agents and sites for sophisticated surveillance equipment.

Although the Canadian Justice Department ruled that there was a "hint of illegality"⁶ to this type of spy operation, after renewed NSA pressure, Canada acceded to US requests.

The stick the US raised was that if Canada failed to cooperate, it would be cut off from the lifeblood of any intelligence system — the flow of information from the far more extensive US spy network.

The US held out carrots as well. And while these could include perks, training, and equipment, the most juicy reward was still information. For example, CIA and NSA each has its own satellite which can be rapidly moved from its "parking spot" over the equator to wherever needed. "Talent" and "Keyhole" are not small spheres, but what amounts to space stations half the size of a football field, equipped with highly sensitive listening devices and super

NSA and CSE performed "favors" that helped their allies evade domestic laws against spying.

cameras that can read a license plate from outer space. Since each repositioning uses up precious fuel and shortens the satellite's useful life span — usually six months or so — it is an expensive way to gather intelligence. For Canada, the promise of tapping into this resource and occasionally being able to direct its use was irresistible.

6. In a written response by a senior member of the Department of Justice, 1979.



NANCY SHAMIMPACT VISUALS

Giving the finger to domestic law, Margaret Thatcher asked Canadian intelligence to find out if her cabinet ministers were "on side."

NSA not only nudged CSE into an extensive embassy collection program, it taught us how to do it at Fort Meade and more extensively at its "Special Collections Service" (SCS) headquarters at College Park, Maryland. I was one of two men asked by CSE in 1977 to initiate these embassy collection operations

and for the next 12 years was one of the main coordinators of Canada's espionage operations abroad. By the time I was pressured to retire in 1990, there were about 30 Canadians involved. Throughout it all, I was trained and controlled by US intelligence

which told us what to do and how and when to do it. Each and every operation abroad by every CSE operator involved in Project Pilgrim was preceded by a trip to College Park to receive advice, training and, yes, approval. The College Park operation, the Special Collections Service, was approved at the highest level of the US government. Although the top job at SCS alternated between NSA and CIA, in fact, NSA ran

the show with orders coming directly from the White House.

I look back on the "Pilgrim" operations in which I participated — in New Delhi, Moscow, Rabat, Caracas, Abidjan, and Bucharest, to name a few — with mixed feeling. Despite serious questions about the role of covert operations in a democratic society, I am proud of



TERRY ALLEN

Arafat has good reason to look over his shoulder, but it was the NSA that should have been smiling after CSE used its monitoring posts to gather information on him and the PLO for the Americans.

some. The surveillance we conducted on members of the hated Ceausescu regime in Romania, for example, may have accomplished some good. Intelligence we obtained clearly showed that the dictator was not popular with the ministers in his own cabinet, who disagreed, almost unanimously, with his

policies. While it is impossible to know if this intelligence was used by the US, Britain, and Canada to provoke Ceausescu's dramatic fall in 1989, it is clear that the information was available to do just that.

Spying on Our Own

Other activities by CSE, NSA, and GCHQ were more blatantly problematic, and since my separation from CSE I have been increasingly troubled by the fact that these agencies spied on their own citizens. During the Cold War — and probably continuing to the present day — Canada routinely bought "third party" intercepts, some of which targeted members of Canada's democratic opposition movements. Located close to the USSR, the Scandinavian countries had a blanket mandate to intercept Soviet communications which they then sold to CSE by the boxload. Starting in the 1960s, CSE asked the Norwegians — and probably the Swedes and Danes — to intercept communications between France and Québec.

Tension had been high between Paris and Ottawa since 1967 when President Charles de Gaulle threw his support behind the Québec independence movement. In a dramatic gesture, he mounted the balcony of Montreal City Hall and declaimed "Vive le Québec libre." In 1976, as a referendum on separatism loomed, the Canadian government, headed by a strongly anti-separatist Pierre Trudeau, used every means at its disposal, including espionage, to defeat it.⁷ Ottawa was particularly concerned that the government of Giscard d'Éstaing — known to be privately sympathetic to the separatist cause — was surreptitiously aiding the separ-

atists. It was hoped that Scandinavian intercepts of all communications between France and Québec would reveal any collaboration.

7. In 1973, after separatists kidnapped a British envoy and assassinated a provincial minister, Trudeau invoked the War Measures Act and jailed more than 400 Canadians without warrant or trial.

CSE also monitored communications between France and Québec from a "Pilgrim" listening post in West Africa using "Oratory," a key-word selection computer (see p. 21); the name of Québécois leader René Lévesque was on the list of flagged words, and so, too, to the delight of NSA, was that of PLO leader Yasir Arafat.

Technically, CSE was intercepting French communications, but in fact, we were spying on our own citizens. The targets were, in fact, Québécois — like Lévesque — who were democratically elected and engaged in a constitutionally protected struggle to determine the shape of Canadian democracy.

With the question of independence for Québec still unsettled, CSE probably still maintains a "French Problem" section at its headquarters which, as in the past, deals solely with the question of separatism.

Spying on Our Allies

In addition to surveilling its citizens, Canada has spied on allies, including Japan, Mexico, Costa Rica, India, France, Italy, and the US.⁸ Meanwhile, the US has long used its embassy in Canada to surveil the Canadians. NSA couldn't ask for a more ideal intercept site. The US embassy sits in front of Parliament and offers an unobstructed view of the prime minister's and the privy council's offices. On its flat roof, directly above rooms with barred, curtained windows, are "air vents" and "heat pumps" traditionally used to conceal antennas and other intercept equipment. The official response to my October 1994 allegations that they housed surveillance equipment and that the US was using its embassy for snooping was: "Too absurd to comment."⁹ The setup, however, is almost exactly like known embassy operations in other countries. According to NSA expert Wayne Madsen, "It is highly probable that listening devices at the American Embassy on Wellington Street [in Ottawa] can hear conversations inside the prime minister's Centre Block office, and in the cabinet room, too."¹⁰

8. Nomi Morris, "The New Spy Wars," *Maclean's*, Sept. 2, 1996, p. 32; for detail of some of these operations and others, see my book.

9. Official spokesman from US embassy, Oct. 1994.

10. Madsen is author of *Handbook of Personal Data Protection* (New York: Stockton Press; Basingstoke, UK: Macmillan, 1992). He commented at a conference in Ottawa sponsored by Privacy International (PI), Sept. 16, 1996.

Special Collection's Stupid Pet Tricks

Although I visited NSA headquarters at Fort Meade dozens of times, it was at the Special Collection Service (SCS) at College Park, Maryland, that I received my covert operation training and assignments. This facility, set in suburban Washington, DC, dealt exclusively with covert intercept operations. The first time I was driven there in 1978, I entered through a strip mall and then through a door in the back of a restaurant; the second time, via a dry cleaners. These dinky businesses in a fake shopping center were all owned, operated, and staffed by US espionage agencies. From the street, the installation's high-tech capacity, its antennae and satellite receptors, were camouflaged and it is unlikely that neighbors suspected anything out of the ordinary.

But the inside was anything but ordinary. There were scores of rooms crammed with administrative functions, equipment, wires, jury-rigged gizmos, a currency bank, and computers. Every electronic intercept capability NSA denied having was right there. In a small black box, not much bigger than a briefcase, was "Oratory." This portable key-word selection computer could be taken almost anywhere and set to pick out pre-selected words and automatically monitor and record fax, voice, or teletype messages that contained them.¹ Developed by NSA, "Oratory" was "tempest-proof" (i.e., shielded to prevent emissions that could lead to detection), small, virtually indestructible, and easy to repair: all you had to do was open the lid and replace the self-diagnosed defective component.

Also inside the building was the office of the head of SCS. I was probably the first Canadian treated to an explanation of his "trophy rack," prominently displayed behind his desk. One item which caught my interest was a stuffed pigeon enshrined as if it were King Tut. The head of SCS explained: "Well, there was a 'target' [in Washington, DC]. ... We just couldn't get close enough to plant a bug; it was the Soviet Embassy; it was an island site surrounded by a fence and protected by a huge perimeter. On the top floor was one specific

SCS had the flashy cockiness that marked US intelligence, coupled with all the high-tech gadgetry unlimited money could buy.

office we desperately wanted to bug. For all the great equipment we had, there seemed to be no way to do it. ... We scouted it. We took pictures. Then one day, while we were looking at the photographs of the office window, one of our guys noticed that there were pigeons sitting on the window ledge. We guessed they were nesting beneath the eaves. One of the engineers came up with a brilliant solution: 'Why don't we bug a pigeon?' At first we just laughed. But the more we thought about it, the more we figured maybe this wasn't such a bad idea."

NSA finally trapped some of the birds, operated — inserting a small "bug" into the pigeons' chests, with a tiny antenna running down one of the wings — and released them. "It was summertime, and the window was left open most of the time.



SONJA ISKOVIZ/MAJ/IMPACT VISUALS

While many armies use pigeons, NSA's head of Special Collections showed a singular lack of gratitude for services rendered. After the bird completed its mission, he had it killed, stuffed, and put in his trophy case.

"We got incredibly good results." After the job was done, NSA rewarded the birds' service. "I decided to have one stuffed to keep as a memento," remarked the chief.

Near the bird was a three-foot long tree branch. In fact, it was a fiberglass replica holding wires and circuit boards. "What was this used for?" I asked. "Well," responded the chief, "we couldn't get inside the Chinese Embassy in DC to plant a bug, but we noticed the ambassador would sit on the same garden bench every morning and have long conversations with his staff and high-ranking visitors. There was a tree close to the bench and our engineers came up with the idea of making a fake tree branch, putting a bug in it, and then dropping it near the garden bench." They planted the branch on a windy day and it worked until a gardener cleaned it and put it in the trash, where it was retrieved.

The shelves held other testaments to that bizarre combination that marks much of intelligence work: a boyish exuberance in putting one over and an amoral obsession with attaining an end no matter the means. There were bugged Royal Dalton porcelain roses, dried floral arrangements, and even a hollowed-out wooden icon of the Virgin Mary holding the baby Jesus. The flashy cockiness that marked the US intelligence service, coupled with all the high-tech gadgetry unlimited money could buy, were there at College Park. The facility was relocated closer to Fort Meade in the early 1990s. ■

1. In 1994, NSA was still denying that it had this capability, despite the fact that its existence was revealed in James Bamford's book, *The Puzzle Palace*, *op. cit.*

In fact, the US is probably still conducting electronic espionage operations from its embassy, not only to discover official Canada's thoughts on domestic problems such as the separation of Québec, but on international topics such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Spying, of course, works both ways. In spring 1981, CSE intercepted a car phone conversation in which Paul Robinson, the US ambassador to Canada, revealed the US bottom line on a huge wheat deal with China that was in the works. Armed with that information, the Canadian Wheat Board underbid the US and cinched the multi-million dollar contract.

Back Scratching and Gamesmanship

This kind of spying is all part of the game and is tolerated among allies and even enemies so long as it does not cross some mutually understood line. And where that line is drawn is much dependent on what can be gotten away with. In pursuit of plausible deniability, CSE, GCHQ, and NSA have used each others' personnel and resources to evade laws against domestic spying. In 1975, with Watergate fresh in the minds of Americans, NSA was more reluctant than usual to overstep legal boundaries. Members of its "A Group," which dealt with East Bloc counter-es-

spionage, were in need of a favor. They asked my section head for help tracking down HF (high frequency) burst transmissions originating in Maryland and ending up in Moscow. NSA suspected espionage, but since the probable perpetrator was a US citizen using his own house, they were reluctant to mount an aggressive intercept. And if anything went wrong, they wanted to be able to deny involvement. NSA did, however, volunteer to foot the bill for CSE personnel and provide all the equipment.

Who was going to catch us? The guys who did the catching were the ones who were asking us to do it.

CSE, in turn, protected its own deniability by giving the job to two communications experts at the Canadian Forces intercept base in Leitrim, near Ottawa. The men were sent to NSA for a detailed briefing and given clearance by the Canadian military to go ahead. It was to be a one time thing: get in, get out, and NSA will be grateful. CSE was aware but not involved; it didn't cost us any money, the men got good training, and we built up a favor. Besides, we'd covered our ass since

we could just blame the military if something went wrong. So two Canadians were sent to conduct a counter-espionage operation on US soil at US taxpayer expense so that NSA could maintain deniability. While NSA eventually established the suspect as the source of the burst transmissions (although I never found out what happened to him), in every way that counts, NSA broke US law and spied on its own citizens.

Had it been called to public account-

ability, NSA might have argued that national security was at stake, despite the easy retort that other legal ways of carrying out the same operation were only slightly more bureaucratically cumbersome and time-consuming. In another case, though, any claim of national security was clearly absurd.

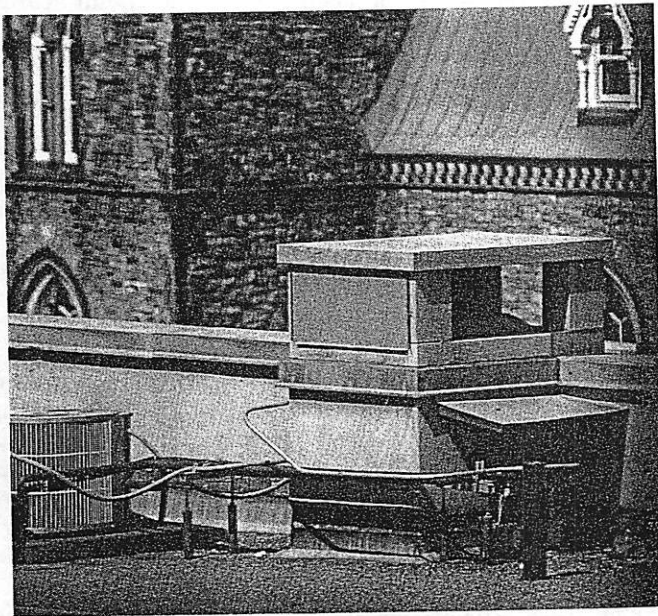
UK Evades Domestic Laws

In February 1983, the British Senior Liaison Officer (BRLO) asked CSE to mount a special two-week operation in London, to be paid for by the Brits. My CSE boss, head of special collections section, described the request to me: "Well," he said, "Margaret Thatcher [then prime minister] thinks two of the ministers in her cabinet are not 'on side' ... so she wants to find out if they are. ... So GCHQ asked if we were given the frequencies to look for, and the time frame to do the intercept, we could assist [Thatcher] in her intelligence gathering on her own ministers."

The section head went on to explain that GCHQ was in a tight spot. It wanted to aid Thatcher — who had just shuffled her cabinet and was planning a June election — but the operation was risky. If, however, "we do it," the section head continued, "they can safely say they didn't, if anyone asks." In part to return favors and build up good will, in part to test out some new equipment, and in part for the perk of two weeks all-expenses paid in London, CSE agreed. The risk for us was minimal. Who was going to catch us? The guys who did the catching were the ones who were asking us to do it.

Using the frequency provided by BRLO, the section head set up an intercept using the briefcase-sized receiver developed by the US-based Microtel Corp. Under cover of a "technical visit," he based the operation inside Macdonald House, the Canadian High Commission, and also used his hotel room. The tapes of conversations by the targeted ministers were duly handed over to GCHQ in its Cotswold headquarters.

At the time, I never stopped to question that what we were doing amounted to performing dirty tricks for a partisan politician, for her very personal reasons, in a foreign land. We had listened so routinely to private conversations we weren't supposed to hear, that I guess we had become immune to that kind of



"Air vents" facing Parliament on the roof of the US embassy in Ottawa match similar constructions that hide intercept equipment.

soul searching. And after all, we weren't spying on Canadians — that time anyway.

Spying on You, No One Is Exempt

Increasingly though, both because it's possible and because it's desired, individuals are caught in the broad net of electronic surveillance. The experts can record and analyze all your communications at will. SIGINT organizations in Canada, US, UK, Australia, and NZ use supercomputers such as the Cray to select items of interest. The list is very fluid and is adapted rapidly to monitor people and policy areas. At any time, it is likely to contain names of all world leaders, terrorists, drug lords, mafia dons, members of radical groups, labor union activists and leaders, types of weaponry, explosives, financial dealings, money transfers, airline destinations, stock information, international conferences, demonstrations, and politically suspect groups and individuals. As is the case with operations, countries maintain deniability by getting information gathered on their domestic situations by allies. Under development is even more sophisticated "topic recognition" which can home in on guarded conversations that avoid potential trigger words.

Nothing and no one is exempt. For example, you are talking on the telephone to a friend discussing your son's school play. "Boy," you say sadly, "Bobby really bombed last night," or perhaps you used the word "assassination" or "sabotage" or any one of the many thousands of key words the computer has been told to flag. A hard copy of your conversation is produced, passed to the appropriate section (in this case terrorism), and probably ends up in the garbage. But perhaps the conversation is not so clear-cut or the analyst has poor judgment. Then your name is permanently filed under "possible terrorist." Weeks or even years later, you have a similar conversation and use the same words; the computer filters it out again. Since this is the second time, your name moves from the "possible" to the "probable" file. Sound absurd? Not at all; it actually happened while I was at CSE.

According to the watchdog group Privacy International, the use of this kind of technology is spreading. "From Fort Meade, Maryland to Cheltenham, England and from Canberra, Australia

to Issy les Moulineaux in Paris; signals intelligence (SIGINT) specialists are honing their skills at monitoring digital information. SIGINT agencies everywhere are increasingly throwing their surveillance web over the Internet and other data networks of interest."¹¹ According to Madsen, "Advanced surveillance functions have become an integral part of wide-scale information systems used by governments and businesses. Monitoring of the activities of individuals is seen as a desirable — and often technically essential — component in many of these systems."¹²

Justifying Espionage No Matter the Costs

The end of the Cold War struggle that fed the budgets and rhetoric of the intelligence bureaucracies has not meant the end of spying. In addition to targeting

The intelligence agencies
know who is spying on whom,
what they know,
and how they know it.
It is the public that is kept
in the dark.

strategic threats and drug and terrorist activities, intelligence organizations are increasingly open in acknowledging economic espionage as part of their mission. In February 1996, Boris Yeltsin ordered top state officials to close the technology gap with the West by making better use of industrial intelligence.¹³ While Aleksandr Lebed was security chief for the Federal Security Service (formerly the KGB), he publicly urged "more spying on banks and foreign companies and want[ed] to see Russian firms used for corporate espionage."¹⁴

The list of examples is growing. Former CSE analyst Jane Shorten revealed that CSE routinely monitors communications from the G-7 summits and other global conferences. At this year's G-7, the US delegation was

11. David Banisar, at PI conference, *op. cit.*

12. Madsen, *ibid.*

13. Reuters, "Yeltsin Urges Russia to Catch Up," *Ottawa Sun*, Feb. 8, 1996, p. 21.

14. Morris, *op. cit.*

warned that it would be the target of industrial espionage. In August, security experts at the European Union's Luxembourg offices said they had found evidence that the Americans had penetrated, through the Internet, the electronic mail that links 5,000 EU elected officials and bureaucrats.¹⁵ Last year the Japanese lodged a formal complaint after the CIA "listened in" on Tokyo officials during sensitive auto trade negotiations.¹⁶

After devoting most of my working life to espionage, I now ask myself if spying on our friends and neighbors is the way to acquire national security and economic prosperity. Do we sleep easier with the knowledge that our security was gained through dubious methods and could be snatched away by someone with even fewer scruples or more technology? Do we tell our children

it is wrong to lie, steal, and cheat unless you do it for your country and then it is no longer immoral but patriotic? The temptation is near overwhelming and the justifications are legion: all countries do it, and in the short term, at least, cheating pays off as long as you don't get caught — and sometimes even if you do — as long as you are caught by other intelligence agencies and not publicly exposed.

While the countries are annoyed when foreign embassies are used to peer into the offices of the head of state, or when the details of trade and deals are plucked from the air, they generally prefer to counter such espionage quietly or even tolerate it. It is rare for friendly countries or even enemies to denounce these illegal intrusions. Intelligence agencies play by their own set of rules and understand that there are things more threatening to their ability to "play the game" unhampered than losing a round to their rivals. By and large, they know who is spying on whom, who knows what, and how. It is the public that is kept in the dark. "Secrecy not only permits but encourages questionable operations," says Nicky Hager in his new book on electronic surveillance.¹⁷ And the biggest threat to those operations is the light of day. ■

15. *Ibid.*

16. *Ibid.*

17. *Secret Power: New Zealand's Role In The International Spy Network* (Nelson, NZ: Potton, 1996), p. 55.

SPOOKS V. CIVIL LIBERTIES AND SOCIAL UNREST

The Battle for Cyberspace

In the cause of protecting our precious national information infrastructure, the Pentagon — eagerly supported by military contractors — is hyping fanciful security threats from cyberspace and promoting remedies that endanger civil liberties and target movements for social change.

by Wayne Madsen

General "Buck" Turgidson, the boisterous, gum-chewing general played by George C. Scott in *Dr. Strangelove*, feared that if the Soviet ambassador penetrated the Pentagon's war room and saw the secret "Big Board," the national security of the United States would be irreparably damaged. Turgidson's real-life successor — the military intelligence establishment — is looking with trepidation at all the computerized big boards that monitor our electrical power grids, air traffic control systems, national telecommunications networks, and television networks. With rising voices, they are warning that a motley assortment of terrorists, hackers, foreign spies, and mafia dons is poised to gain access to our "precious national information infrastructure." These info-warriors claim that everything from automatic teller machines, telecommunications switches, corporate proprietary data, medical systems, and the Pentagon's inner sanctum is lying virtually unprotected. Their solution is to grant the Pentagon and the intelligence agencies — particularly the ultra-secretive National Security Agency (NSA) — ever widening powers.

Wayne Madsen, an Arlington, Virginia-based journalist specializes in computer security, privacy, and intelligence issues and is author of *Handbook of Personal Data Protection* (New York: Stockton Press; Basingstoke, UK: Macmillan, 1992). This article was researched and written with support from a grant from the Fund for Constitutional Government, Washington, D.C.

US intelligence has a special reason to champion information warfare. In an age of budget cuts, agencies such as the NSA, CIA, and even the FBI see cyberspace, the Internet, and other modern information channels as a future battleground. There, they envision information wars against nebulous bands of drug dealers, arms smugglers, terrorists, and rival nations. And for that they will need a whole new offensive and defensive arsenal. Eagerly nodding their heads and holding out their hands are military contractors anxious to cash in on the lucrative contracts to develop strategies, programs, and products to engage the nation's cyber-enemies.¹ And as is usual of a project dear to both intelligence and industry, both political parties have offered ardent support.

On July 15, President Clinton signed Executive Order 13010 which created a Presidential Commission to recommend new legislation to protect the country's "critical infrastructure."² One of the administration's InfoWar town criers, Deputy Attorney General Jamie Gorelick, appeared the next day before the Senate's Permanent Committee on

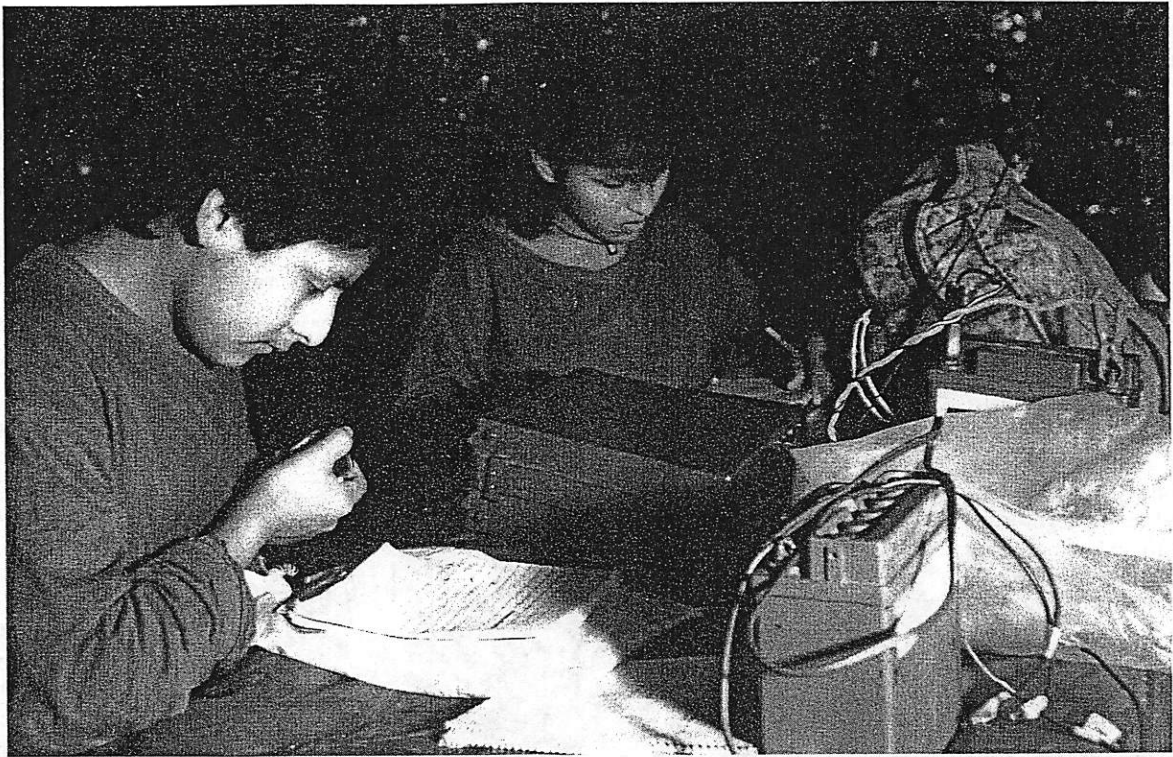
1. The firms include Science Applications International Corp. (SAIC); Booz, Allen and Hamilton; TRW; Lockheed Martin; and Rand Corp.'s Center for Information Revolution Analysis.

2. The Executive Order, signed on July 15, 1996, created the Commission on Critical Infrastructure Protection which will include representatives of the Departments of Treasury, Justice, Defense, Commerce, Transportation, and Energy as well as from the CIA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), FBI, and NSA.

Investigations. She cautioned that unless the US embarked on a Manhattan type project, it could suffer the cyber equivalent of Pearl Harbor. Gorelick pointed to a recent power failure across several western states as well as Canada and Mexico that could have been the result of an InfoWar attack. In fact, it was caused by nothing more nefarious than a fallen tree branch. Stressing urgency and stretching for examples, she told the Senate committee that "recent breakdowns of the air traffic control system — although the result of aging systems rather than electronic attacks — illustrate the potential impact of a regional or system-wide collapse of such a key infrastructure." Actually, the greatest protection our air traffic control system currently has is also its most significant vulnerability — the advanced age of the computer equipment. It breaks down frequently but it sure does keep out those criminal hackers.

Information Warfare or War on Information?

These hyped-up scenarios aside, the US does face sinister information-related threats; they come not from hackers and terrorists, but from the government's use of information censorship and "perception management." Because of media coverage, especially by CNN, during the Gulf War, Tiananmen Square, and the abortive Soviet coup, Washington's opponents in Baghdad, Beijing, and



JEREMY BIGWOOD

The US monitors radio communications, such as those sent by MRTA guerrillas in Peru, and then relays information to the US-backed Fujimori regime to use for counterinsurgency.

Moscow were privy to real-time information at the very moment it was available to the military and intelligence leadership in Washington. A report written for the Pentagon by the large intelligence contractor, Science Applications International Corp. (SAIC), (see p. 30) warned that "Widespread dissemination by the US media and its independence vastly complicate military operations. Any information warfare strategy must take into account the press and *at least* address its potential impact. It will be a key component of the information environment."³ (Emphasis in original.)

Vice Adm. William Studeman, former director of the NSA and ex-deputy director of the CIA, was quite specific where he thought the media fit in a future information war. Surfing on Alvin and Heidi Toffler's third wave, he echoed their contention that there must be a "rapid media reaction force" to pump out all sorts of propaganda on various media

3. *Information Warfare: Legal, Regulatory, Policy, and Organizational Considerations for Assurance: A Research Report for the Chief, Information Warfare Division (J6K), Command, Control, Communications, and Computer Systems Directorate, Joint Staff, The Pentagon*, prepared by Science Applications International Corp. (SAIC), Telecommunications and Networking Systems Operation, July 4, 1995, pp. 2-68. Along with J6, the Joint Chiefs of Staff J3 organization (Operations) has also been tasked with offensive and defensive warfare planning.

The Pentagon and the intelligence institutions face loss of their traditional monopoly over the flow of strategic and tactical information from the world's battlefields and zones of rebellion.

channels and outlets for "positive purposes."⁴ His definition of "positive," however, might raise some eyebrows among civil libertarians:

When it comes to the information aspects related to national security and the modern military battlefield, the media and other sources of open information are major players. They populate, even clutter up the modern battlefield. They shape opinions, impressions, and perceptions about the legitimacy, morality, and effectiveness of purpose on the battlefield. They add dynamic and encyclopedic depth to the information base associated with the modern battlefield, and we use their information in support of intelligence analysis. They are used by

4. *Ibid.*

the combatants for perception management, propaganda, message sending, and other signal purposes. The information environment the media creates, imposes, or disposes can make or break

a war effort. Substantial sophisticated accounting must be taken for the role the media will play in the battlefield information spectrum.⁵

The Pentagon and the intelligence institutions, then, face nothing less than a loss of their traditional monopoly over the flow of strategic and tactical information from the world's battlefields and zones of rebellion. To make matters worse, the flow of TV images is supplemented by a tidal wave of information over the Internet. This broad, inexpensive access to a world audience — whether by pro-democracy students in China, anticommunist mayors in Russia, or rebel commanders in Mexico — is viewed with horror at Langley and Fort Meade. In the name

5. Adm. Studeman, "National Defense University Speech — Talking Points," May 1995, p. 7.

of national security, the info-warriors are advocating that the government control access to uncensored and unfiltered information from such conduits as satellite television and the Internet.

Charles Swett, an assistant for strategic assessment in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict, warned of another danger: "[T]he political process is moving onto the Internet." Referring to a *Washington Post* story about the Zapatista National Liberation Front (EZLN), Swett charged that the guerrillas lied in their Internet communiqués when they claimed that the Mexican army had used tanks and aerial bombardment in Chiapas, and had raped and killed children there.⁶ He did not, however, question the assertions of the Mexican government's Internet propaganda.

Swett also argued that the Defense Department (DoD) should begin to scan "left-wing" news on the Internet sites supported by the Institute for Global Communications (IGC) and the Association for Progressive Communications (APC) to keep track of activists operating domestically and overseas. He added that "means of employing the Internet offensively in support of our unconventional warfare objectives should be explored."⁷ In June, CIA Director John Deutch chimed in, lamenting that terrorist groups were using the "Internet and other modern means for their own communications."⁸

Liberation Struggles and Terrorism

The Pentagon-NSA cyber-warriors see one of the greatest security threats coming from "hackers," described in a Na-

6. Charles Swett, "Strategic Assessment: The Internet," unofficial paper prepared for the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict (Policy Planning), dated April 17, 1995.

7. *Ibid.*

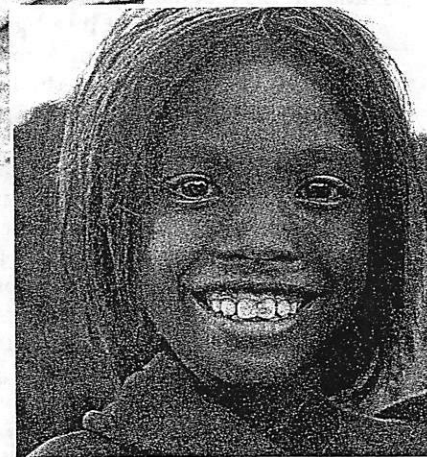
8. Statement of John Deutch, director of the CIA before the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee, Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, June 25, 1996.

tional Communications System report as "computer intruders [who] have developed social philosophies ... which they use to justify their electronic intrusions. ... One example of a philosophical position held by computer underground members revolves around the concept of *freedom of information*" (emphasis in the original). Computer undergrounds in Belarus, Bulgaria, the Czech Repub-



JACK KURTZ/IMPACT VISUALS

Resistance groups use the Internet to spread their message around the world, Zapatista combatant (above), East Timorese civilian (r.).



ELAINE BRIERE

lic, Romania, and Russia, in addition to several other countries, are cited as potential dangers to US National Security and Emergency Preparedness (NS/EP) telecommunications.⁹

In fact, the governments most threatened by hackers are those with the most to hide, since a major goal of computer undergrounds is in getting censored information out of totalitarian regimes such as those in China, Be-

9. Office of the Manager, National Communications System (NCS), "The Electronic Intrusion Threat to National Security and Emergency Preparedness (NS/EP) Telecommunications," Sept. 30, 1993, pp. 4-3, 6-1. The report was written by Booz, Allen, and Hamilton, a major support contractor to US intelligence. The NCS comprises representatives from the NSA, CIA, Joint Chiefs of Staff, DoD, Department of Justice, and 18 other federal departments and agencies. Supporting the NCS is the National Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee (NSTAC), an industry consortium that includes the major support contractors to the US intelligence community, including Lockheed Martin, AT&T, Boeing, Motorola, Rockwell International, and Harris Corp.

larus, Iran, Nigeria, or Kenya. By restricting the use of strong encryption programs like Pretty Good Privacy (PGP) and undermining confidentiality mechanisms like anonymous re-mailers, Washington undermines the freedom fighters. But it also protects its own ability to control information.

The power of an open Internet to make a difference was illustrated this September when Israel incited the Palestinians by opening a new tunnel close to the Al Aqsa Mosque. On the second day of turmoil on the West Bank, Israeli Cobra helicopter gunships attacked houses in Ramallah while Israeli soldiers fired on fleeing students at Bir Zeit University. When the school transmitted photographs of the Israeli actions around the world on the Internet, various electronic forums condemned Israeli actions. Frustrated Israeli cen-

sors said they were powerless to interfere with the transmissions.¹⁰

In other cases, opposition groups including Hezbollah, the domestic Iranian political opposition forces,¹¹ and Latin American progressive parties have been successfully blocked from In-

10. Robert Fox, "Palestinian Students Go on Line to Rally for Cause," *Washington Times*, Oct. 7, 1996, p. A15.

11. In August 1996, the US National Science Foundation (which has research ties to the NSA) terminated Internet connectivity to Iran through Vienna University in Austria. An Iranian expatriate user of the connection wrote that the US was "in harmony with the most reactionary forces in Iran which don't want any dialogue between the Iranian expatriates and the Iranians inside Iran."

ternet access. Recently, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) which was labeled "cyber-guerrillas" by the Info-war crowd in the US and elsewhere, saw its Internet plug pulled. In 1996, during a fierce offensive against the Colombian government, the guerrillas set up a home page using an Internet service provider in Mexico City. FARC posted an electronic version of its magazine, *Resistencia*, and explained its latest actions against the Colombian government. Suddenly, the provider, responding to "external" pressures, terminated FARC's connection.¹² Based on comments and publications by opponents of an uncensored, unregulated Internet, such "technology blockades"¹³ will likely be imposed on other Internet activists.



Saddam and Madonna tryst while a jealous Qaddafi glowers. (OK, the CIA could have done a slicker morph, but it has a slightly bigger budget than CAQ.)

PSYOPing the Net

Another threat to cyberspace freedom comes from one of the more secretive and weird components of the military intelligence establishment — the PSYOP (psychological operations) people who added "perception management" to the information warfare mix. It was PSYOP agents who decided to smoke former Panamanian leader Manuel Nori-

PSYOPers suggested morphing photos of world leaders in compromising situations and beaming the images by satellite or airplane onto local TVs.

ega out of the Vatican's Papal Nuncio in Panama City with obnoxious music and who counseled the paramilitary forces at David Koresh's Branch Davidian compound in Waco to demoralize the children by running over their bicycles with armored personnel carriers. They now seek to practice their government-approved mind games on the Internet and through the news media.

12. Karl Penhaul, "Internet plug pulled on Colombia's guerrillas," Reuters, Sept. 25, 1996.

13. Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology, *Report of the Defense Science Board Summer Study Task Force on Information Architecture for the Battlefield*, Oct. 1994, p. B-7.

Among the PSYOPers, more bizarre suggestions for using the airwaves are plans to morph images of world leaders to portray them in compromising situations and then beam the images by satellite or airplane onto the television screens in their countries.¹⁴ Imagine using sophisticated morphing to show Saddam Hussein huddled with a CIA agent

or Iranian President Rafsanjani kicking up his heels at a disco, martini in hand. The US Army's 4th Psychological Operations Group nearly did that. The group admits that, as the Gulf War neared, it considered broadcasting directly onto

Iraqi TV morphed images of Saddam sipping whiskey and carving a ham.¹⁵

While this plan was vetoed, similar PSYOP broadcasts have been carried out. During the Gulf War, a special Air Force plane, codenamed *Commando Solo*, broadcast radio reports to Iraqi soldiers informing them that their positions were the next to be attacked by allied aircraft; many surrendered. And

14. Morphing is a computer process in which images are merged and altered using sophisticated software. When photos are morphed, the resulting image is technically indistinguishable from an original photograph.

15. Douglas Waller, "America's Persuader in the Sky," *Time*, Aug. 21, 1995, p. 43.

before the US invasion of Haiti, *Commando Solo* broadcast messages from exiled President Jean-Bertrand Aristide directly onto Haitian TV.

While these operations have been run abroad, it is far from certain that the US news media would refuse to cooperate and let broadcasts be manipulated for political and military advantage in times of "national emergency" or in the interest of "national security." And considering the current ownership of the media, there is reason to be concerned about how such fungible terms will be interpreted. ABC and CNN are currently owned by the fantasy factories of Walt Disney and Time Warner (which also includes Warner Brothers), respectively. Disney and Warner Brothers have long histories of cooperating with government perception management campaigns, especially producing propaganda billed as entertainment during World War II.

Two of the main networks are owned by large defense contractors: NBC by General Electric, and CBS by Westinghouse. Given their financial conflict of interest, they might well show sympathy for a Pentagon-led effort to manage the news to benefit military operations.

PSYOPers are also eagerly investigating the Internet as an attractive vehicle for offensive information warfare.

The Pentagon's Swett declared: "The Internet could be used offensively as an additional medium in psychological operations campaigns and to help achieve unconventional warfare objectives. ... Used creatively as an integral asset, the Internet can facilitate many DoD operations and activities." Swett's work in the Pentagon's Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict includes implementing battle plans.

Viruses, Bugs, HERF Guns

Some of these "offensive" strategies under consideration read like B-movie scripts. In 1995, the Rand Corp. — a major think tank for the National Security Council (NSC) policy makers — conducted a war game, *The Day After ... in Cyberspace*. In it, Iranian-backed Islamist radicals seed the world's computer systems and networks with destructive software weapons, including trap doors, logic bombs, worms aided by network sniffers, traitorous computer programmers, and television broadcast overrides. As a result, Cairo is blacked out; telephone switches crash in the Pacific Northwest; an Amtrak train derailed near Laurel, Maryland; the Bank of England cannot transfer funds; the New York and London stock exchanges crash; automatic teller machines in Georgia go haywire; CNN goes off the air; a British airliner's cockpit goes dark, causing it to explode on landing at London's Heathrow airport; a Saudi oil refinery near Dhahran explodes; the Pentagon's logistics computers go down; and revolutionaries commandeer Saudi television proclaiming a "Provisional Republic of Arabia."¹⁶

As if this exercise in doomsday hyperventilation were not enough, some

16. Mark Thompson, "If War Comes Home," *Time*, Aug. 21, 1995, pp. 44-46.

Pentagon and CIA cyber-warriors are pushing the idea that US computer systems and networks are vulnerable to futuristic electro-magnetic pulse (EMP) guns, also known as high energy radio frequency (HERF) guns. During the summer of 1996, British papers — most notably the *Sunday Times* — warned that



Internet access and real-time reporting on events such as the 1991 Moscow coup mean that US intelligence agencies get information no sooner than much of the world.

London banks were vulnerable to attacks from HERF guns and Trojan horse computer programs that could bring banking systems to their cyber knees. Some London banks reacted by transferring money to Switzerland. According to the German news weekly *Der Spiegel*, the scare story apparently was concocted by an escaped schizophrenic patient from a psychiatric clinic in Germany.¹⁷

17. "Schweigen ist Gold" (Silence is Golden), *Der Spiegel*, n. 26, 1996, pp. 162-63.

He may have been sent over the edge by too many Hollywood thrillers. The 1995 James Bond movie *Golden Eye* features a top secret US satellite that can generate an electro-magnetic beam anywhere on earth. In *Escape from L.A.*, released the next year, a network of "ray-gun" armed satellites orbit the earth. While there is research into space-based weaponry to disable enemy electronic and computer systems, electrical engineer Jim Ross asserts that human-held HERF guns are simply fantasy. Given the amount of energy they release, even the tiniest "leak of any power from [them] would probably cook the shooter and anyone standing near him/her."¹⁸ The HERF gun crowd may have more success writing screenplays than formulating national security policy.

Contracting Out Intelligence

One thing that is not Hollywood science fiction is the current trend by the Clinton administration to grant more and more powers to the national intelligence establishment to control information systems security in the civilian agencies of government and the private sector. In July 1996, Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.) warned that "Our law enforcement and defense agencies cannot, and should not, carry the whole load for the security of our computer networks. ... Congress recognized this fact

when it passed the Computer Security Act and put the responsibility for developing federal computer security standards for nonclassified information in the hands of a civilian government agency, rather than the NSA."¹⁹ That civilian government agency is the National Institute for Standards and

18. James A. Ross, "More Irresponsible Journalism, The HERF Gun Story," *Privacy and Security* 2001, June 1996, pp. 3-4.

19. Statement at Hearing on Security in Cyberspace, Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs, July 16, 1996.

Technology (NIST, formerly the National Bureau of Standards). NIST, however, has lost much of its authority over security standards to the NSA.

NIST's defeat resulted primarily from the battle between the Clinton administration and its allies in the NSA and some software companies and privacy advocates over US encryption standards. When private industry criticized NSA's role in developing the encryption key escrow standard (under which government escrow agents would hold parts of encryption keys), the agency cried national security. Information warfare, they argued, was too important to be left in the hands of a bunch of scientists, engineers, and bureaucrats at NIST. The Clinton administration agreed and established a Joint Defense and Intelligence Community Information Warfare Technical Center, which will reside, of course, at the NSA headquarters at Fort Meade, Maryland.²⁰

This was just the approach that Leahy had argued against when he told the Senate that "the government should not control or stand in the way of technical solutions."²¹

The advanced technology that NSA, as information czar, would deploy to

NSA was able to listen in on the coded military and diplomatic traffic of the more than 130 countries that were Crypto A.G. customers.

guard the parapets of the nation's computer infrastructure includes encryption key recovery. In October 1996, after being endorsed by CIA Director John Deutch, this method of maintaining the government's ability to spy on encrypted communications replaced key escrow as the favored technology. Key recovery works by locating information that is woven into the header of each message. This mechanism allows a recovery "agent" to extract or "reconstruct" the message's encryption key and decrypt its contents.

20. Each of the armed services has its own information warfare activities. These are the Army's Land Information Warfare Activity (LIWA) at Fort Belvoir, Virginia; the Navy's Fleet Information Warfare Center (FIWC), in Norfolk, Virginia; and the Air Force Information Warfare Center (AFIWC), in San Antonio, Texas.

21. Leahy statement, *op. cit.*

Key recovery may have been the basis for NSA's most successful post-Cold War project for deciphering coded messages. Since the 1940s, NSA reportedly "rigged" encryption systems sold by the Swiss firm Crypto A.G. so that the agency retained the ability to break the codes of anyone using the machines. Thus, Fort Meade was able to listen in on the coded military and diplomatic traffic of the more than 130 countries that were Crypto A.G. customers.²²

Der Spiegel recently explained how the NSA program worked. Periodically, NSA and Motorola crypto-engineers would visit Crypto A.G. headquarters in Zug, Switzerland, to install special equipment and to program cipher machines. The Crypto machines encrypted messages but also inserted a secret field in the cipher text called "*hilfsinformationen*" or "help information." This information was a set of instructions that allowed NSA to reconstruct the key from the message cipher text. The customer who bought the machines would not, of course, know about the special secret code. Only the NSA, German *Bundesnachrichtendienst* (BND) intelligence, Crypto A.G., Motorola, or other authorized "eavesdroppers,"

with a minimum of hands-on training, would be able to automatically decrypt the cipher text of the message.²³ The process sounds an awful lot like the administration's key recovery program.

The Information Warfare Gap

At the conclusion of *Dr. Strangelove*, when nuclear missiles are about to rain down on the US, the president is told that the country has fewer mine shafts to shelter survivors than the Soviet Union. Gen. Turgidson insists that the US cannot fall victim to a "mine shaft gap." The US now faces another dangerous

22. "Wer ist der befugte Vierte?" (Who is the fourth authority?), *Der Spiegel*, n. 36, 1996, pp. 206-07.

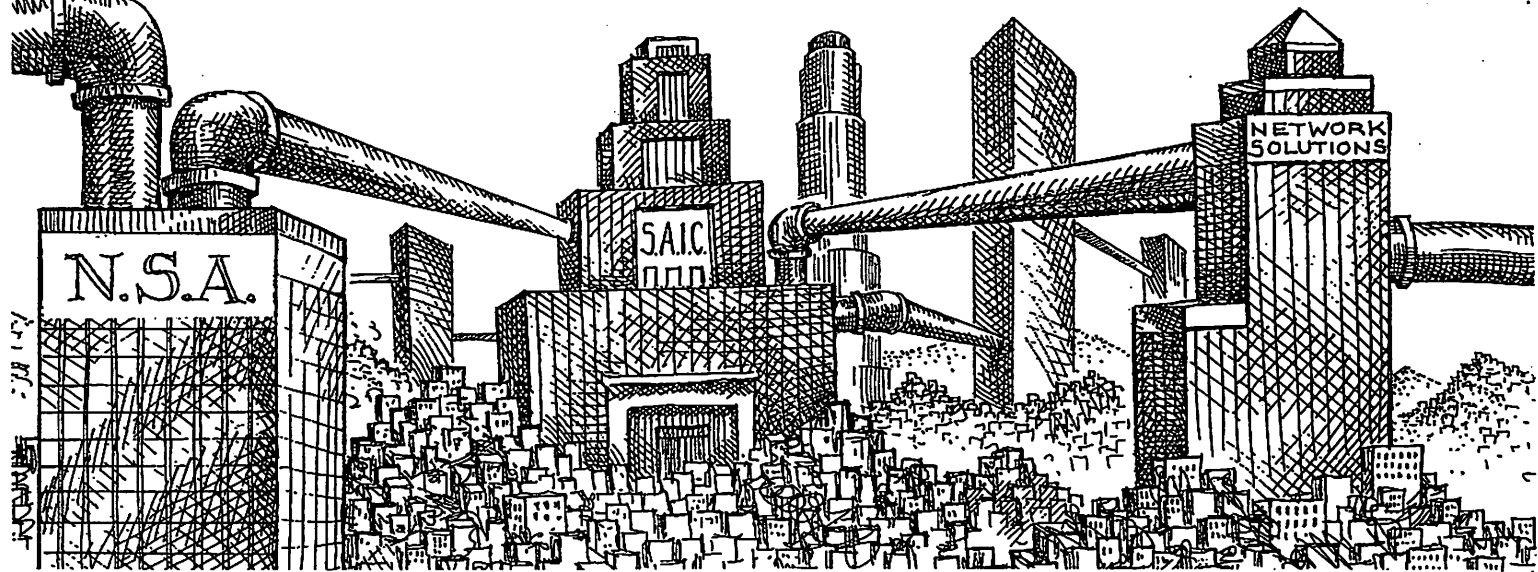
23. *Ibid.*



Gen. Turgidson in *Dr. Strangelove* is no less bizarre than some of today's cyberwarriors.

gap — a credibility gap. An array of Pentagon, intelligence agency, and military contractor officials are trying to convince the public that its airplanes and airports, automatic teller machines and banks, hospitals, cable televisions, telephones, computers, refrigerators, and traffic lights are vulnerable to information warfare attacks by an assortment of terrorists and Third World dictators.

While there have been security problems surrounding cyberspace technology, the dangers are being grossly exaggerated by special interests protecting bureaucratic turf or waiting in line to reap millions in defense contracts if their doomsday scenarios are taken seriously. Unfortunately, the investment of scarce resources into such "pie in the sky" science fiction countermeasures will come at the expense of other programs. Instead of inventing new "threats" to national security, the intelligence establishment should be forced to divert much of its massive budget to impoverished social, environmental, educational, and medical programs in other government departments and agencies. Information warfare should be high on any budget cutter's target list. ■



Networking with Spooks

by John Dillon

The Internet is changing from a public resource to a lucrative operation influenced by spooks and former Pentagon officials. Open access and information are increasingly controlled.

The Internet, the mother of all networks, is a sprawling congregation of connected computers; almost anyone is welcome, almost anything goes.¹ Now, one private company with strong ties to the defense and intelligence agencies has become the prime gatekeeper and toll-taker for the millions navigating the maze. Network Solutions Inc. (NSI) of Herndon, Va., has the government-granted monopoly to issue "domain names" — electronic addresses like <microsoft.com> used to route e-mail and steer traffic through the increasingly commercialized World Wide Web.

NSI's spook connections and its lead role in the privatization of the Internet have raised alarms. Net activists were outraged by the firm's September 1995 decision to charge \$100 a year to register new addresses and \$50 a year to renew old ones. Later, NSI stirred up even more anger when it began removing the addresses of the thousands who refused to pay. The company also has been sued half a dozen times over its policy to give trademark holders priority when a domain name is in dispute.²

John Dillon is a Vermont-based journalist who covers information technology.

1. For examples of the kinds of political censorship that are creeping onto the Net, see pp. 24-29.
2. Oppedahl & Larson website, <www.patents.com/nsi.sht>.

Who's in Charge

The furor over NSI raises basic questions of who controls and regulates the Internet. Although physically decentralized — with millions of computers linked around the globe — the Net is in fact hierarchically organized. Anyone on the planet who wants an Internet address ending with one of the popular suffixes .com, .edu, .org, .net, or .gov must register the domain name with the Internet Network Information Center, or InterNIC, a US government-created central registry. In 1993, NSI took over the administration of that listing.

This domain name system allows people to substitute user-friendly names such as <ibm.com> for the real Internet Protocol (IP) addresses: hard-to-remember numerical strings like <198.106.242.7>. When you enter an address in your web browser — like <mediafilter.org/caq> to get this magazine's site — your computer first accesses a "name server." The server then returns the unique numeric IP address which your browser uses to find the appropriate place on the Web.

Critics say there is no good reason why Network Solutions should have a monopoly franchise on registering the user-friendly domain names. But NSI

has a great reason: By controlling the keys to prime Internet real estate, it has staked out a phenomenally lucrative business. Although the company does not release financial figures, the Internet's astronomical growth — fueled by the tens of thousands of businesses coming on line each month — has triggered an explosion in domain name registrations. In March alone, about 45,000 names were registered, a 25 percent increase over February. NSI made an estimated \$20 million in the six months from September 1995 to March 1996 from annual registration fees, with an additional \$40 million projected for the next six months.³

"I would think they're making an obscene profit," said Karl Denniger, head of Macro Computer Solutions Inc., a Chicago-based Internet provider that wants to enter the domain name business.⁴ "Their monopoly of this isn't really legally defensible," said Stanton McCandlish, an activist with the Electronic Frontier Foundation in San Francisco.⁵

3. Robert Shaw, "Internet Domain Names: Whose Domain Is This?" Paper presented at the workshop "Coordination and Administration of the Internet," held at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, Sept. 9-10, 1996.

4. David S. Hilzenrath, "Holding the Keys to Internet Addresses," *Washington Post*, July 27, 1996.

5. Interview, Nov. 14, 1996.

Controlling Information

NSI's national security pedigree is even more troubling to some than its monopoly-derived profits. When the government administered the InterNIC, the service was subsidized by tax dollars and was free to users who simply registered their names. In May 1993, the National Science Foundation privatized the name registry and is paying Network Solutions \$5.9 million to administer it.⁶

In September 1995, NSI instituted the fee system. A few months earlier, it had been bought out by Science Applications International Corp. (SAIC). This privately held company with 20,000 employees and 450 offices around the globe has close ties to the Defense Department and intelligence agencies. Its current board of directors includes former National Security Agency chief Bobby Inman, former Defense Secretary Melvin Laird, and the former head of research and development for the Pentagon, Donald Hicks. Ex-CIA Director Robert Gates, Secretary of Defense William Perry, and CIA Director John Deutch have been past members.⁷ Eighty-three percent of the company's \$2 billion annual revenue comes from government contracts, including defense, intelligence, and law enforcement contracts. It is designing new information systems for the Pentagon, helping to automate the FBI's computerized fingerprint identification system, and last year won a \$200 million contract to provide "information support" to the Internal Revenue Service.⁸

Some of these contracts, along with the company's strong intelligence and defense links, raise fears that SAIC will abuse the information it controls through its key Internet role. "I don't want a spook corporation, particularly a private spook corporation, to be anywhere near a control point on the global cooperative Internet," said James Warren, a writer and Internet civil liberties activist.⁹ But McCandlish of the Electronic Frontier Foundation described SAIC's ownership of Network Solutions as a "non issue." "The Internet itself was a Defense Advanced Re-

6. Stephen Pizzo, "Domain Name Fees Benefit Defense Contractor: Who Are These Guys?" *Web Review*, Sept. 1995.

7. *Ibid.*

8. SAIC press release, May 24, 1996; and Pizzo, *op. cit.*

9. Glenn Simpson, "Could Big Brother Be Boss of the Internet," *Palm Beach Post*, Oct. 3, 1995.

search Project Agency project. It's been true for a long time. It's not some big secret."¹⁰

Putting A Hold on Names

Another bone of contention is NSI's policy on domain name disputes. For a long time, names were registered on a first come, first served basis. But then some quick-buck artists realized they could register domain names related to famous trademarks and sell the name back to the owner, a process known as trademark hijacking. In response, NSI instituted a policy that gives trademark owners priority in claiming a domain name over someone who has already registered it. While the domain names are in dispute, the company can put the disputed name "on hold," so that it can't be used until the issue is settled.

The company's dispute policy has swung too far to protect trademark owners at the expense of legitimate domain name holders, critics say. They note that trademark law allows different companies to share the same name — McDonald's hamburgers and McDonald's widgets, for example. And they say NSI is ruling on legal questions, such as who owns the name and what it can be used for, without legal authority.

"They are serving as legislators, administrators, judges, juries, and executioners," said Kathryn Kleiman, a lawyer and organizer of the Domain Name Rights Coalition, a non-profit organization that lobbies Congress on domain name issues.¹¹

The company's policy created major headaches for a New Mexico Internet service named Roadrunner Computer Systems, for example, which used the

10. Interview, Nov. 1996.

11. Interview, Nov. 1996.

<roadrunner.com> address for itself and for its customers' e-mail. But last year Warner Bros., which produces Road Runner cartoons and holds a trademark by the same name, tried to establish exclusive rights. Roadrunner Computer Systems obtained a court order barring Network Solutions from putting its name on hold.¹²

Challenging the Monopoly

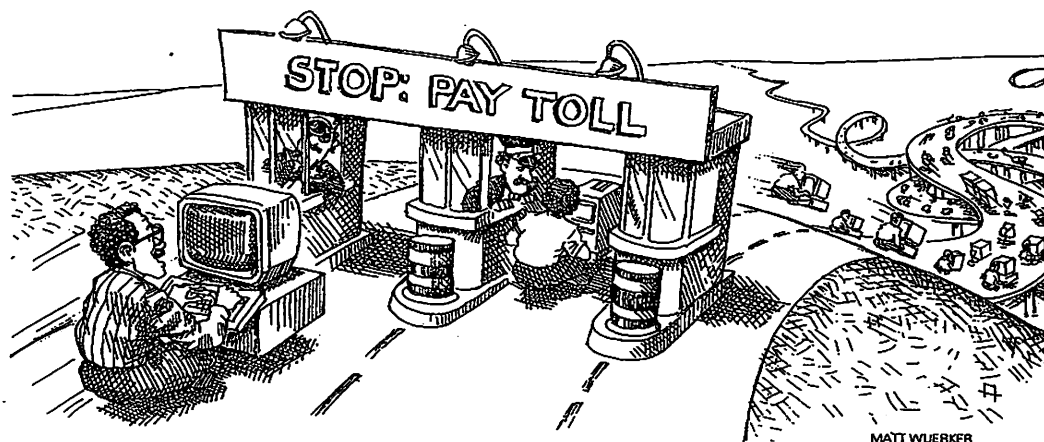
But NSI's monopoly may soon crumble. Dozens of new top-level domains (the .com or .edu portion of the names) are being considered, and they will be administered by new registration services.

Paul Garrin, a New York media artist, has plans to strike an even more decisive blow for competition and Internet democratization. He and his colleagues have designed an alternative network of name servers. By changing your browser's default settings to find one of the servers Garrin has established around the world, you could locate web sites listed by any chosen name.¹³ The system does not yet work for e-mail.

"We would no longer be restricted to top-level domain, such as .com or .edu," Garrin said. "Under the existing system, there's an artificial shortage of domain names driven by InterNIC's desire to control. By adding new suffixes such as .mag, .inc, .press, for example, numerous companies could use their own names." They could also eliminate NSI's monopoly control. "We're de-territorializing the Internet and bringing it back to the real ideal of virtual space with no national borders of hierarchies," he said. ■

12. Evan Ramstad, "The Net's Traffic Cop," *Austin American-Statesman*, Sept. 2, 1996.

13. Interview, Oct. 1996. Garrin operates CAQ's web site: <<http://mediafilter.org/caq>> on a volunteer basis.



MATT WUERKER

Patrolling the Empire

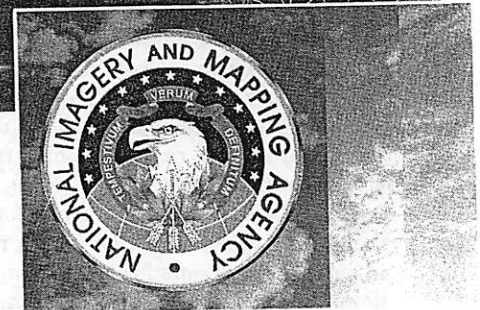
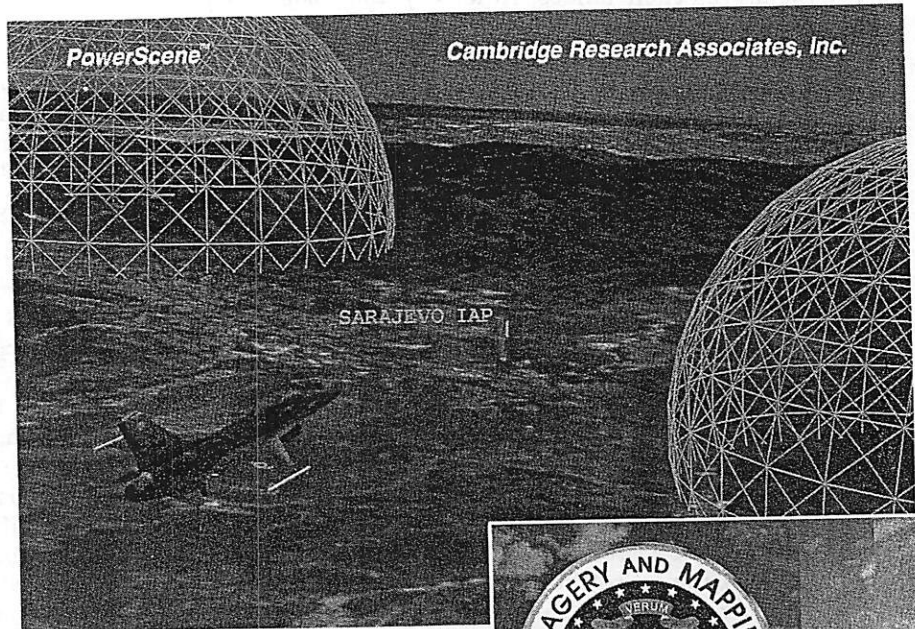
Mapping, Imagery & National Security

The Pentagon's new strategy for global control is being tested around the world from the Persian Gulf to the Huallaga Valley. A new agency, NIMA, is advancing plans for future wars by helping to fuse high tech surveillance and weaponry.

by Randy K. Schwartz

Throughout the Cold War, the two nuclear superpowers — dug in across long-standing battle lines — pointed satellite sensors and other reconnaissance assets toward hardened military installations. The list of targets changed relatively slowly. Today, Washington sees its security interests — i.e., its ability to impose its will on a world scale — threatened not by an entrenched superpower, but by local and regional crises that erupt seemingly out of nowhere. In a world in which the perceived threat could be Iraqi mobile tactical missile launchers one day and rebellious peasants in the US “backyard” the next, instant, accurate information is crucial. As former National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) Director Jeffrey K. Harris put it, “silos don’t move very far once they have been dug,” while “mobile missiles and guerrillas are — no kidding — very hard to locate. And once you do locate them, they’re gone in a flash and locating them again means starting all over.”¹

Randy K. Schwartz is chair of the Mathematics Department of Schoolcraft College in Livonia, Michigan.
1. Speech at National Space Club, June 20, 1995.



So far, in the “battle for information” the US — with its superiority in satellite surveillance and mapping capability, along with its ability to target and rapidly deploy weapons from a safe distance — is the clear winner. But if the US is to sustain military pre-eminence and achieve “battlespace dominance,” it must combine surveillance and reconnaissance with precision weaponry and with the infrastructure of command, control, communications, computer processing, and intelligence (C⁴I). This “system of systems” would give US war fighters access to real-time information from all sources at the touch of a button.

This October, the US military and intelligence establishment created the National Imagery and Mapping Agency (NIMA) to grapple with this new challenge and create a seamless national imagery system. The new agency absorbed the Defense Mapping Agency (DMA), Central Imagery Office, and CIA’s National Photographic Interpretation Center (NPIC), along with the the imagery interpretation units of the NRO, the Defense Airborne Reconnaissance Office, and Defense Intelligence Agency. More

than 7,000 of NIMA’s 9,000 employees once constituted DMA.²

As a single unified agency, NIMA will be able to exploit the entire range of imagery collection assets, commercial processing resources, computer archives, and on-line distribution channels. Where most of the 20 million maps and charts DMA produced annually were paper, NIMA anticipates that within a few years 70 percent of its images will be digital. This innovation will allow field commanders to access maps on-line, anywhere in the world, instantaneously. New technology also makes it possible to fuse imagery and mapping data.

2. The outright absorption of the CIA’s NPIC by NIMA — an agency overwhelmingly dominated by military personnel — has raised fears that it will create “bias” in the use of imagery and contribute to the “militarization” of intelligence. Some national security experts recall that in the 1960s, it was the NPIC, using photos from NRO satellites, that debunked the defense establishment’s claim of a “Soviet missile gap.” (See, e.g., Melvin A. Goodman, “The Road to Intelligence Reforms: Paved with Good Intentions,” *Unclassified*, Summer 1996, p. 25.)

Battle Tested

The technical and organizational retooling is dictated by new geopolitical realities, but it draws from lessons of the past, especially those learned in the Gulf War. In that conflict, a glut of intelligence data clogged military communications satellites, and because of incompatible computer systems, satellite images processed in Washington couldn't be moved rapidly to field commanders.³ Gen. Charles A. Horner, commander of US Space Command, pointed out that "air combat planning is moving toward 12 hour cycles, with execution decisions and changes often made within one or two hours of time over target. Intelligence must keep pace."⁴ Creation of the Central Imagery Office (CIO) in May 1992, which worked to unify different agencies' imagery processing standards, was a preliminary attempt to address the problems.⁵ Three years later, Adm. William O. Studeman, as acting CIA head, announced that the intelligence community had "developed a new framework strategy which defines for us a future world in which flexibility, adaptability, economy, efficiency, and reach rather than full-time presence, are basic elements. The requirement is to have surge, not to have total presence all around the world."⁶

The concept of surge — the ability to pounce on a hotspot at short notice anywhere in the world — is a central component of the Pentagon's new planning. It requires instant detection of security threats and the battlespace awareness to target them and strike quickly. Because satellites do not require air supremacy, they will probably remain the most reliable way to gather overhead intelligence. A web of dozens of satellites

3. David A. Fulghum, "Key Military Officials Criticize Intelligence Handling in Gulf War," *Aviation Week & Space Technology (AW&ST)*, June 24, 1991, p. 83; *Strategic Satellite Systems in a Post-Cold War Environment* (Hearing Before the Legislation and National Security Subcommittee of the House Committee on Governmental Operations, Feb. 2, 1994), p. 246; and *Preparing for the 21st Century: An Appraisal of US Intelligence* (Report of the US Congressional Commission on the Roles and Capabilities of the US Intelligence Community, GPO, March 1, 1996).

4. *Department of Defense Authorization for Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1994 and the Future Year's Defense Program*, Hearings Before the Senate Armed Services Committee, April-June 1993, Part 1, p. 503.

5. Jeffrey T. Richelson, *The US Intelligence Community*, (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, rev. ed., 1995), pp. 32-36.

6. Speech at Marquette University, April 20, 1995.

and other spy vehicles will patrol vast stretches of the planet around the clock. Computers — which sift the deluge of real-time, as well as archived images and maps — will then be able to aim and cue weapons automatically.

The result, said one analyst, will be:

a world in which the many kinds of sensors, from satellites to shipborne radar, from unmanned aerial vehicles to remotely planted acoustic devices, will provide information to any military user who needs it. Thus a helicopter might launch a missile at a tank a dozen miles away based on information derived from airborne radar or satellite imagery. In this view, the revolution in military affairs consists of the United States' astounding and unprecedented ability to amass and evaluate enormous quantities of information about any given battle arena ... and make near-instantaneous use of it.⁷

"Control from Outside"

What are the geopolitical implications of a national imagery system? First, the

7. Elliot A. Cohen, "A Revolution in Warfare," *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 1996, p. 40.



The Israeli army uses surveillance by drone aircraft, jointly developed with the US (r.), to locate hot spots and decide where to pounce. Above, troops in Gaza monitor the release of prisoners.



JOHN TORDAI (l) AAI CORP. (below)

US may no longer need to station forces around the world in order to enforce its will. Second, Washington can wage war from a safe distance by using imagery and other intelligence systems fused with precision weaponry.

The Gulf War demonstrated how pilots, with very little risk of ending up in politically troublesome body bags, could rain down death and destruction. The conflict gave a taste of the precision bombing that will be made possible by the fusion — then still in an early stage — of imagery data with smart weapons and suggested areas for improvement.

The conflict also gave the Pentagon the opportunity to battle test pilotless surveillance drones, or unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV). The Navy had begun pushing hard for the development of Pioneer, a 16-foot drone, after Syrian missiles downed two of its warplanes over Lebanon in 1983. The drone was jointly developed from 1985-86 by Israeli Aircraft Industries, Tadiran (owned by the Israeli Labor Party) and AAI Corp. (Baltimore, Maryland). Flying at 15,000 feet, it can beam back images to a receiver more than 100 miles away while a soldier on the ground remotely controls bearing and camera an-

gle. During the Gulf War, in 307 combat flights, the Pioneer UAV searched out Iraqi troop concentrations, artillery and missile sites, and mines, and assisted in targeting tanks, trucks, and bunkers.⁸ Marine Corps Commander Lt. Gen. Boomer called it the single most valuable collector of intelligence in the war.⁹

Buoyed by this success, the US military is gradually replacing many of its old piloted spy planes with a fleet of drones procured by the Defense Airborne Reconnaissance Office (DARO). Some models under development will have infrared sensors for nighttime use and the ability to detect the launch of enemy missiles — and intercept them with missiles of their own.¹⁰

The Middle East has been key not only to the trials and development of UAVs, but as a testing ground for the Pentagon's new war strategy. Since 1989, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF), for example, have used Pioneer drones to secure its occupation of Palestine. The drones located mass uprisings, beamed down real-time images of riots to security forces, and patrolled border areas in search of guerrilla movements.¹¹ The information they provide has made possible a new form of occupation which the Rabin government dubbed "control from outside." Now, even without an IDF presence in urban areas, troops can redeploy on short notice. This capability was vividly demonstrated in September 1996, when Tel Aviv rushed Israeli tanks and Cobra helicopters into Ramallah and other Palestinian "autonomous" areas to quell an uprising sparked by the Israeli tunneling near the Al-Aqsa mosque.

It was in relation to the Middle East conflict, too, that mapping expertise proved its usefulness to policy makers and the military. "It is no secret," observed one Palestinian, "that the map of Oslo II, with its delineation of the three zones, had been designed by the Israeli military according to a clear military plan."¹² The Israeli-drawn maps, not shown to the Palestinians until nine

days before the accord was signed, identify one zone under Palestinian autonomy, a second zone under Israeli security control with minor Palestinian administration, and a third (about 70 percent of the land) under full Israeli sovereignty. By controlling the second and third zones, and key settlements and bypass roads, Israel controls the Palestinian "autonomous" areas.

For several years, Israel has used jets, helicopters, and drones for round-the-clock surveillance of southern Lebanon, part of which it occupies. In April 1996, during Israel's "Grapes of Wrath" operation, a UN soldier in Lebanon took a video which was broadcast on BBC-TV. It showed an Israeli drone flying over the village of Qana before, during, and after the savage bombardment that killed 102 refugees at a UN base.¹³ An Israeli general had first claimed that a drone, sent to scout the target area, had been turned back be-

Surge, the ability to pounce on a hotspot anywhere in the world, requires instant detection of security threats and the ability to target them and strike quickly.

cause of clouds and had left Qana well before the shelling. The video exposed this lie, and proved that the drone had helped Israel carry out a deliberate attack on the UN compound.¹⁴

Grapes of Wrath drove home how quickly Israel could spring into Lebanon and sent a powerful message to Syrian President Hafez Al Assad to "get with the program" of US-brokered peace treaties. It also demonstrated that surveillance, mapping, and other assets have made it militarily feasible, for the first time, for Israel to pull its troops back and dictate a tripwire "peace" with Arab forces. The Pentagon plan for global surge capability is essentially Israel's "control from outside" writ large.

Deliberate Force

Assembling a national imagery system also has implications for Washington's al-

lies and rivals. After the Gulf War, the Pentagon forecast that the world would continue to be punctuated by crises "likely to engender ad hoc coalitions. We should plan to maximize the value of such coalitions."¹⁵ The US "information umbrella" — its increasing lead in battlespace awareness and military intelligence — is analogous to the old "nuclear umbrella."¹⁶ Without this capability, it would be impossible for the US to implement its policy of "assertive multilateralism" under which it pressures nations into alliance and leads international coalitions to distant lands to pound recalcitrant forces into submission.

The pacification of former Yugoslavia was a NATO operation to help make Eastern and Central Europe safe for Western, and especially US, financial and strategic interests. As early as 1994, US spy satellites and drones were urgently expanding the imagery archives of the region. The drones, deployed in Albania, were long-range "endurance" models called Predators, manufactured by General Atomics (San Diego). Flying at 25,000 feet, Predator's synthetic aperture radar captured live video of the Bosnian terrain at one-foot resolution — even through clouds.¹⁷

The Defense Mapping Agency carried out a massive effort to upgrade more than 100 different topographic maps of Bosnia. The US later distributed nearly 3 million paper and 300,000 CD-ROM versions of these color maps in support of NATO forces.¹⁸ The Central Imagery Office deployed local area computer networks so that field commanders wouldn't have to wait days and weeks for archived images.¹⁹

In August 1995, when NATO unleashed the air strikes of Operation Deliberate Force, US pilots led 20-plane attack groups that also included British, French, Dutch, German, and Turk-

15. Patrick E. Tyler "Pentagon Drops Goal of Blocking New Superpowers," *New York Times*, May 24, 1992.

16. Joseph S. Nye, Jr. and William A. Owens, "America's Information Edge," *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 1996, pp. 20-36.

17. Walter Pincus, "Another Intelligence Image Faces Change," *Washington Post*, Oct. 15, 1995; David A. Fulghum and John D. Morocco, "CIA to Deploy UAVs in Albania," *AW&ST*, Jan. 31, 1994, pp. 20-22; and David A. Fulghum, "Predator to Make Debut Over War-Torn Bosnia," *AW&ST*, July 10, 1995, pp. 47-48.

18. Defense Mapping Agency web site: <<http://164.214.2.53/information/facts/>>, summer 1996.

19. Annette J. Krygiel, "Networks Enhance Tactical Warriors' Imagery Support," *Signal*, May 1996, pp. 65-67.

8. Defense Airborne Reconnaissance Office (DARO), *UAV Annual Report for 1994-95*; and Richelson, *op. cit.*, pp. 160-61.

9. AAI Corp. web site, <<http://www.aaicorp.com/>>, summer 1996.

10. See *AW&ST*, July 10, 1995 (special issue on UAVs); David A. Fulghum, "ACC Weighs Plans for New Technology," *AW&ST*, April 29, 1996, pp. 38-40; and Steve Rodan, "Eye in the Sky," *Jerusalem Post International Edition*, Feb. 3, 1996.

11. Jerusalem Telegraphic Agency, April 28, 1989.

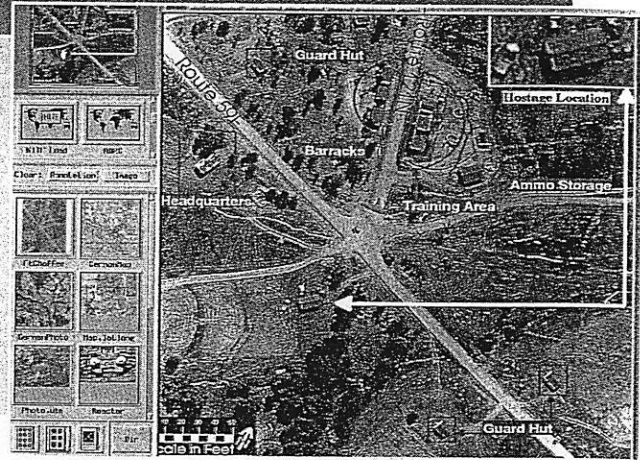
12. Mustafa Barghouti, "Posteuphoria in Palestine," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Summer 1996, pp. 87-96.

13. BBC broadcast May 6, 1996, cited in Barbara Crossette, "U.N. Report Suggests Israeli Attack Was Not a Mistake," *New York Times*, May 8, 1996.

14. *Ibid.*



Using Predator (above), “you could see the city below, and you could focus in on the city, you could see a building, focus on a building; you could see a window, focus on a window. You could put a cursor around it and [get] the GPS latitude and longitude very accurately, remotely via satellite. And if you passed that information to an F-16 or an F-15 at 30,000 feet, and that pilot can simply put in that latitude and longitude into his bomb fire control system, then that bomb can be dropped quite accurately onto that target, maybe very close to that window, or, if it’s a precision weapon, perhaps it could be put through the window. ... I’d buy a lot of unmanned aerial vehicles in the future.” — *Adm. William Owens, then vice chair, Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1995.*



ish pilots. “American air power was at the forefront of the NATO effort,” wrote one military reporter, “with more than two-thirds of the 3,515 allied sorties being flown by US Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps aircraft.”²⁰

US pilots based at Aviano Air Base in Italy were at a distinct advantage. They could rehearse their individual bombing runs in virtual reality with a state-of-the-art simulator, PowerScene, from Cambridge Research Associates (McLean, Virginia). Before an actual run, pilots used the toggles, joysticks, and video monitors of a PowerScene workstation for lifelike practice. The software relied on an archive of DMA maps to identify cities, targets, and other features allowing pilots to pinpoint their coordinates simply by touching the screen.

“PowerScene helps us recognize the target better,” crowed a US F-16 pilot who flew over Bosnia. “It gives the angle we’ll be looking from and makes us faster at identifying targets. That can make the difference between dropping and not dropping. We come at some targets at six to seven hundred miles per hour. We have seconds to identify the target or we don’t drop. The bottom line is a higher percentage of our bomb runs have been successful.”²¹

20. Tim Ripley, “Precision Strikers” and “On Target with Deliberate Force,” *United States Air Force Yearbook 1996* (Fairford, UK: The Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund Enterprises, 1996), pp. 22-24, 55-57.

21. Defense Mapping Agency web site, *op. cit.*

Brought to the table by Deliberate Force, the key powers gathered at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base outside Dayton, Ohio. DMA set up Building 834 as a map room and began working round-the-clock. As soon as a negotiator proposed a new boundary—say the Posavina Corridor linking Serb-held areas—the change was incorporated into a quickly printed map and displayed on PowerScene monitors. Within three weeks the negotiators drew new boundaries, imposed a constitution on Bosnia, and set up a government with links to the US and to Western financial institutions. Nine months later, President Clinton was able to call for the admission of Central and Eastern European nations to NATO by 1999.

Remote Sensing for Counterinsurgency

There is nothing intrinsically nefarious about a collection of maps or images. They can be used to promote humane goals and policies as well as facilitate war and domination. But following a well-worn path, NIMA will undoubtedly harness seemingly innocent projects to further its goal of creating a national imagery system for the US military.

In 1992, at then-Sen. Al Gore’s request, the CIA began making satellite images for “environmental monitoring.” In its new guise as nature lover, the agency formed MEDEA, a group of 60 scientists with security clearances, and

asked it to advise on monitoring endangered Mojave Desert tortoises, Costa Rican rainforests, etc.²² For about a decade, the Defense Department (DoD) has been sponsoring computer projects to automate the inspection of mammograms for the onset of breast cancer; the same technology will be useful in automating the inspection of overhead reconnaissance images.²³

An early example of how a seemingly benign project ended up serving a very lethal purpose was Landsat. When the image gathering program began in 1972, technicians at NASA and the other research labs who developed it were told that its goal was to use satellites to monitor crops, forest and water resources, survey land usage, and explore for oil and other minerals. Those scientists may be surprised to learn that the largest government user of the imagery was not the Department of Agriculture or Interior, but US intelligence agencies.²⁴

Landsat imagery has been widely used in US-backed counterinsurgency warfare. For more than 15 years, for example, the Peruvian armed forces have used maps based on Landsat imagery in a war against the Communist Party of Peru (PCP), also known as Shining

22. William J. Broad, “US Will Deploy Its Spy Satellites on Nature Mission,” *New York Times*, Nov. 27, 1995.

23. Pincus, *op. cit.*

24. *International Implications of Proposed Sale of Landsat Satellite*, hearing before a subcommittee of the House Committee on Government Operations, Sept. 28, 1983, p. 4.

the technology genie is clearly out of the bottle.”³³

In a 1995 case that fed such worries, the government won convictions after a graduate student stole classified mapping data from a Cornell University computer and sold it for commercial uses. The data, which were on restricted loan to the Geological Sciences Department's Andes Project, had passed through several hands by the time federal officials were alerted. Prosecutors focused on a map vendor, Bill Stewart of Cartographic Imports (Ann Arbor, Michigan). Despite his claim that he had no idea the data were classified, he was convicted for felony conversion of information, conspiracy, mail fraud, and wire fraud, and sentenced to 30 months in prison.³⁴

The surprisingly hardball prosecution reflected real government fears. What had been stolen were DMA level-one digital terrain elevation data (DTED-1) for various parts of the world. Essentially lists of three-dimensional co-ordinates on the earth's surface at



The Peruvian Army has received substantial help from US programs to surveil remote areas used by guerrillas. Here, troops hold people who lack proper identification.

MARIANA BAZOMIMPACT VISUALS

not only disclosing operational planning but also the potential to jeopardize or significantly interfere with military or intelligence operations.”³⁵

The government is caught in a bind: Unless maps and images are digitized, they cannot be woven into a seamless imagery system; but in that form they are more vulnerable to theft and sabotage. Predictably, everybody from hackers to spies is breaking into military computers via the Internet, once an exclusively military network. Last June, the General Accounting Office estimated more than 250,000 attempts in 1995 alone; 65 percent were successful. The DoD and CIA have launched major initiatives to develop defenses against such “cyberwar.”³⁶ In 1995, a teenager in England tapped into a computer at Griffiss Air Force Base in Rome, New York, where the CIO's Bosnian images were assembled.

Concerns about information leakage have not prompted security officials to

35. Quoted in Jan. 5, 1994 letter from Capt. L.W. Urbik (chief of staff, DMA) to Schlosser Geographic Systems to deny appeal of FOIA request 930123.

36. See the series of articles in *Signal*, 50:9-10 (May and June 1996); Roger C. Molander, et al., *Strategic Information Warfare: A New Face of War* (RAND publication MR 661, 1996); and Tom Weiner, “CIA Director Plans Center to Protect Federal Computer Networks,” *New York Times*, June 26, 1996.

slow their race for a national imagery system. “Information supremacy may well define the US as a superpower,” noted former NRO director Jeffrey Harris. “Winning wars in the information age, with US forces potentially stretched thin, will be possible because we control critical information.”³⁷

For people around the world, however, the Pentagon's ability to patrol their land from afar and to make war on them from a safe distance is a chilling prospect. US efforts such as NIMA to fuse a system of all-source intelligence data will no doubt continue to be cloaked as initiatives for peacekeeping, environmental monitoring, scientific research and the like, but it is sobering to realize that its prime use will be to reinforce the domination of peoples and resources on a global scale. ■

37. Speech at Rochester Institute of Technology, Oct. 23, 1995.

For people around the world, the Pentagon's ability to patrol their land from afar and to make war on them from a safe distance is a chilling prospect.

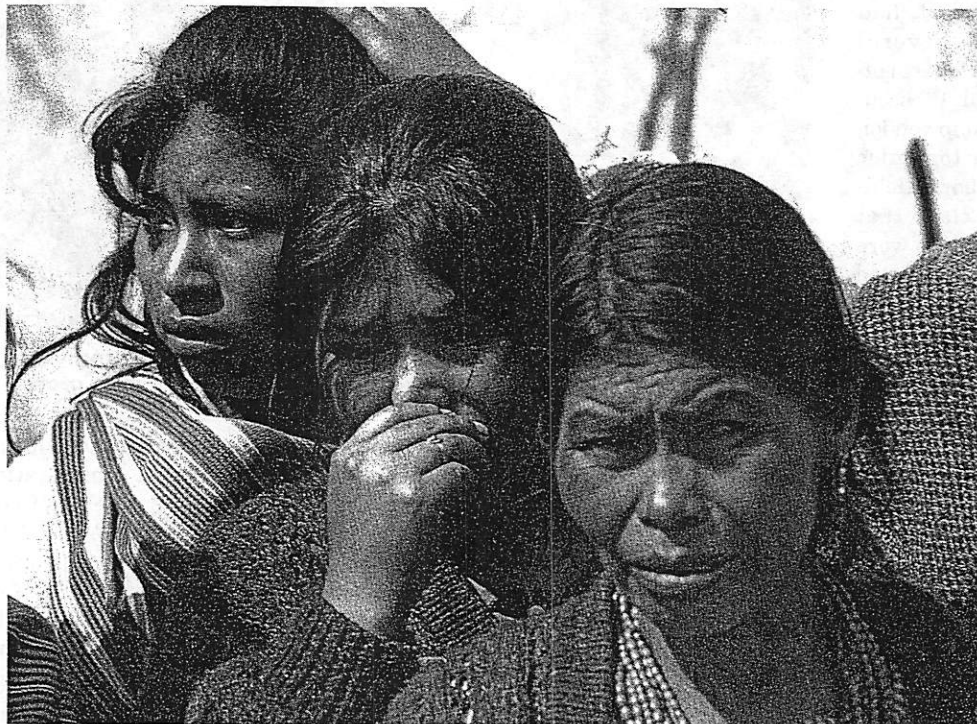
94-meter intervals, the information is used in cruise missile guidance systems and other sensitive military applications. DoD argues that DTED-1 could give foreign armies an offensive military capability, and that its coverage areas alone could reveal priorities of US or allied military forces. In 1993, the Joint Chiefs of Staff rebuffed a Freedom of Information Act request for DTED-1. They wrote that its release “has the potential of

33. *Preparing for the 21st Century*, op. cit.

34. The grad student pled guilty and was given probation; the university was slapped with tighter security rules. (Interviews with Lew Kidder, an Ann Arbor attorney familiar with the case, Nov. 1995 and Sept. 1996.)

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Mexico Practices What School of the Americas Teaches



JUAN CARLOS ROJAS/IMPACT VISUALS

by Darrin Wood

Mexican generals implicated in serious human rights violations studied at the School of the Americas while the institution was routinely teaching torture techniques.

The US Army's School of the Americas (SOA) has never had much good press, but recently its reputation went into a tailspin. It all began with an item in the June 28, 1996 Intelligence Oversight Board's "Report on the Guatemala Review":

Congress was also notified of the 1991 discovery by DoD [Department of Defense] that the School of the Americas and Southern Command

Darrin Wood is a freelance journalist and filmmaker based in Spain who has written for the *Madrid Daily*, *El Mundo*, and the Basque newspaper *Egin*.

Photo: Women crying over the deaths of their sons in battles between the EZLN and the Mexican army, 1994.

had used improper instruction materials in training Latin American officers, including Guatemalans, from 1982 to 1991. These materials never received proper DoD review, and certain passages appeared to condone (or could have been interpreted to condone) practices such as executions of guerrillas, extortion, physical abuse, coercion, and false imprisonment. On discovery of the error, DoD replaced and modified the materials, and instructed its representatives in the affected countries to retrieve all copies of the materials from their foreign coun-

terparts and to explain that some of the contents violated US policy.¹

Such practices in any case, the Pentagon assured, did not represent US government policy, and all instruction in torture, murder, and mayhem had been discontinued in 1991.²

The government admission that the manuals did in fact exist and had condoned torture was made under pres-

1. Intelligence Oversight Board (Anthony S. Harrington, Chair), "Report on the Guatemala Review," June 28, 1996, < <http://www.us.net/cip/> >.

2. Dana Priest, "U.S. Instructed Latins On Executions, Torture Manuals Used 1982-91, Pentagon Reveals," *Washington Post*, Sept. 21, 1996, p. A1.

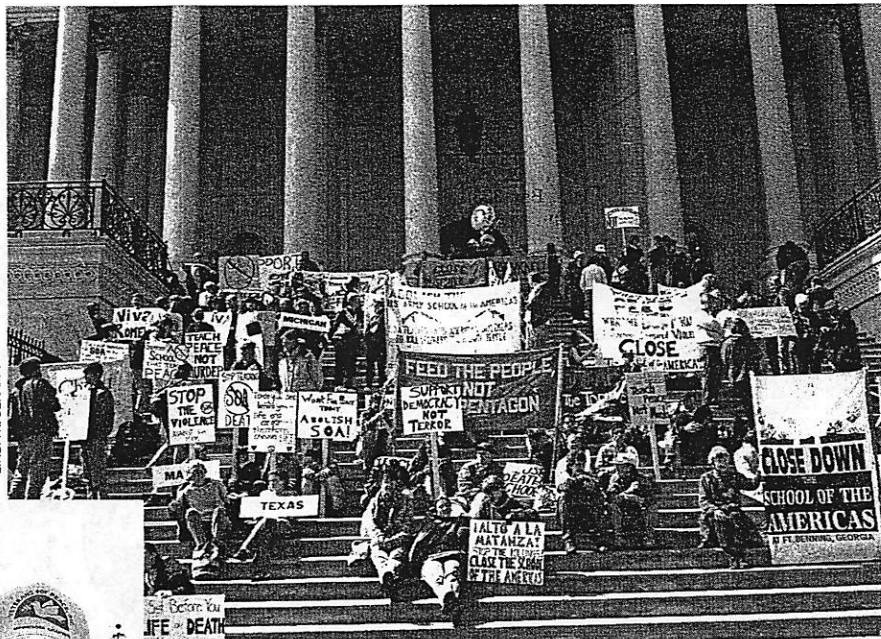
sure. Despite numerous first-hand sighting, no one had managed to hold onto a copy until one made its way to Congress member Joseph Kennedy. When the Pentagon learned that the Massachusetts Democrat had the hard evidence, it tried to beat him to the punch and release the excerpts. The seven manuals — nearly 1,200 pages in the original Spanish — recommended using “fear, payment of bounties for enemy dead, beatings, false imprisonment, executions, and truth serum.” The chilling text forever disproved the School’s claims that the Noriegas, Banzers, and D’Aubuissons who came out of SOA were just a few “bad apples.” Rather, they were the bad seeds that SOA — acting as “Johnny Rotten-Appleseed” — had planted in the fertile ground of Latin American dictatorships.

SOA public affairs officer Maj. Gordon Martell was left hanging out to dry by the change in the official line. He had admitted that some SOA grads were guilty of abuses but had downplayed the impact. “Out of 59,000 students who have graduated from a variety of programs, less than 300 have been cited for human rights violations like torture and murder, and less than 50 have been convicted of anything.” In fact, the low number had more to do with the level of impunity in Latin America than any failure of the students to master their lessons. And up until the end, the hapless Martell was denying that the manuals contained anything untoward. “All of the manuals used by the School of the Americas are approved by the Army, and the school has never done those things, ever, in its history.”³

Torture, Lies, and Videotape

Two people who had been on the trail of the manuals were Robert Richter, whose 1995 film, *School of Assassins*, was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Short Documentary, and Roy Bourgeois, a Maryknoll priest who had long opposed the school. After reading

3. Virginia Anderson, “U.S. report criticizes School of the Americas,” *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, July 4, 1996, p. 11E.



LINDA K. SERAFIN



RICK REINHARD

Roy Bourgeois (l.) was part of a 1994 protest at the US capitol demanding that the “School of Assassins” be shut down.

an article in *CAQ* that reported the existence of the manuals, they traveled to Paraguay. (The article had linked the manuals to serious human rights abuses performed under Operation Condor and documented that they taught torturers how to keep prisoners alive during sessions using electric shock).⁴ In Asunción, Bourgeois and Richter met with Martín Almada, the activist and torture victim who had told *CAQ* of seeing the manuals and of having experienced their lessons first hand. Although the two did not find the instructional material, which had disappeared from the archive where it was catalogued, they ferreted out former SOA students who were now willing to talk. In Richter’s updated version of the documentary, one of those former students revealed some of his “unconventional training”:

Mr. X: “The difference between the conventional and the unconventional training is that we were trained to torture human beings. They would use people from the streets of Panama, because they would bring them into the base and the experts would train us on how to obtain that information through torture. And there were several ways of doing it. There was the psychological torture and there was of course the physical torture.”

4. Stella Calloni, “The Horror Archives of Operation Condor,” *CAQ*, Fall 1994.

Bourgeois: “Are you saying that ordinary citizens were brought to the School of the Americas and used as human guinea pigs for torture?”

Mr. X: “Some of them were blindfolded and they were stripped and put in a certain situation, I mean setting, where they were tortured. At the time they had a medical physician, a US medical physician which I remember very well, who was dressed in green fatigues, who would teach the students in the nerve endings in the body, he would show them where to torture, where you wouldn’t kill the individual. He would tell them how much the heart can tolerate, can hold up. And there were also times where they would revive the person with a powerful drug. When the person was [near death], the doctor will tell you this is enough, you can’t go on anymore because this man will die. So it’s very simple. If he hasn’t talked yet, then you’ve got to stop because otherwise, he’ll be dead.”⁵

Richter also talked with José Valle, an SOA graduate and ex-member of the US-backed Honduran death squad Battalion 3-16. “They told us we could respect human rights, that it was not necessary to beat the prisoners,” he said. “But that was in the classroom. The problem was that in the actual situation the interrogators were told that they had to get the information out of the people in any way possible.”

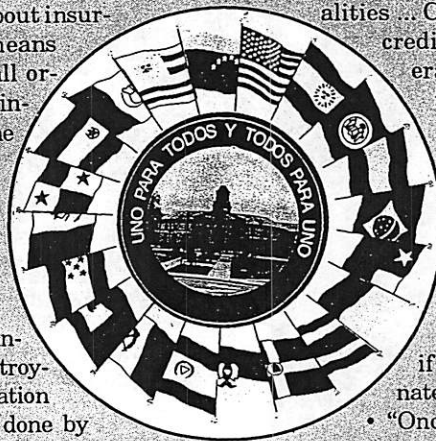
5. Robert Richter, *Inside the School of Assassins* (video), 1996. This award-winning video is available through Richter Productions, (tel.) 212-947-1395.

Lesson Plans for Torture

The following are translations made directly from Spanish-language manuals obtained from DoD, by the National Security Archives.

- "The government can quickly find out about insurgent activity in these organizations by means of the distribution of its employees in all organizations that are suspected of being of interest to the insurgent group. Among the main organizations of this type, one may mention the political parties, unions, and youth and student groups." ("Manejo de fuente," p. 7; excerpt not included in DoD Fact Sheet).

- "The CI [Counter Intelligence] agent can increase the value of the employee by destroying the structure of the guerrilla organization surrounding said employee. This can be done by means of arrests, executions or raids, taking care not to expose the employee as the source of information." ("Manejo de fuente," p. 80, part of which was included in DoD Fact Sheet).



- "Determine the method to neutralize personalities. ... Place the identity of the Target on the Black, Gray or White lists. ... Carry out psychological operations against personalities ... Carry out propaganda operations to discredit the target. ... Carry out deception operations. Neutralization by means of deception may employ false information to confuse the target." ("Contrainteligencia," pp. 242-43; excerpt not included in DoD Fact Sheet).

The English manuals promoted the following tactics:

- "A deserter could be more or less certain that there will be no reprisals against him if all other members of his cell are eliminated by government security forces."
- "Once a security agent of the guerrilla organization has been identified, he could be forced or induced to abandon his cause without abandoning his position or he could be neutralized." ■

Based on interviews, Richter believes that the torture manuals — in use for seven years at Fort Benning — were used prior to 1982 and formed the basis for daily lesson plans at SOA.

The SOA "Redefines" Itself

The increased public attention on the School of the Americas in the past few years has forced the School to scramble to justify its multi-million dollar budget and to fabricate a revisionist interpretation of its goals and curriculum. A recent article in the Spanish language edition of *Military Review* tries, without admitting past flaws, to "redefine" SOA's mission as the promotion of democratic principles and human rights in the hemisphere. "[...T]he School of the Americas has more possibilities than ever at this time to contribute to those causes that are so important for its adversaries, even though they might not be convinced of it without first abandoning the notion that any use of military force in Latin America is inevitably wrong. ..." The article, according to its author, Army Lt. Col. Geoffrey B. Demarest, "is not directed to the enemies of the School nor does it offer any apology for what occurred in the past." An SOA graduate and an ex-assistant military attache at

the US Embassy in Guatemala, he has good reason to know what he is not apologizing for.

Demarest does acknowledge that SOA's makeover will not be easy because the concept of human rights "can be difficult for many Latin American officers, since many of them consider that that term has been employed in a propagandistic and damaging way for some legitimate uses of military force." And Demarest admits that the issue of human rights has been used for political expediency. "It is possible," he writes, "that the emphasis put on the subject of human rights has been a response to the School's critics, who have shown to be hardly convinced of its merit based on its role during the Cold War. With the end of said conflict, and in spite of the increased emphasis that the instruction in human rights receives, the School is still criticized because its fundamental concepts appear to be obsolete."

SOA vs. EZLN

Although the school is currently deep into a PR campaign to paint a smiley face on a death's head, those "fundamental concepts" still include the use of force to maintain the US "backyard" and to back the political and financial fortunes of those leaders who play ball

in it. The role of SOA graduates in Mexico is a case in point. From 1953 to 1992, almost 500 Mexican military officers have received training at the SOA. Since the 1994 Zapatista uprising in Chiapas, Mexico has taken the lead in the number of Latin American military personnel receiving US military training. With millions of dollars in US military aid and training, Mexico has undergone a massive militarization in the past few years. To top it off, Bill Clinton and the Pentagon recently unveiled a plan to spend an additional \$48 million on helicopters and training to shore up the Zedillo regime.⁶

While it is impossible to know how many US-trained officers are participating in counterinsurgency operations, some evidence can be gleaned by checking SOA enrollment lists against press reports of military operations. The headquarters of the Mexican Army's 31st Military Zone, located at Rancho Nuevo near San Cristóbal de Las Casas in Chiapas, had a kind of SOA class reunion feel to it when Zapatistas rose up in arms on December 31, 1993. Three of the army generals there — Gaston Menchaca Arias, commander

6. "Anuncia Clinton envío de equipo militar a México y otros países de AL," *La Jornada* (Mexico D.F.), Sept. 25, 1995.

of the Military Zone, Miguel Leyva García, and Enrique Alonso Garrido — were all SOA alumni. Menchaca Arias and Leyva García had been classmates at the SOA back in 1971.

However, Gen. Menchaca, who as a captain in 1971 when he studied “irregular warfare” at SOA, probably won’t be the school’s poster boy for military expertise. As the Zapatista Army was taking control of San Cristóbal in the early morning hours of January 1, 1994, Concepción Villafuerte of the San Cristóbal newspaper *El Tiempo*, called the Commander at 1:45 am to ask him why there were so many armed people in the town. The US-trained specialist replied: “I don’t know. Aren’t they just people celebrating New Year’s?”

As the fighting continued in early January of 1994, another SOA grad, Gen. Juan López Ortiz, was sent into Chiapas with troops under his command from the states of Campeche and Tabasco. In a 1994 interview with the Mexican magazine *Impacto*, this SOA grad called the EZLN “very criminal people [who] dare to call themselves an army while they send people to their deaths, armed with wooden rifles; when they use innocent people as human shields and they cover their faces with ski masks.”⁷ López Ortiz had first made a name for himself in 1974 fighting the Partido de los Pobres (Party of the Poor) in the mountains of the Mexican state of Guerrero. That infamous campaign left hundreds of peasants “disappeared.” In 1994, the troops he commanded in the town of Ocosingo massacred suspected Zapatistas in the town’s market; the prisoners’ hands were tied behind their backs before the soldiers shot them in the back of the head.⁸

The February 1995 invasion by the Mexican army of territory controlled by the EZLN brought another SOA grad onto the scene. Gen. Manuel García Ruiz (SOA Class of 1980 — the same year and course as Gen. Garrido), boasted to journalists of the army’s “humanitarian” work in the aftermath of the invasion of the Lacandona jungle.⁹ According to the Mexican news weekly *Proceso*: “Brigadier Gen. Manuel Gar-

January 5, 1994: Mexican army troops (r.) secure the streets of Ocosingo after two days of fighting with the Zapatistas. A few days before, the troops, under SOA-trained Gen. Juan López Ortiz, executed suspected guerrillas with a shot to the head and hands tied behind their backs. In 1974, López Ortiz had led an infamous campaign in which hundreds of peasants were “disappeared.”



DAVID MAUNG/IMPACT VISUALS



cía Ruiz, with a diploma from the General Staff, was ordered to occupy Nuevo Momon, one of the Zapatista strongholds; on Friday, February 10, Lieut. Col. Hugo Manterola was killed in circumstances that still haven’t been cleared up.” Testimony compiled by the press states that there was an exchange of gunfire, which lasted approximately 10 minutes, between government and Zapatista soldiers. Gen. García Ruiz’s official version, however, denies that a confrontation occurred and claims that Manterola was the victim of a sniper.

Chiapas has also reportedly suffered the presence of a group of mercenaries from Argentina who were sent to the infamous 31st Military Zone in July of 1994 to help the Mexican Army perfect its counterinsurgency tactics. These same Argentines have worked for the CIA in the past in training US-backed death squads in Honduras

led by SOA graduate Gen. Gustavo Alvarez Martínez.¹⁰

SOA vs. EPR

On June 28, a new guerrilla organization calling itself the EPR (Ejército Popular Revolucionario — Popular Revolutionary Army) appeared in Guerrero during a memorial service for 17 peasants murdered by police in Aguas Blancas the previous year. In August, the EPR carried out coordinated

10. Dauno Totoro Taulis, “Especialistas de la muerte,” *Madres de Plaza de Mayo* (Argentina), Aug. 1995, pp. 16-17.

7. Carlos Acosta, “Riviello defiende a la Institución y contrataca: Hay quienes quisieran distanciarnos del pueblo; imposible, somos uno y lo mismo!” *Proceso* (Mexico.), Feb. 14, 1994, p. 12.

8. Carlos Tello Díaz, *Chiapas: La rebelión de las cañadas* (Madrid: Acento Editorial, 1995), p. 29.

9. Interview with García Ruiz, “Informe Semanal,” Feb. 25, 1995, TVE (Spain’s government-run television network).

attacks throughout Mexico. In their pursuit were SOA graduates in the states of Chihuahua, Guanajuato, Guerrero, Jalisco, Michoacán, Morelos, Oaxaca, Tamaulipas, and Yucatán. Some SOA grads who were stationed in Chiapas and are now involved in anti-EPR operations are generals Menchaca Arias, García Ruiz, and Juan López Ortiz.

With US-trained troops or weapons on the ground almost everywhere, US Ambassador to Mexico James Jones was coy about Washington's role. After the EPR's attacks in August, he said that although Mexico still hadn't directly asked for support from its friendly northern neighbor, the US would be more than willing to offer help and expertise in combatting the new guerrillas. Mexico has yet to publicly accept that goodwill. But so far, military aid to Mexico, mostly under the guise of anti-drug campaigns, has led to many "gifts" of helicopters and airplanes.¹¹

Predictably, the militarization of Mexico, which was occurring before the appearance of the EPR, has been accompanied by an increase in the number of reported human rights abuses. Nowhere has that link been more prominent than in the long suffering state of Guerrero, whose 9th Military Region contains two military zones, the 27th, located in the tourist resort town of Acapulco, and the 35th, located in the town of Chilpancingo.¹² From the June 1995 peasant massacre by police, to the recent allegations of the

rape of 12 indigenous women by the army, Guerrero had more than its share of brutality — and of School of the Americas graduates.

In a report on the 1995 Aguas Blancas massacre, *Proceso* noted that five weeks after the atrocity, Gen. Adrian

safely transferred, the possible role of the military in the ambush has remained unexamined. This omission is particularly troublesome in light of the statement by retired US Army Col. Rex Applegate that "[Mexican] army zone commanders generally work closely with state officials ..."¹⁴

The current commander of the 9th Military Region located in Acapulco is Gen. Edmundo Elpidio Leyva Galindo. During a search mission for the EPR in September, which he reportedly headed, one of his troops thought he saw some masked men running in an open field. Using a reporter's cellular phone the general ordered, "Shoot them, kill them ..."¹⁵ Leyva Galindo not only is a graduate of the School of the Americas, but was there for the same years and for courses as Maldonado Ramírez.¹⁶

Leyva Galindo and Maldonado aren't the only former SOA classmates involved in the Mexican Army's pursuit of the EPR. Gen. Renato García González, the current commander of the 27th Military Zone in Aca-

pulco, trained at the School of the Americas in 1980 along with Gen. Rubén Rivas Peña, the commander of the 28th Military Zone, located in the neighboring state of Oaxaca. Both coincided with the previously mentioned Gens. Enrique Garrido and Manuel García Ruiz. Oddly enough, the states of Guerrero and Oaxaca were the sites of the EPR's strongest attacks on August 28, 1996.¹⁷



The poverty and militarization that mark Central America are exacerbated by US policies that aid the army and corporations while undercutting small farms and businesses. Here, girls and bombs in Honduras.

SUZANNE MARSHALL/IMPACT VISUALS

Maldonado Ramírez was relieved as the commander of the 35th Military Zone, which is in the same military region in which the atrocities took place.¹³ In 1978 and 1979, Maldonado Ramírez had studied "Joint Operations — Latin America" at SOA. So far, the scandal surrounding the government ambush of the unarmed civilians has resulted in the prosecution of the police officers who pulled the triggers and the resignation of Gov. Rubén Figueroa. With Maldonado Ramírez

13. Amnesty International has sent out 60 Urgent Appeals concerning human rights violations in Mexico between January and October 1996 — a record number for Latin America. (Anne Marie Mergier, "Alarmadas por la impunidad y las violaciones a los derechos humanos en México, Amnistía Internacional y Human Rights Watch alertaron a Europa," *Proceso*, Oct. 20, 1996. Ignacio Ramírez, "Una recomendación de la CNDH sobre la matanza de Aguas Blancas, sería como las llamadas a misa," *Proceso* (Mexico), Aug. 14, 1995, p. 44.

14. Col. Rex Applegate (ret.), "Time Bomb on the U.S. Border: Mexican Military Unable to Counter Insurgency," posted to "Chiapas-L," Nov. 29, 1995.

15. "Por el Terrorismo, Vigilancia en Todas las Instalaciones Gubernamentales y Estratégicas: Continúa la Alerta en Guerrero por los Enfrentamientos con el EPR," *Excelsior* (Mexico), Sept. 5, 1996.

16. *Ibid.*

17. Salvador Corro, "En una sangrienta noche de terror, las fuerzas del EPR destruyeron el mito de la pantomima," *Proceso*, Sept. 1, 1996.

11. Reuters, "US Offers to Help Mexico Fight Guerrillas," Sept. 11, 1996.

12. Mexico is divided into 12 military regions which contain a total of 39 military zones. Most Mexican states hold only one Zone; however, states such as Tabasco and Guerrero hold two, while Chiapas is the only state to hold three military zones. (Jesús Aranda, "No habrá más tropas en Ocosingo con la nueva zona militar: fuentes oficiales," *La Jornada*, Dec. 19, 1995).

Counterinsurgency With a Human Face

The latest disclosures about the School of the Americas have revived calls to shut it down — sort of. Activists have backed Rep. Joseph Kennedy's (D-Mass.) proposed house bill, HR 2652, which would "close the United States Army School of the Americas and establish a United States Academy for Democracy and Civil-Military Relations."

A closer look at HR 2652 doesn't leave much hope for Latin Americans. Under its new, blandly cheery name, the "Academy" would eliminate combat training with live ammunition and emphasize "human rights" and civilian control of the military. But, as a former SOA instructor wrote: "The military skills required to oppress indigenous populations were finely honed long before most Latin American faculty members and students were flown in at U.S. government expense for their vacations in Columbus [Georgia]." The Kennedy bill does not, however, ban such training at other institutions currently run by the US military.

The bill's supporters should probably also scrutinize the concept of "Civil-Military" relations. According to the US Army's Command and General Staff College Field Manual 100-20:

"Civil-military operations (CMO) include all military efforts to support host nation development, co-opt insurgent issues, gain support for the national government, and attain national objectives without combat. Successful CMOs reduce or eliminate the need for combat operations, especially when initiated early in the insurgency. They also help prepare the area of operations for combat forces, if they are required."¹⁸

With US-trained troops or weapons on the ground almost everywhere, the US ambassador to Mexico was coy about Washington's role.

If HR 2652 passes, it runs the risk of converting SOA into a way for the Pentagon to continue business as usual while giving the appearance that the system works, human rights are a priority, and the bloodstains have been cleaned off the chalkboards.

18. Field Manual 100-20 "Stability and Support Operations (SASO)," Chapt. 7, *The American Role in Foreign Internal Conflicts*, US Army Command and General Staff College, rev. final draft, estimated distribution date: June 1997

In the "First Declaration of the Selva Lacandona" from Mexico's Zapatista Army, the General Command of the EZLN called for "summary trials against the soldiers of the Mexican Federal Army and the political police who have received courses and have been advised, trained, or paid by foreigners ..."

While that scenario may seem exaggerated, nonetheless, there should be a full investigation of those parts of the curriculum that have been connected to human rights abuses. Those found responsible for these and other abuses should be exposed, tried, and punished. Then the program should be ended and all US training of foreign

militaries should cease. If that does not happen, the School of the Americas, or whatever name it goes by in the future, runs the danger of being, as Lt. Col. Demarest states in his article in *Military Review* "an even more useful organization in the post-Cold War world than it was during this conflict."

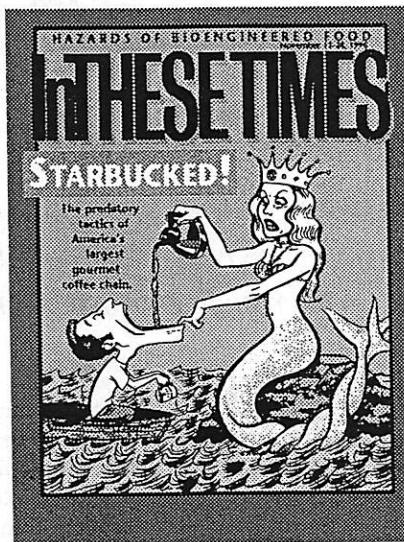
And that, given the role of the School of the Americas during those grim years, is a frightening concept. ■

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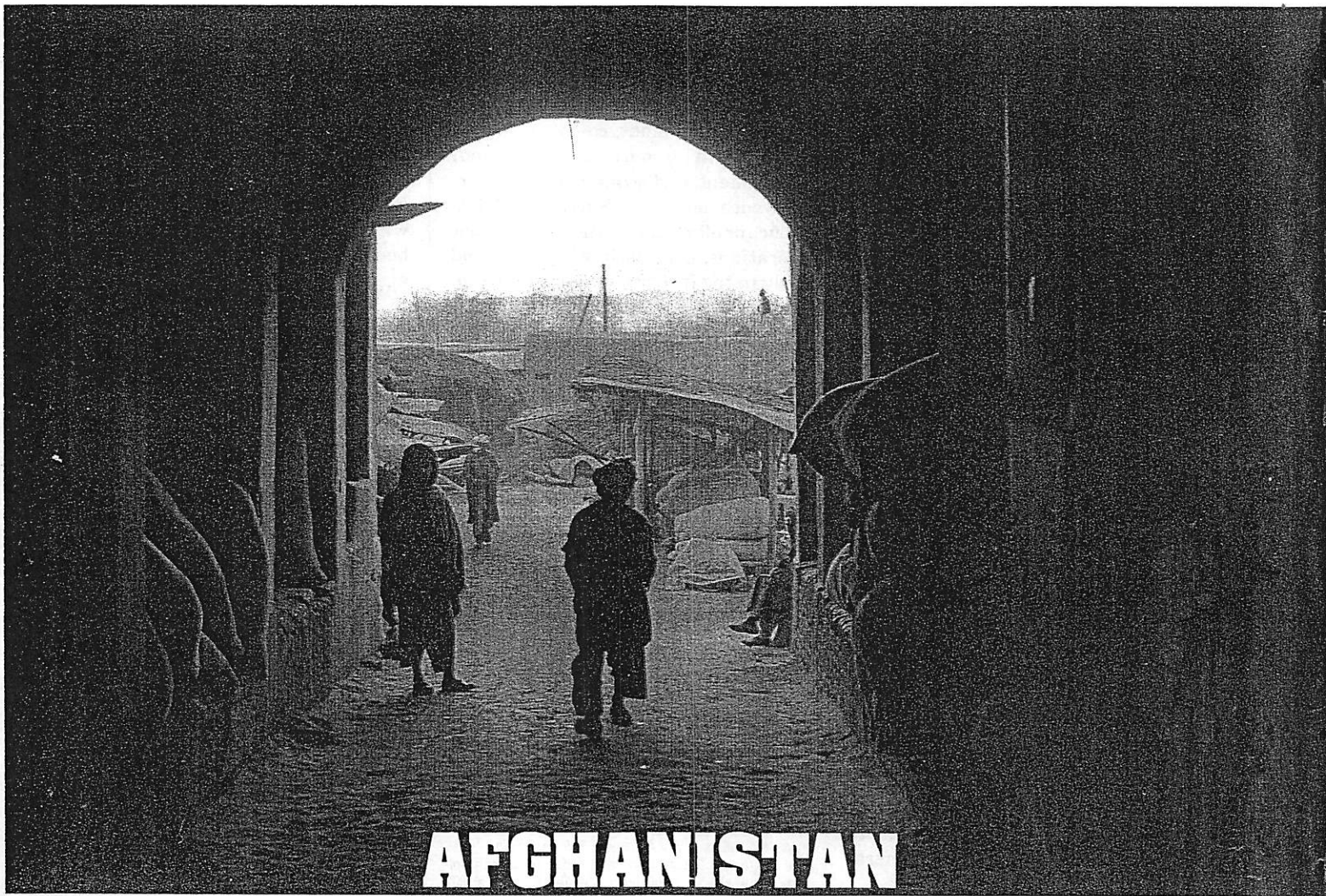
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AFGHANISTAN

The Great Game Continues

by Asad Ismi and Farhan Haq

The destabilization that the US fomented when it sought to overthrow the Soviet-backed government continues. Despite initial US hopes that the Taliban would restore order — no matter what the human cost — the region stubbornly remains unsafe for US interests.

The story of how the US and its regional ally, Pakistan, have courted triumph and disaster in Afghanistan through support of questionable leaders and dubious policies is yet another case study in how ill-conceived foreign policy and CIA meddling can bring ruin in the name of US interests.

On September 26, a new protagonist in the tale took center stage when mem-

Farhan Haq is UN correspondent for InterPress Service, a Third World News Agency. **Asad Ismi** is a research associate at Canada's Americas Policy Alternatives Center, based in Toronto. He has a Ph.D. in war studies from the University of London.

Photo: Kathleen Foster/Impact Visuals, Afghan market.

bers of the Islamist Taliban rebels forced their way into the United Nations compound in Kabul. For the past four years it had been home to Mohammed Najibullah, former communist president of Afghanistan, and his brother, Shahpur Amadzai. The rebels shot the brothers and hung their corpses, dollar bills stuffed in their mouths, from a tower, where the city's residents could see the fate of the nation's last Soviet-backed leader. The close of this latest chapter of Afghanistan's long war seemed to be scripted by the CIA: the Communists routed, the Islamic mujahedin in command.

The plot, however, has taken some disturbing twists. The Taliban (students), formed in 1994 in the *madrassas* (theological schools) of northern Pakistan, are not the anticommunist Islamic rebels to whom the CIA had funneled some \$5-6 billion between the Soviet invasion in 1979 and its withdrawal 10 years later.¹

When the Taliban launched their first assault on Afghanistan in October 1994 from a base in Pakistan, they were one more faction in the complex civil war. Two years later, they had seized

1. John Burns, "The West in Afghanistan, Before and After," *New York Times*, Feb. 18, 1996.

Kabul and most of the country and gained the upper hand against the main US-supported groups, Berhanuddin Rabbani's *Jamiat-i-Islami* (Islamic Society) and Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's *Hezb-i-Islami* (Islamic Party). These groups may yet beat back the Taliban (at the time of writing, they have begun to regain strategic territory around Kabul). But if the Taliban retain power, Washington will have a hard time justifying an alliance with the group: In the two-thirds of Afghanistan which have fallen under their control during the past two years, the Taliban have banned a variety of activities as un-Islamic, including television, music, most sports, and even kite-flying.² Their treatment of women has drawn almost universal condemnation, much of it from the Islamic world. The "students" have imposed fanatically extreme dress codes, banned women from working, and forbidden their education. "The worst fate befalls women in need of medical attention: Men are not allowed to treat them, but neither are women allowed to work in most clinics or hospitals."³

What role the US played in the rise of the Taliban is not yet clear, but on the day the rebels captured Kabul, State Department spokesperson Glyn Davies touted them as "the group that might finally bring stability to Afghanistan," and mildly labeled the execution of former President Najibullah "regrettable." Davies held out the possibility of re-establishing full diplomatic ties and expressed hope that "the new authorities in Kabul will move quickly to restore order and security and to form a representative interim government that can begin the process of reconciliation nationwide."⁴ This quick support led to speculation that the US had been aiding the Taliban all along. But even if that is not the case, Washington certainly contributed to the disorder and Islamist infighting that set the scene for the group's creation and quick success.⁵

2. Interviews with UN Under-Secretaries-General Marack Gouling and Chinmaya Garekhan and Afghan Deputy Foreign Minister Abdul Rahim Ghafoorzai, Sept. 24-30, 1996; Amnesty International report, "Afghanistan: Taliban Takes Hundreds of Civilians Prisoner," News Service 175/96.

3. Fred Halliday, "Kabul's Patriarchy With Guns," *The Nation*, Nov. 11, 1996, p. 20.

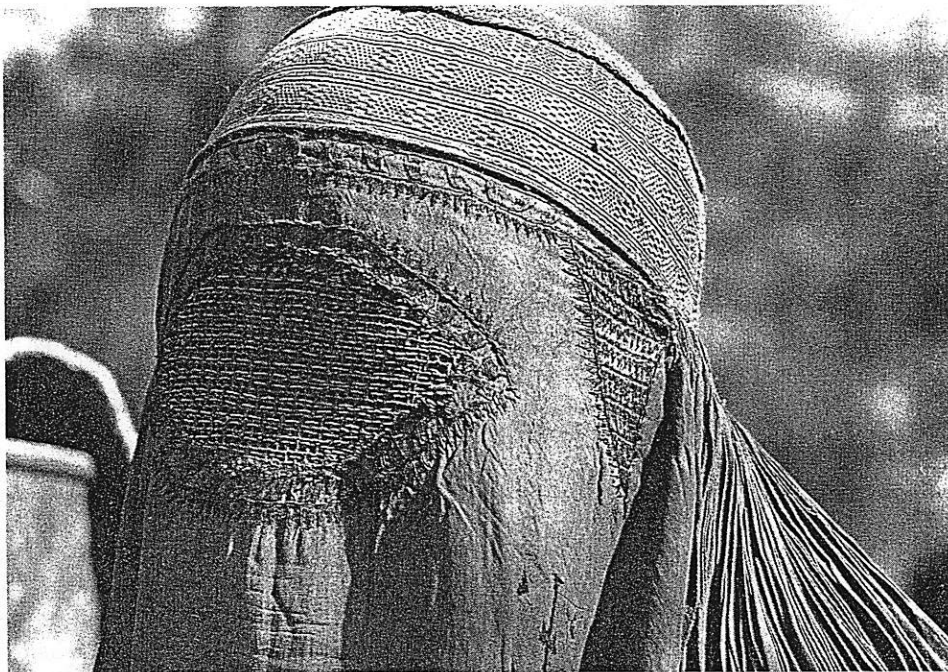
4. Elaine Sciolino, "State Dept. Becomes Cooler To the New Rulers of Kabul," *New York Times*, Oct. 23, 1996.

5. While many experts believe that US officials were surprised by the Taliban victories and largely ignorant of the "shadowy" group's composition, backing, and goals, others suspect that the US had a more active role, probably through Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

And, to a dramatic extent, the Taliban serve many of Washington's key strategic and economic policy goals in the Central Asian region. The US hoped that by keeping Teheran's Shi'ite rulers on edge, the Taliban's anti-Shi'a tenets (part of their strict Hanafi brand of Sunni orthodoxy) would further the US policy of containing Iran. The Taliban also showed early cooperation by shutting down one of the terrorist training camps against which Washington had railed. The US also hoped the Taliban would impose the kind of stability that

in late September that a friendly Taliban government would ensure the venture's feasibility and security — a crucial dividend for Washington, which wishes to prevent the creation of a similar pipeline proposed by Pakistan and Iran.⁷ Indeed, this may have been the largest single factor behind Washington's cautious acceptance of the nascent Taliban state.

Within a few weeks, however, as Afghanistan slipped back into civil war, the US was backing away from its early support. Even the *New York Times*



KATHLEEN FOSTER/IMPACT VISUALS

The Taliban are forcing women to cover themselves from head to toe.

makes foreign investment and trade possible. The US would prefer warm ties with any government in Kabul which could assist its efforts to secure a multibillion dollar natural gas pipeline and an oil pipeline project involving the US firm Unocal and the Saudi group Delta Oil. The two companies have reached an agreement with the former Soviet republic Turkmenistan for the pipeline which would go through Afghanistan into Pakistan. It is projected to bring some \$300 million a year to the Afghan economy and net large profits for the energy companies. Uzbek leader Gen. Abdul Rashid Dostum held discussions with Unocal officials in Dallas last April on the portion of the pipeline that would pass through the northern territories under his control.⁶ It seemed

noted some interesting timing: "The shifting of the Administration's position coincided with a similar shift by the Unocal Corporation." Where the company had formerly been quoted as "very positive," Marty Miller, the Unocal vice president in charge of the project, now insisted that Unocal was "fanatically neutral when it comes to politics."⁸

Regional Power Shifts

If the US role in the Taliban's rise is veiled, those of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, Washington's closest allies and sometime surrogates in the region, were more overt. Of the UN's 185 members, Pakistan alone rushed to recognize the Tali-

Dostum Holds Talks on Kabul Peace Plan," *Dawn* (Karachi), April 12, 1996; and Asad Amin, "Unmade in Washington," *The Herald*, July 1996, pp. 136-37.

7. Amin, *op. cit.*

8. Sciolino, *op. cit.*

6. Interview with Selig S. Harrison, May 8, 1996; "General

The Great Prize

“As supplies from the Gulf begin to peter out next century, [oil supplies in Central Asia] will become highly significant. No one knows how much hydrocarbon wealth lies beneath central Asia's deserts, but most of the world's major oil companies are already prospecting there. ‘The deposits are huge,’ said a diplomat from the region. ‘Kazakhstan alone may have more oil than Saudi Arabia. Turkmenistan is already known to have the fifth largest gas reserves in the world.’

“A consortium including BP, Mobil, Shell, and Total has just completed what is thought to be the largest seismic study ever undertaken, in the Caspian Sea region of Kazakhstan, costing more than [\$22 million]. But there is an immense problem. The Central Asian republics are all land-locked and there is no way to get the oil and gas out. So a race has begun to find a route. There are three main contenders. Russia wants to tap into the mineral wealth of its former empire by pushing pipelines from its Black Sea terminal at Novorossiysk eastwards towards Kazakhstan. Iran, which dreams of being a powerful player in the region, talks of driving a pipeline from its coast at Chabahar via Mashad into Turkmenistan and beyond. Georgia, already at work on a pipeline crossing the Caucasus to tap the fields of Azerbaijan, thinks it could eventually be driven across or around the Caspian into Kazakhstan.

“But to Western, and especially American interests, none of these options look attractive. Georgia is too unstable, and the idea of allowing a Russian or Iranian hand to rest on the oil jugular is considered too dangerous. Hence the attractions of Afghanistan. Another pipeline route exists, and is already at a detailed planning stage. This pipeline, initially for gas, would begin in the Dauletabad field in central Turkmenistan, traverse Afghanistan along the Herat-Kandahar corridor, territory controlled by the Taliban, and exit into Pakistan.” ■

Christopher Lockwood, “Warring nation holds the key to oil riches of Central Asia,” *Daily Telegraph* (London), Oct. 11, 1996.

ban government.⁹ Between 1992 and 1996, the arms funneled to the mujahedin had paved the way for brutal combat among the *Hezb-i-Islami* and the *Jamiat-i-Islami*, and played perhaps the largest role in fueling early support for the Taliban. Indeed, as UN Undersecretary-General Marrack Goulding made clear after a visit to Afghanistan shortly before the Taliban seized Kabul, Hekmatyar's and Rabbani's continued divisiveness and defections by their war-weary troops played a major role in the Taliban's almost bloodless seizure of most of 21 of Afghanistan's 32 provinces.¹⁰ And Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency almost certainly helped arm and train the Taliban, in part to counter the drug smug-

When it looked like the Taliban could bring stability Unocal was “very positive,” but as the situation muddied, it became “fanatically neutral when it comes to politics.”

gling and weapons trade across its border fueled by the continuing conflict.¹¹ They also wanted to avoid a destabilization of Northern Pakistan which shares a Pathan population with Afghanistan. The Saudis, too, looked with favor on their fellow Sunni Muslims as a bulwark against Iran. The Saudis funded the *madrasses* — laying the original base for the formation of the Taliban in the 1990s — and continued to provide training bases, financial backing, and political support.¹²

By contrast, Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani was bluntly antagonistic to the Taliban's gains: “This is a disas-

9. The UN Security Council was similarly mild, condemning the assault on its compound in Kabul and “the brutal execution” of Najibullah, but refusing to rule in favor of Berhanuddin Rabbani's government or against the legitimacy of the Taliban-led State Council, as Afghan diplomats at the UN had sought. (Statement by Security Council President Alfonso Cabral, Sept. 28, 1996.)

10. Interview with Goulding, Sept. 27, 1996.

11. Fred Halliday, “The Ungreat Game,” *New Republic*, March 25, 1996, p. 38; Alexander Cockburn, “Beat the Devil,” *The Nation*, March 20, 1995, p. 373; John F. Burns, “Pakistan is Rethinking Its Support for an Afghan Muslim Group,” *New York Times*, March 27, 1996; Nicholas McAulay, “Karachi Kills Me,” *Index on Censorship*, May/June 1995, p. 11; Barnett Rubin, *The Search for Peace in Afghanistan: From Buffer State to Failed State* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1995), pp. 138-39.

12. “Afghanistan Is Fast Becoming the Centre of a Regional Proxy War,” APS Diplomatic News Service, Nov. 4, 1996.

ter, and we regret it.” Ayatollah Ali Khamenehi, Iran's chief cleric, explicitly blamed the group's victory on Tehran's nemesis, arguing, “The US support for this group ... is an attempt to confront the Islamic Republic of Iran.” Khamenehi claimed that Washington has been secretly aiding the Taliban, “whose knowledge of Islam is unknown.”¹³

Also worried, the Russian Foreign Ministry warned of “the danger that [the Taliban's victory] poses to the international community and its destabilizing effect on the situation in the region.”¹⁴ During his short tenure as national security adviser, Aleksandr Lebed put his warning in tough terms reminiscent of Soviet posturing during its own Afghan involvement: “If the Taliban, backed by Pakistan, reaches the border with Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, including the city of Bokhara [which] they want to annex, they will wipe away Russian border posts and see the road to the north free.”¹⁵ Likewise, officials in Tajikistan are understood to fear that the Taliban will back Tajiki fundamental-

ists although Rabbani has also aided those groups at times. Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, however, appear ambivalent: “The Turkmenians hope to export gas through western Afghanistan and keep the Taliban from interfering in their affairs; the Uzbeks have been exploring an alliance with Pakistan that would enable them to trade via Indian Ocean ports and so lessen their dependence on Russia.”¹⁶

“Fanatics Fight Better”

Although many of Afghanistan's neighbors have scrambled for access to the country's trade routes and potential wealth, Afghanistan's descent into extremism and factionalism owes much to US policy, which has encouraged precisely these tendencies since May 1979, seven months before the Soviet invasion. That is when John Joseph Reagan, CIA station chief in the Pakistani capital of Islamabad, met the Afghan mujahedin in

13. “Ayatollah Khomeini Lambasts Fratricide in Afghanistan as Non-Islamic Move,” Islamic Republic News Agency, Oct. 7, 1996.

14. Nasim Zehra, “The Rise and Rise of the Taleban,” Inter Press Service, Oct. 3, 1996.

15. John F. Burns, “Afghanistan Reels Back into View,” *New York Times*, Oct. 6, 1996, p. 3.

16. Halliday, “Kabul's Patriarchy ...,” *op. cit.*, pp. 20-21.

Peshawar, Pakistan, and agreed to supply them with arms.¹⁷ Zbigniew Brzezinski, US national security adviser to President Jimmy Carter, had urged the White House to "open a front of low intensity warfare" against the regime of President Nur Mohammed Taraki, which had taken power in a coup a year earlier.¹⁸ The mujahedin who met the CIA's Reagan were selected by the ISI and had been Pakistani intelligence assets since 1973 when King Zahir Shah was overthrown by Prime Minister Mohammed Daoud (later killed in the Communist coup). "It appears," wrote Noam Chomsky, "that the major guerrilla groups have been engaged in disruptive operations in Afghanistan since 1973, backed by Pakistan in an effort to destabilize the Afghan regime and to bring it to accept Pakistani border claims." Daoud's rise to power had sent a "wave of conservative and Islamic fundamentalist opposition into exile in Pakistan."¹⁹ In that wave was then-professor Rabbani, an ethnic Tajik who in 1977, from exile in Peshawar turned the Jamiat into an active resistance party. Also jockeying for power was Hekmatyar, an ethnic Pathan and



Factional fighting and shelling by the Taliban have destroyed most of Kabul, including this old man's neighborhood.

CIA favorite Hekmatyar used US aid not only to make war on the Soviets and often on other resistance groups, but to become Afghanistan's "leading drug lord."

hard-line Islamist who from the start feuded with other resistance leaders. One foreign observer described him as "dictatorship material at its worst."²⁰

17. Alfred W. McCoy, *The Politics of Heroin: CIA Complicity in the Global Drug Trade* (New York: Lawrence Hill Books, rev. ed., 1991), p. 451.

18. Lawrence Lifschultz, "Pakistan: The Empire of Heroin," in Alfred W. McCoy and Alan A. Block, eds, *War on Drugs: Studies in the Failure of US Narcotics Policy* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992), pp. 321-23.

19. Noam Chomsky, *Toward A New Cold War* (New York: Pantheon, 1982), pp. 93-94.

20. Edward R. Girardet, *Afghanistan: The Soviet War* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), pp. 168-70.

Although they won the early support of Pakistani Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who was wary of Daoud's efforts to seek self-determination for Pathans in Pakistan's Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP), the groups had little public support inside Afghanistan and "a negligible organization" before the Communist coup. What's more, their pan-Islamism did not fit well with the "Pashtun-centered Afghan nationalism" that Daoud's revolution helped to foster.²¹ But once the Soviets invaded on December 24, 1979, to counter Hafizullah Amin's September 16 ouster of Taraki, they installed Babrak Karmal as head of a Soviet-backed government. It was then that the

Pakistan-based resistance began to enjoy the full favors of US military support.

The leader most favored was Hekmatyar, whose *Hezb-i-Islami* was fiercely anti-Soviet. Hekmatyar also

21. Diego Cordovez and Selig S. Harrison, *Out of Afghanistan: The Inside Story of the Soviet Withdrawal* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 61-62, 163, 255; Ted Galen Carpenter, "The Unintended Consequences of Afghanistan," *World Policy Journal*, Spring 1994, p. 78; Kurt Lohbeck, *Holy War, Unholy Victory: Eyewitness to the CIA's Secret War in Afghanistan* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Gateway, 1993), p. 33; Lifschultz, *op. cit.*, p. 323.

was anti-US and had an unsavory reputation for betraying fellow resistance leaders. He was known for his violence dating back to college days, when he reportedly threw acid in the faces of unveiled female students. His fighters had bloody clashes with Jamiat forces dating back to December 1978, and reportedly attacked fellow mujahedin even during battle against the Soviets.²² But Hekmatyar was also a favorite of the ISI and Islamists in the Pakistani leadership. One of these was ISI Chief Hamid Gul, who sent Hekmatyar much of the US aid to fight the Soviets. From 1979-89, more than half of the \$5-6 billion in CIA aid to the mujahedin went to Hekmatyar.²³ He used that money not only to make war on the Soviets and often on other resistance groups, but also to become Afghanistan's "leading drug lord," earning hard currency through poppy cultivation in Helmand and Nangahar provinces.²⁴ Another recipient was Rabbani's key ally and fellow Tajik, Ahmed Shah Mas-

22. Halliday, *op. cit.*, p. 41; Lohbeck, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-63; Galen, *op. cit.*, p. 79; Lifschultz, *op. cit.*, p. 332; McCoy, *op. cit.*, p. 449; Girardet, *op. cit.*, pp. 170-71.

23. Burns, *op. cit.*

24. Lohbeck, *op. cit.*, pp. 9, 12, 125-26; McCoy, *op. cit.*, pp. 449-53, 459-60; Lifschultz, *op. cit.*, pp. 332-33; *United Nations International Drug Control Programme, Afghanistan Opium Poppy Survey 1996* (Vienna: UNDCP, 1996).



AP/WORLDWIDE PHOTOS

Well-armed Taliban fighters shortly after the capture of Kabul.

than to frighten the Arabs in the West."²⁹

Unholy Wars

The fate of such calculations, and of Hekmatyar's role as a "useful tool," took a turn for the worse after the Soviets withdrew in 1989, leaving Najibullah's trusted Communist secret police in charge. Although Washington and Moscow now both sought stability — albeit on their own terms — in Afghanistan, the mujahedin infighting intensified, particularly as the rebels extracted drug profits from Nangahar province, where about 80 percent of Afghanistan's poppy production takes place.³⁰ The trade in drugs and guns also began to hit Pakistan. There, smuggled rocket launchers started to be used in ethnic riots in Karachi while arms traders enjoyed brisk sales for Kalashnikovs and other automatic weapons

from the war zone. Although prohibited in Pakistan, some were even bought as presents for government officials.³¹

It was no secret to the United States that some of its main allies during the Soviet phase of the war were the chief beneficiaries of the drug trade. "The U.S. government has for several years

received, but declined to investigate, reports of heroin trafficking by some Afghan guerrillas and Pakistani military officers with whom it cooperates," the *Washington Post* reported after the Soviet pullout. Hekmatyar, in particular, was alleged by US officials to have been deeply involved in the narcotics traffic.³² Soon, fighting in the mujahedin-

held zones was focused as much on gaining control of the main heroin producing regions as on defeating Najibullah's faltering state. By 1995, opium production had risen to 2,200 tons a year, up from only 200 tons in 1978.³³

29. Rubin, *The Search for Peace in Afghanistan*, op. cit., p. 113; Carpenter, op. cit., p. 82.

30. "Next Stop Kabul?" *The Economist*, Sept. 21, 1996, p. 40.

31. Duncan, op. cit., p. 34.

32. Noam Chomsky, *Deterring Democracy* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1992), p. 118.

33. UNDCP, *Afghanistan Opium ...*, op. cit.

soud, who led one of the most successful holdouts against the Soviets from the strategic Panjshir valley.²⁵ He remains entrenched there as nominal defense minister in the nominal Rabbani government.

Pakistan's ISI took charge of the distribution of guns, money, and aid, mainly from the CIA and Saudi Arabia, and ensured that the more Islamist elements among the resistance got the plums of foreign assistance. The mujahedin's military committee would meet ISI teams to coordinate military operations, ensuring that Pakistani military intelligence "had tight control over the guerrillas: Those who did what they were told got more weapons."²⁶

From the start, the US was aware that its aid was fostering "a form of warlordism within the Afghan resistance command" and that the CIA-ISI strategy of rewarding some resistance factions at the expense of others was undermining any chance of developing a "credible" non-Communist leadership. In the early 1980s, Director of Central Intelligence William Casey justified CIA policy by insisting — contrary to available evidence — that Hekmatyar had the strongest fighting force. Similarly, a CIA

official in Pakistan explained that the US supported Hekmatyar because "fanatics fight better."²⁷ Washington continued to supply arms to Hekmatyar even after the Soviet withdrawal and after the 1989 statement by Robert Oakley, then US ambassador to Pakistan, that US aid to Hekmatyar had stopped completely.²⁸

Pakistan's ISI took charge of the distribution of guns, money, and aid, mainly from the CIA and Saudi Arabia, and ensured that the more Islamist elements among the resistance got the plums of foreign assistance.

Like the ISI, the CIA considered Hekmatyar "a useful tool for shaping the future of Central Asia," and Washington may also have found his Sunni militancy "an effective barrier" to any expansion of Shi'a Iran's influence in the region. As a US official said, "it is better for Iran to be concerned with Afghanistan to the east

27. Lifschultz, op. cit., p. 332; Cordovez and Harrison, op. cit., pp. 62-63; Barnett Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan* (New Haven: Yale University, 1995), pp. 198-201.

28. Lohbeck, op. cit., p. 10.

25. Girardet, op. cit., pp. 78-88.

26. Emma Duncan, *Breaking the Curfew: A Political Journey Through Pakistan* (London: Michael Joseph, 1989), p. 280.

Nor was the fallout limited to drugs and arms. Some 20 training camps teaching Islamist fighters such skills as demolitions sprang up in eastern Afghanistan, mainly in areas under *Hezb-i-Islami* control, and many of the participants in the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center claimed to have had combat experience with Hekmatyar's troops. Ramzi Ahmed Youssef, convicted recently in New York of plotting to blow up 11 US airliners over the Pacific, allegedly bragged of receiving training in terrorist tactics from such bases. Thus it became clear by 1994, five years after the Soviet withdrawal, that the so-called Afghan freedom fighters had turned their country into "a breeding ground for drugs and terrorism."³⁴

It was at this point that the Taliban entered the picture, a collection of theology students organized around the heavily Saudi-funded *madrassas* in northern Pakistan, headed by a virtually unknown leadership with a vague political ideology. Although committed to hard-line Islamic tenets, the students' political goals ranged from support for the restoration of ousted King Zahir Shah, a Pathan, to halting the drug trade, to the fulsome appreciation of Pakistan.³⁵

By March 1995, the guerrilla force had assembled a troop strength of some 25,000 and had reached the outskirts of Kabul, where Massoud's 30,000 troops, backed by artillery and jets, pushed them back. The ensuing stalemate brought months of inconclusive but brutal shelling, arduous sieges, and finally, in September 1996, the seizure of the capital and the nearby city of Jalalabad. Over that period, defections by weary fighters from the *Hezb-i-Islami* and *Jamiat-i-Islami* allowed the Taliban to capture several key provinces with a minimum of fighting.³⁶ In the areas under its control, the Taliban proved to be as ruthless in its rule as the mujahedin factions it supplanted.

In the 19th century Rudyard Kipling called the imperial struggle between Britain and Russia for control in Cen-

tral Asia "the Great Game." And just as Afghanistan was the pawn then, it continues to be manipulated and fought over by a variety of interests. The Taliban's ascension — and the implied advantage it would give to Pakistan, especially — has set up a new round.

The Great Game, Updated

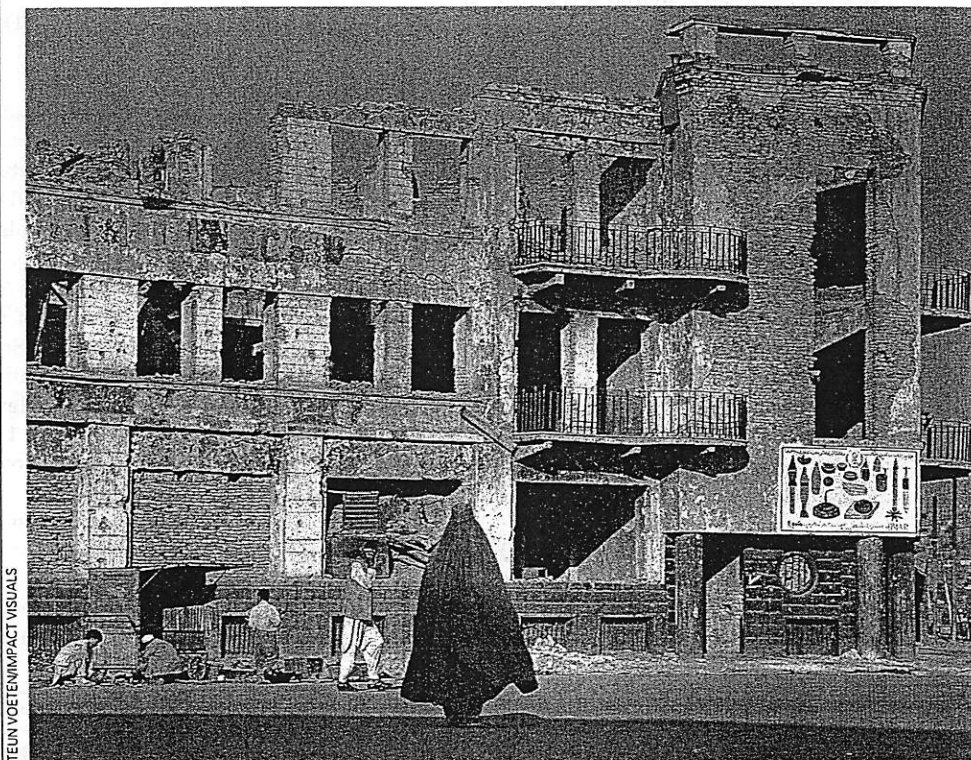
Today, Afghanistan is the subject of the machinations of at least six nations in the region — Iran, Pakistan, India, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Russia — as well as the continuing influence of the mujahedin's two main outside patrons, Saudi Arabia and the United States. The leader in the pro-Taliban camp is Pakistan, which seeks stability along its northwestern border, and a lessening of the flow of drugs and guns which has turned its Northwest Frontier Province into a major heroin transshipment point and Karachi into a virtual free-fire zone. The control of Afghanistan's major trade routes by the Taliban offers Pakistan an additional benefit: a potential land route from the Pakistani city of Quetta to Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, two former Soviet republics eager to export the cotton which Pakistan's textile mills often lack.³⁷

37. Dilip Hiro, "What's in Store for Region after Taleban Win?" *InterPress Service*, Sept. 30, 1996.

Along with Saudi Arabia, Pakistan also looks forward to a nation ruled by Sunni Islamists who have received training from both nations — and whose Pathan ethnicity, shared with northwest Pakistan, is expected to ease tensions and increase trade.

The anti-Taliban camp includes nations such as India, which wants to see Pakistan's regional ambitions contained, and those which, like Tajikistan, fear the Afghan Islamists will spread their radical religious views to their largely secular neighbors. Tajikistan also backed Rabbani, an ethnic Tajik who took a moderate line on supporting Afghanistan-based Tajikistani Islamists seeking to overthrow the secular post-Communist government in Dushanbe. Following Rabbani's flight from Kabul, however, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan united behind Uzbek warlord and former Communist general Abdul Rashid Dostum, albeit offering him varying degrees of support. Dostum was friendly to the Taliban as recently as this spring and was seeking better relations with Pakistan and the US.³⁸ But by mid-October, after two years of enmity, Dostum had partnered with Ahmad Shah

38. *Ibid*; Zehra, *op. cit.*; interview with Gen. Abdul Rashid Dostum in New York, April 16, 1996.



A veiled woman walks through the ruined city of Kabul.

34. Tim Weiner, "Blowback from the Afghan Battlefield," *New York Times Magazine*, March 13, 1994, p. 53; and Burns, "Afghanistan Reels...," *op. cit.*, p. 3.

35. Interviews with the Taliban's supporters in Tor Kham and Landi Kotal, Pakistan, Aug. 4, 5, 1994.

36. Ahmed Rashid, "Afghanistan: Apocalypse Now," *The Herald*, Oct. 1995, p. 29; Robert D. Kaplan, "A Bazaar's World," *Atlantic Monthly*, March 1996, p. 27; and "Brutal Winter," *The Economist*, Dec. 16, 1995, p. 35.

Massoud in a concerted counteroffensive against the Taliban, which he blamed for the failure of cease-fire talks brokered by Pakistan and the UN.³⁹

Iran's case is more complex: its Shi'a ally in Afghanistan, the *Hezb-i-Wahdat*, was routed by Rabbani and then forced to surrender to the Taliban outside Kabul. The leader of the Shi'a group, Ali Mazari, "died under suspicious circumstances while in the custody of the Taliban and the Shi'a believe that Mazari was killed by his captors."⁴⁰ Iran has subsequently backed Rabbani, whose followers speak Farsi as Iranians do, while the Taliban speak Pashto; yet none of the Sunni Islamist leaders offers much advantage to Teheran's aims to expand its regional influence at present. With Hekmatyar all but defunct as a military asset — his fighters joined with Rabbani over the summer, but did little to stop the Taliban's advance — Massoud and Dostum have gained the bulk of support from the Central Asian and Russian governments.

The US, on the other hand, is still keeping its options open, much as it has done ever since the Soviets withdrew, leaving Washington in a bind over which of its assembly of warlords would best serve US interests. In one of the State Council's first statements after the capture of Kabul, the Taliban vowed to combat terrorism, and it has already closed one of the training camps near the Pakistani border. The US is less optimistic that the Taliban will curtail the lucrative flow of raw opium from Afghanistan, which brings in hard cash and foreign exchange. According to US sources, "Taliban has followed the practice of other Afghan armed groups in tolerating, and sometimes even taxing, the traffic."⁴¹ UN data appear to confirm these suspicions: The International Drug Control Program (UNDCP) found that poppy cultivation and yield in the 1995-96 growing season — when the Taliban held 95 percent of the area under cultivation — was at "virtually the same level" as during the previous growing season.

In fact, the UN estimated a slight increase in cultivation areas, while estimated yield rose by 8.8 percent over the 1994-95 season. The agency concluded

that the Taliban's ban on marijuana usage and trafficking actually helped boost opium cultivation in Oruzgan and Qandahar provinces. "The Taliban, who as fundamentalist Muslims oppose all forms of intoxication, oppose opium smoking, but in order to protect their support base have refused to declare a ban on the cultivation of poppy and trafficking in opium," the UNDCP noted.⁴²

The Taliban's opponents, however, are convinced that the geopolitical situation will yet work in their favor. Rabbani's side hopes that the worries over the students' extremist views — already branded "primitive" and "medieval" in several Western newspapers — will win it the unified support of the international community it so clearly lacked after it ousted Najibullah in 1992. Rabbani's Deputy Foreign Minister Abdul Rahim Ghafoorzai warned the UN, "The outside sponsors of the Taliban are attempting to cover up [the Taliban's] actual identity and nature,

The US has for several years "received, but declined to investigate, reports of heroin trafficking by some Afghan guerrillas and Pakistani military officers with whom it cooperates."

thus soliciting a kind of legitimacy for this illegitimate, obscurantist and terrorist group. Any relation established with the Taliban may be interpreted by the Taliban as if they have been tolerated by the international community."⁴³

The UN is hedging its bets on whether the Taliban is capable of reform. Upon his return from a mid-September visit to Afghanistan, Goulding said of the Taliban, "Some of their views are monstrous." But, he added, the guerrilla leaders he met had no knowledge of the UN Charter, but after reading the document they claimed to be willing to uphold its tenets, including equal rights for women.⁴⁴

The Taliban, however, continue to send out contradictory signals: After

Goulding's visit, the new leaders in Kabul issued statements that previous restrictions on women's movement and dress had been "wartime measures" and would be rescinded shortly; simultaneously, reports from Kabul indicated that women were being beaten if they failed to cover themselves thoroughly in accordance with the Taliban's edicts.⁴⁵ In response, UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali warned that failure to respect women's rights could have "serious repercussions on the ability of the United Nations to deliver programs of relief and reconstruction to the country."⁴⁶

The history of the Afghanistan war has been one of reversed expectations. The Soviet Union, which had hoped to strengthen its grip on Central Asia, was forced into a humiliating retreat. Pakistan's military rulers had openly cheered at the prospect of a US aid bonanza following the 1979 Soviet invasion. Instead of prospering, Pakistan

has been destabilized by the immense drug and arms traffic, which have fanned the flames of ethnic conflict in Karachi. Warlords such as Hekmatyar have slid in and out of obscurity, a fate which may yet await the relatively new faces behind the Taliban.

Even Washington, which invested so much in the war and was clearly pleased at the slow bleeding of the Soviets, has grown ever more concerned with economic instability, increased heroin flow into the US, and the emergence of terrorist groups such as the one responsible for the World Trade Center bombing — all, at least in part, consequences of US support for the mujahedin. In the long term, US interests may suffer new setbacks with the emergence of a new Islamist government that may yet prove as repressive and aggressive as those in Iran and the Sudan. So long as the economic, geopolitical, and ideological stakes remain high, however, the great game seems destined to endure. ■

39. Reuters, "Afghan Fighting Widens as 2 Allies Attack Taliban," *New York Times*, Oct. 28, 1996.

40. Zalmay Khalilzad, "Afghanistan in 1995: Civil War and a Mini-Great Game," *Asian Survey*, Feb. 1996, p. 190.

41. Burns, "Afghanistan Reels ...," *op. cit.*

42. "Opium Poppy Production in Afghanistan: High but Stabilized, New UN Survey Finds," United Nations Press Release SOC/NAR/746, Sept. 26, 1996.

43. Abdul Rahim Ghafoorzai, address to the UN General Assembly, Oct. 7, 1996.

44. Interview with Goulding, Sept. 25, 1996.

45. See, for example, John F. Burns, "Walled In, Shrouded and Angry in Afghanistan," *New York Times*, Oct. 4, 1996, p. 3.

46. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, statement, Oct. 7, 1996.

Tracking CIA-Contra-Crack Links

by
Dennis Bernstein
and Robert Knight

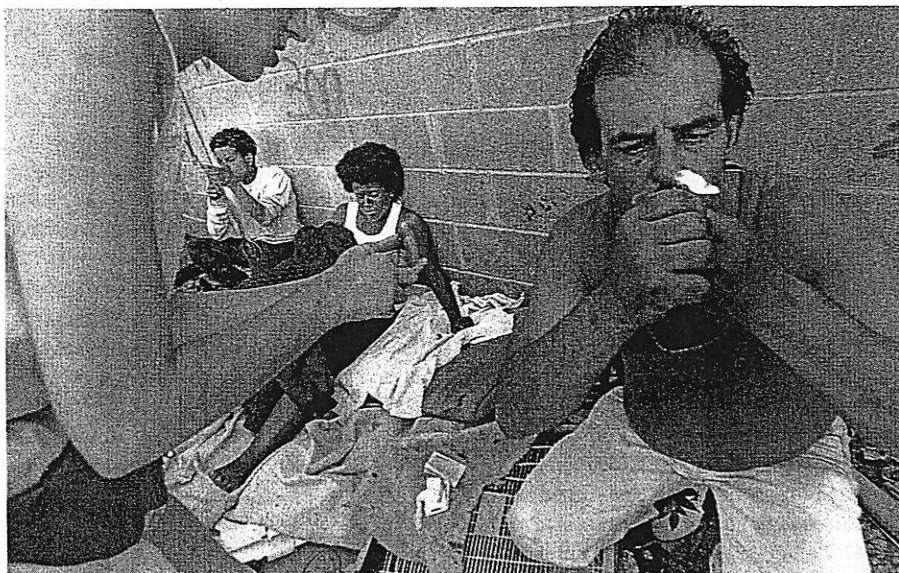
If federal investigators dig into the growing controversy over the CIA's alleged role in drug trafficking to support the Contra war in Nicaragua, there will be plenty of witnesses and documentation from their own court records. At least a half dozen federal trials between 1984 and 1991 implicate Contra operatives and their US handlers in drug-related operations that were never followed up by US law enforcement.

The court records reveal a vast shadow world of wheeler-dealers, ex-spies, former government officials, and immunized witnesses who worked at various levels of the Contra re-supply operation. Their testimony could bolster allegations raised in the *San Jose Mercury News* series that the CIA was aware of or involved with drug trafficking to support the Contra war. (See p. 53.)

Perhaps the most compelling example is the trial of cartel kingpin José Rafael Abello, labeled by the FBI as "the most dangerous cartel leader ever to be extradited to the United States."¹ In 1990, Abello was convicted in Tulsa, Oklahoma, largely on evidence supplied by his longtime operative, Fabio Ernesto Carrasco. Carrasco agreed to testify against his former boss in exchange for immunity from his own prosecution on other trafficking charges. During several days of thorough debriefings with US Customs officials and federal prosecutors, Carrasco disclosed that from 1984-86, he worked as a liaison between CIA-backed Contra leaders in Costa Rica and self-described cartel operative

Dennis Bernstein and Robert Knight hosted the syndicated *Contragate/Undercurrent* investigative radio news program and won the Jesse Meriton White award for international reporting and the National Federation of Community reporting on Iran-Contra. Bernstein is host-producer of *Flashpoints*, a daily public newsmagazine at KPFA in San Francisco; Knight is the host of WBAI's weekly broadcast of *Earth Watch*.

1. *United States of America vs. Jose Rafael Abello Silva*, case no. 87-CR-140-B, April 6, 1990.



ANDREW LICHTENSTEIN/IMPACT VISUALS

The flood of cheap crack changed the drug scene and wreaked social havoc.

George Morales.² Senate investigators and several Contra leaders have identified Morales as a key funder of the Contras after Congress cut off the official flow of money.³

Carrasco described how Contra leaders Popo Chamorro, Octaviano César, and others in Costa Rica arranged for almost a ton of cocaine to be brought in from Colombia and Panama. After the drugs arrived at Costa Rican Contra camps, Carrasco and other members of the Morales organization supervised transport to the US.

Testimony in Tulsa

In startling detail, Carrasco described under oath how in the fall of 1984, Contra leaders ordered Morales to land cocaine-filled planes at public airports in south Florida, assuring him that the flights would be "protected." Carrasco claimed he was on one of the flights to North Miami's bustling Opa-Locka airport, then under heavy surveillance by federal authorities because of its con-

2. Trial records and author interview with Carrasco at attorney John Mattes, who was present at all debriefings with US customs agents and federal prosecutors.

3. Senate Subcommittee hearings on Narcotics, Terrorism, and International Operations, July 16, 1987.

venient location for drug flights from Central and South America. The flight landed in the late afternoon and taxied to a hangar controlled by Morales, who was already under indictment by federal drug prosecutors for utilizing that same hangar for smuggling activities. According to Carrasco, more than 400 kilos of cocaine packed in military-style duffel bags were unloaded in plain view on the tarmac.

Carrasco's sworn statements about this incident and the involvement of Contra leaders in trafficking were part of wide-ranging disclosures he made about drug smuggling activities in Haiti, Central America, and the Caribbean. But it was not until he was cross-examined at the trial by Abello's defense attorneys that the CIA connection was spotlighted.

Q: "Mr. Carrasco, during the time that you were working for Mr. Morales in 1983 and '84 and '85 and into '86, you knew that George Morales claimed to have connections to the CIA agency of the United States, right?"

A: "Yes, that's right."

Q: "And as a result of those CIA connections with Mr. Morales, you knew

that he had protection to bring drugs into the United States, didn't you?"

A: "That's right."

Carrasco went on to testify that he had delivered weapons and retrieved cocaine from land controlled by Costa Rica-based longtime CIA operative John Hull. "They were war weapons, not personal type weapons," Carrasco stated. "There were submachine guns and I think grenade launchers." The drugs, he said, "came in military bags, green in color." Carrasco also said he met with Contra leaders in Florida and Central America, including Octaviano César, Popo Chamorro, Marcos Arguado, and Gerado Duran, who claimed they were working for the CIA. Morales said César and Aguado cited their CIA links when they promised to "take care of the legal problems" (i.e., a 1983 drug indictment) in exchange for his help in arming the Contras. According to Carrasco, between 1983 and 1985, he met with César and Chamorro 30 to 40 times to deliver millions of dollars in proceeds from Contra cocaine sales. Carrasco's testimony is consistent with Morales' statements in 1987 to the Senate Committee on Narcotics and Inter-

national Terrorism, headed by John Kerry (D-Mass.). There, Morales testified that four contra leaders — the same four named by Carrasco — were involved in arms-for-drugs operations in 1984-85, when the Boland Amendment banned military aid to the Contras. Morales also implicated John Hull, who was eventually barred from the country by the Costa Rican government because of "the quantity and frequency of the shipment of drugs" that flowed through his property.⁴

Yet Another Link

Although not everything Carrasco said can be taken at face value, his trial adds one more example to a consistent pattern. Because he had immunity only for those operations which he revealed under the agreement, he had an incentive to confess to the broadest possible range of offensives. And while it is also true that witnesses who are given immunity in exchange for information tend to inflate their own importance and that of

4. March 1989 letter from Costa Rican president and Nobel Peace Prize winner Oscar Arias to State Department, based on recommendations by a Costa Rican congressional commission report of the same month.

their operations, Carrasco's assertions are consistent with other disclosures and the findings of the Kerry committee.

Florida-based attorney John Mattes, who had assisted Kerry's 1987 investigation into Contra drug trafficking, said that "Carrasco's revelations in Tulsa corroborated and confirmed much of what we had already uncovered in the investigation of the Contras from 1985 to 1988. The Tulsa disclosures echoed earlier testimony that the contra leaders had been able to smuggle a massive amount of cocaine into the United States unimpeded."⁵

In October, spurred by public outrage over the *Mercury News* stories, the Senate Intelligence Committee reopened investigations into CIA-Contra drug trafficking. (See p. 60.) At the hastily called hearing, Jack Blum, former Kerry committee special counsel, charged that US policymakers had consistently ignored Contra drug dealing, and that "people connected very directly to the CIA" had allowed airstrips and other facilities to be used for narcotrafficking.⁶ ■

5. Interview with Mattes, Oct. 28, 1996.

6. Senate Select Intelligence Committee, Oct. 23, 1996.

(Letters to editor, cont. from inside cover)

needles, Lehrman and Heller undercut the AIDS prevention efforts so urgently needed to save lives.

Thanks to CAQ for publishing Lehrman's position in 1987 and for printing my piece which, while devoid of sensational charges about origins, exposes today's deadly failures around prevention and public health.

Bob Lederer Corrects the Record:

Congratulations to CAQ and David Gilbert for his article which mirrors my own conclusion. Since writing three articles in *Covert Action* a decade ago on theories of human-made AIDS (deliberate and accidental), I've watched many of those theories — and newer ones — come and go. None has stood the test of time. As David explains, there are several reasons to reject any theory based on genetic engineering. And the evidence for the various non-splice theories has simply not come in.

Yet from left to right, people have used my articles to support their own — often repressive or diversionary — agendas about AIDS. (I particularly regret giving any credence to the notion, long since discredited, that insects might spread AIDS). The most recent example is a book by a possibly LaRouche-affiliated dentist, Leonard G. Horowitz, who takes off from my articles to weave a tangled web of CIA plots to invent and spread HIV. Posing as a progressive, Horowitz shows his hand with a fevered "exposé" of the role of

Henry Kissinger and the Rockefellers in masterminding world domination.

This is not to say I support the "official" HIV-from-African-green-monkeys theory; it remains wildly implausible. And I retain an open mind about whether HIV actually causes AIDS. The evidence appears strong, but questions remain. One question which does *not* remain is that posed (in the same Summer 1987 *Covert Action* as my first article) by Nathaniel S. Lehrman: "Is AIDS Non-Infectious?" To this day, Lehrman and right-wing allied retrovirologist Peter Duesberg continue to contradict irrefutable epidemiology by claiming that AIDS is not a sexually- and needle-transmitted disease. Their attack on campaigns for safer sex and clean-needle use — truly life savers — is utterly irresponsible.

Meanwhile, the case for some of the *co-factors* (contributing causes) theorized in my 1987-88 articles — especially other viruses, the bacteria that causes syphilis, the misuse of antibiotics (both under- and over-treatment) and street drugs, extreme psychological stress and nutrient deficiencies — continues to grow, yet is still shamefully neglected by a dogmatic, pharmaceutically intertwined medical establishment.

Gilbert correctly located the *real* genocide of AIDS in "the everyday functioning of a two-tiered public health system that is rooted in racism, sexism and profiteering." He should know — he's struggled for years under highly

repressive conditions in prison, at great personal risk, to build peer-educated prevention programs and support for inmates with HIV, often stigmatized and medically underserved.

Over the last decade, I, too, have immersed myself in the day-to-day fight to end this epidemic, which has now claimed the lives of 31 of my acquaintances. I remain active with ACT UP (the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power), a predominantly gay and lesbian nationwide direct-action movement that fights such policies as pharmaceutical price-gouging, government cutbacks in medical care access, and Clinton's refusal to fund needle-exchange programs. I also serve on the board of a "buyers club" that distributes low-cost vitamins and herbs, plus scientific information on the growing evidence of their effectiveness. Finally, I'm a senior editor of a national magazine, *POZ*, which covers AIDS from practical, investigative, and inspirational angles.

I cite my activities to emphasize my conviction that anyone who remains fixated on the past (i.e., the origins of AIDS), and is not engaged in the vital tasks of "fighting like hell for the living," should not be taken seriously. I encourage you to join the fight. Please contact: *POZ*, 349 W. 12th St. New York, NY 10014 email: <pozmag1@aol.com>



Howard University students protest at the capitol over CIA-Contra-crack links.

Cracking the CIA-Contra Drug Connection

Recent revelations have linked the CIA to the crack plague. But only by framing the discussion in the context of a critique of US foreign policy objectives that have been operating since at least the mid-1940s, can the solid link between international affairs, racism, and illegal drugs be grasped.

by Clarence Lusane

In a series of explosive stories for the *San Jose Mercury News*, investigative reporter Gary Webb asserts that US-backed Contras and Contra-supporters imported cocaine into the United States; that the cocaine was sold to at least one major Los Angeles black drug dealer with ties or membership in the Crips street gang; and that the CIA was aware of the Contra drug activities

Clarence Lusane, author of *Pipe Dream Blues: Racism and the War on Drugs* (Boston: South End Press, 1991), is with the Center for Drug Abuse Research at Howard University and teaches at Medgar Evers College with the DuBois Bunche Center for Public Policy.

and chose to either ignore them or to protect the traffickers.¹

The response to the series from the black community has been phenomenal. Reprints sold on the streets of Harlem, Washington, DC, and other cities have ensured wide access, while Internet postings have spread the story like wildfire around the world. Forums and meetings as well as demonstrations and other protests have demanded action; congressmembers and black leaders have called for investigative hearings.

1. See articles by Gary Webb, *San Jose Mercury News*, Aug. 18-20, 1996, <<http://www.sjmercury.com/drugs>>.

The CIA-Contra-crack story is a complicated saga with many layers and serious implications for the black community and the nation. Although hard documentation of CIA involvement in drug trafficking had been on the record for decades, Webb's articles add hard, specific evidence of the consequences at home. It would be a grave mistake either to blow up the issue of the CIA's role in drug trafficking to one of conspiratorial genocide, or to reduce it to the excesses of a few undisciplined operatives. Only by framing the discussion in the context of a critique of US foreign policy objectives that have been



CINDY REIMAN/IMPACT VISUALS

Using CIA-provided facilities, CIA-connected Contras dealt drugs and used the profits both to enrich themselves and to buy arms. Above, Contra soldiers; (r.), outmoded guns turned in after peace.



OLIVIA HEUSSLER/IMPACT VISUALS

operating since at least the mid-1940s, can the solid link between international affairs, racism, and illegal drugs be grasped.

The role of US intelligence agencies in narcotics trafficking has been a direct function of US foreign policy both during and after the Cold War. Under the cover of anticommunism, every US administration from Truman to Bush justified global covert operations that led directly to the opening and expansion of trafficking routes for illegal narcotics. Operatives associated with US intelligence agencies then either ignored or even supported the flow of drugs that predictably followed.² And even without the ideological justifications of anti-communism, the pattern of running covert operations linked to drug traffickers continues today under Clinton.³

These policies are not race neutral. In the US, the consequences of drug trafficking for the black community and subsequent growth in substance addiction has been nothing short of devastating. But it is also critical to note how

people of color throughout the developing world have seen their economies skewed and some of the most corrupt elements of their societies strengthened by narcotrafficking. The cultivation of coca leaves, opium, hashish and other crops essential to illegal drug production is propelled by global capitalist economics that have relegated developing nations to producing — under profoundly inequitable circumstances — for the developed world. Virtually all the media stories, including the *Mercury News* series, have ignored the economic imperative driving the production of illegal drugs in the developing world and their marketing in the US. In conjunction with whatever role the CIA and other intelligence agencies have played in narcotrafficking, Washington's corporate-driven international policies are central to economic woes of millions of people — both in the developing world and in the inner-city and rural poverty belts of the US.⁴

What It Said, What It Didn't

What is new and particularly shocking in Webb's series is his charge that US-

4. For a more detailed description of how organized crime and organized capitalism intertwine, see Michel Chossudovsky, "The Business of Crime and the Crimes of Business," *CAQ*, Fall 1996.

backed Contras and Contra supporters imported cocaine into the US and sold it to black street gangs in Los Angeles. The Contra drug dealers, according to the *Mercury News*, "met with CIA agents both before and during the time they were selling the drugs in LA."⁵ Despite their US backing, Nicaragua's Contras were often hard up for cash. Most of them were supporters of the US-backed dictator Anastasio Somoza, who had seized power in 1936 and whose dynasty ruled Nicaragua with notable corruption and brutality. In 1979, a group of rebels, the Sandinistas,

took power and instituted numerous literacy, health, and land reform programs. Washington was appalled both by their overtly Marxist cast and by their policies that favored the interests of peasants and workers over those of large landowners and international corporations. In response, with White House approval, the CIA created a Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN) in mid-1981. This coalition of several groups, mostly Somoza loyalists, waged Washington's surrogate war against the Nicaraguan people even after internationally certified elections were held. By the mid-1980s, the FDN had racked up a horrifying human rights record while the Sandinistas had garnered strong support around the world from both governments and solidarity groups. Under pressure, Congress cut off funding, but some US money authorized by President Reagan continued to pass covertly through the CIA. Some of the Contras looked to drug money to supplement the clandestine flow.

5. Gary Webb, "America's 'Crack' Plague Has Roots in Nicaragua War," *San Jose Mercury News*, Aug. 18, 1996.

2. George Bush was a former director of the CIA under whose watch a whole range of similar CIA-drug trafficking operations occurred. See Jonathan Marshall, *Drug Wars: Corruption, Counterinsurgency and Covert Operations in the Third World* (Forestville, Calif.: Cohan and Cohen Publishers, 1991), pp. 41, 46.

3. For examples, see Walter LaFeber, *Inevitable Revolutions* (New York: W.W. Norton, rev. ed., 1993), pp. 359-60; Tim Weiner, "Tale of Evasion On Aid For Guatemala," *New York Times*, March 29, 1995; James Ridgeway, ed., *The Haiti Files* (Washington, D.C.: Essential Books, 1994), pp. 163-79.

Webb's revelations added to the picture by showing that from around 1982 to 1986, two men linked to the Contras — Los Angeles cocaine trafficker Danilo Blandon and his San Francisco-based supplier Norwin Meneses — sold large quantities of cocaine to "Freeway" Rick Ross.⁶ Ross, a black 22-year-old street dealer with ties to the Crips street gang in Los Angeles, turned the cocaine he bought from Blandon and Meneses into crack. Because the Nicaraguans' prices were well below normal costs, Ross quickly became a major dealer with broad influence over the spread of crack in Los Angeles.

Part of the profits made from the drugs that Blandon and Meneses sold to Ross, according to Ross' testimony cited by the *San Jose Mercury News*, were "then used to buy weapons and equipment for a guerrilla army." At first the CIA and Contra leaders, including Adolfo Calero, the US-based political leader of the FDN, insisted that Meneses was not a key player in the Contra war and that they were surprised to find out that he was involved with drugs. These disclaimers don't ring true. Meneses says that, for at least five years, he raised funds for the Contras, visited Contra camps, and sent people to Honduras to work for the Contras.⁷ Calero concedes Meneses visited Contra camps numerous times during the 1980s and the two men were even photographed together at a Contra fundraiser in San Francisco.⁸ Also, Calero's professed ignorance of Meneses' trafficking is not credible. A detailed *San Francisco Examiner* story linked Meneses' drug trafficking to his Contra connections.⁹ Not only was Meneses well-known in the US as a large-scale dealer, Nicaraguan newspapers dubbed him "Rey de la Droga" (King of Drugs).¹⁰ After being instructed to conduct a search, the CIA admitted that it had records going back to 1984 implicating Meneses in drug trafficking.¹¹

6. It should also be noted that Blandon sold automatic weapons and sophisticated communications equipment to Ross and his partner. At one point, he even tried to sell them a grenade launcher. See Gary Webb, "Testimony Links US to Drugs-Guns Trade," *San Jose Mercury News*, Aug. 19, 1996.

7. Douglas Farah, "Drug Dealer Depicted as Contra Fund-Raiser," *Washington Post*, Oct. 6, 1996.

8. *Ibid.*

9. Doyle McManus, "Examining Charges of CIA Role in Crack Sales," *Los Angeles Times*, Oct. 21, 1996.

10. Gary Webb, "Shadowy Origins of 'Crack' Epidemic," *San Jose Mercury News*, Aug. 19, 1996.

11. Walter Pincus, "No Links to Drug Dealers Turn Up in CIA Records," *Washington Post*, Nov. 6, 1996.

Media Role in the Misinformation Campaign

The major media, which had been overlooking or debunking CIA links to drug-dealing Contras for a decade, responded to Webb's series by either ignoring them or running a story on the story impugning Webb's motives, facts, and research skills. The corporate press responded to outrage in the black community by chalking it up to what the *Washington Post* termed "black paranoia." While noting that a long history of government-sponsored activities against the black community have justified black suspicion, the majors have categorized those suspicions as baseless conspiracies comparable to tales of UFO abductions.

There are inaccuracies and exaggerations in Webb's series which the major media seized on, but instead of correcting the record on specifics, they used the flaws to dismiss the piece out-of-hand. They also created straw men only to tear them down. For example, while Webb exaggerates the case when

Even if the US-created, taxpayer-paid Contras dealt only one rock of crack with the tacit approval of US officials, then serious policy and ethical problems exist (not to mention legal ones).

he writes that the cocaine sold to Ross and later turned into crack created "the first mass market in America" for the drug,¹² he never states, as some of his debunkers have charged, that Ross alone was responsible for the proliferation — or for its invention. It is generally agreed that the stunning spread of crack in Los Angeles did occur around the time Blandon and Ross entered the market, but Webb explains how they took advantage of, rather than created, the circumstance in which "street-level drug users were figuring out how to make cocaine affordable ... by changing the pricey white powder into powerful little nuggets that could be smoked — crack."¹³

Nor does the series allege that the CIA as an agency or any of its identifiable employees directly sold drugs in

12. *Ibid.*

13. *Ibid.*

the US or specifically targeted the black community. These charges have been made by both critics and proponents of the series.

Even though the *Washington Post* and *Los Angeles Times* successfully challenged some of the *Mercury's* details — such as the amount of cocaine sold to Ross and the profits they made — they do not address the broad issues and their implications. By asking the wrong questions they have diverted attention from critical points. For example: Even if the US-created taxpayer-paid Contras dealt only one rock of crack with the tacit approval of US officials, then serious policy and ethical problems exist (not to mention legal ones).

Despite some factual errors, the *Mercury News* series has not only added evidence on how racism intersects with US drug and foreign policies, but also raised two key questions to which the black community has long sought answers:

1) Did the CIA or other US officials authorize and participate in the marketing and distribution of crack cocaine to the black community as a matter of policy or strategy?

2) Have the CIA and other US intelligence agencies, through covert operations and other activities, facilitated a flow of drugs into

the United States that has resulted in increased use and sales in the black community?

The answer to the first question, so far as can be determined, is no. Neither the series nor other reports and studies provide evidence of such high-level authorization and targeting of the black community. While there are examples of convictions of US officials for narcotics trafficking, no conspiratorial network inside the CIA has ever been identified. If the question were rephrased to ask if the blight of drugs in the black community has had serendipitous effects — the blunting of social protest and organizing, an excuse to warehouse in prisons hundreds of thousands of young black men for whom there are no jobs — the answer would be yes. But a useful consequence that is tolerated or even appreciated is not the same as a deliberate conspiracy.



Air America helicopter lands in northern Laos, 1971. Gen. Vang Pao, (r.) a major drug lord, commanded the CIA's secret army.



JOHN EVERINGHAM



DANIELE CAVALIERE

The answer to the second question is an unqualified yes and the evidence is overwhelming. The CIA, FBI, National Security Agency (NSA), State Department, Justice Department, Military Intelligence, and other agencies have repeatedly employed operatives and agents known to be involved in narco-trafficking. At various times the US agencies have either turned a blind eye or knowingly allowed their facilities to be used for major dealing. This policy was approved at the top of these agencies in the White House and, many believe, by successive presidents.

Jack Blum, chief investigator for the Kerry subcommittee, concluded after years of investigation and access to classified information:

If you ask: In the process of fighting a war against the Sandinistas, did people connected with the US government open channels which allowed drug traffickers to move drugs to the United States, did they know the drug traffickers were doing it, and did they protect them from law enforcement? The answer to all those questions is yes.¹⁴

History of Involvement

Official collaboration between US government entities and known drug traffickers dates back at least to World War II. The Office of Strategic Services (OSS), predecessor of the CIA, made

14. *Ibid.*; and McManus, *op. cit.*

deals with Corsican heroin traffickers as well as with US gangster and known heroin dealer Lucky Luciano to prevent communists from gaining a political foothold in post-war France and Italy.¹⁵

Not just the CIA but the entire US foreign policy apparatus helped implement the covert war against Nicaragua and was complicit in the drug trafficking.

From 1924-44, the US heroin addict population had dropped from 200,000 to about 20,000.¹⁶ Then Washington, "through the CIA and its wartime predecessor, the OSS, created a situation that

15. Brian Freemantle, *The Fix* (New York: Tom Doherty Associates, 1985), p. 32. The OSS's Operation Underworld would negotiate a deal that would eventually free Luciano from prison in 1946 in exchange for his role in helping to secure the docks of New York from Nazi sabotage and using his mob contacts in Sicily to attack the Italian Communist Party. (Henrik Krüger, *The Great Heroin Coup* [Boston: South End Press, 1980], pp. 14, 31.)

16. Alfred W. McCoy, *The Politics of Heroin: CIA Complicity in the Global Drug Trade* (New York: Lawrence Hill and Co., rev. ed., 1991), p. 18.

made it possible for the Sicilian-American Mafia and the Corsican underworld to revive the international narcotics traffic," according to the leading academic study on the topic.¹⁷ After Luciano established a worldwide network of traffickers, distributors, and retailers for the drug, the number of US addicts grew rapidly again.¹⁸

Similar alliances led to similar consequences in Southeast Asia. In Laos, beginning around 1960, the CIA created a secret army of 30,000 Hmong tribesmen to fight their communist government. Hmong Gen. Vang Pao (who eventually moved to Montana) was allowed to use the CIA's Air America planes to traffic opium, the Hmong's major cash crop. Turned into heroin, this crop not only addicted thousands of US soldiers fighting in Vietnam, including a disproportionate number of African Americans, but by the war's end in the mid-1970s, comprised about one-third of all heroin in the US.¹⁹ By 1989, Southeast Asia was producing 73 percent of the world's heroin.²⁰

Beginning in the late 1970s, in Southwest Asia's Golden Crescent — where Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iran come together — the US supported the anticommunist mujahedin guerrillas fighting against their Soviet-backed government. The CIA's covert activities in the region created new trafficking lines and a tremendous wave of heroin that flooded the lucrative US market. Scholar Alfred McCoy noted one of the consequences: "As heroin from Afghanistan and Pakistan poured into America throughout 1979 ... the number of drug-related deaths in New York City rose by 77 percent." By the late 1980s, the surge in heroin from the Golden Crescent "had captured 60 percent of the US market."²¹

The pattern of exploding narcotics trafficking would be repeated when the Reagan administration made the decision to support anticommunist governments and rebels in Central America. Between 1982 and 1985, covering the first Reagan term, the number of US co-

17. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

18. Krüger, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

19. McCoy, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

20. *Ibid.*

21. *Ibid.*, pp. 437, 439.



ANDRE LAMBERTSON/IMPACT VISUALS

The effect of crack — some of which was imported with CIA complicity — on the black community was devastating.

caine users grew to 5.8 million, a 38 percent rise.²² During that period, the CIA and other agencies employed drug traffickers throughout Central America to assist their covert wars against the Sandinistas in Nicaragua and guerrillas fighting to overthrow military and political dictatorships in El Salvador and Guatemala. Gen. Paul F. Gorman, former head of the US Southern Command, captured the rationale for these unsavory alliances: “The fact is, if you want to go into the subversion business, collect intelligence, and move arms, you deal with drug movers.”²³

It is critical to note that it was not just the CIA but the entire US foreign policy apparatus — including all branches of the military, the NSA, and the State Department — that helped implement the covert war against Nicaragua and was complicit in the drug trafficking. Many of their activities were revealed in the investigations and

hearings by Sen. John Kerry (D-Mass.) in the late 1980s. McCoy notes that the committee found, for example, that “The US State Department paid four

“The drug war is always the pretext for something else.” — Noam Chomsky

contractors \$806,401 to supply humanitarian aid to the Contra forces in Central America. All four of these companies were owned by known drug traffickers.”²⁴ The report went on to say that the State Department made “payments to drug traffickers ... for humanitarian assistance to the Contras, in some cases after the traffickers had been indicted ... on drug charges.”²⁵

The committee’s report was unambiguous in assigning guilt: “On the basis

of this evidence, it is clear that ... elements of the Contras ... knowingly received financial and material assistance from drug traffickers. ... In each case, one or another agency of the US government had information about the involvement.”

The Kerry report also concluded, “The logic of having drug money pay for the pressing needs of the Contras appealed to a number of people who became involved in the covert war. Indeed, senior US policy makers were not immune to the idea that drug money was a perfect solution to the Contras’ funding problems.”²⁶

Racism and the War On Drugs

The flood of drugs into the US, Contra-carried and other, had a devastating impact on the black community; the harmful effects were only compounded by the “war on drugs” — pursued in

22. *Ibid.*, p. 478.

23. Jonathan Marshall, “Drugs & US Foreign Policy,” *Dealing With Drugs*, Pacific Research Institute, 1987, p. 166.

24. McCoy, *op.cit.*, p. 483.

25. “Drugs, Law Enforcement, and Foreign Policy,” Subcommittee on Terrorism, Narcotics, and International Operations of the Committee on Foreign Relations, US Senate, Dec. 1988, p. 36.

26. *Ibid.*

turn by Nixon, Reagan, Bush, and Clinton — that disproportionately targeted African Americans.

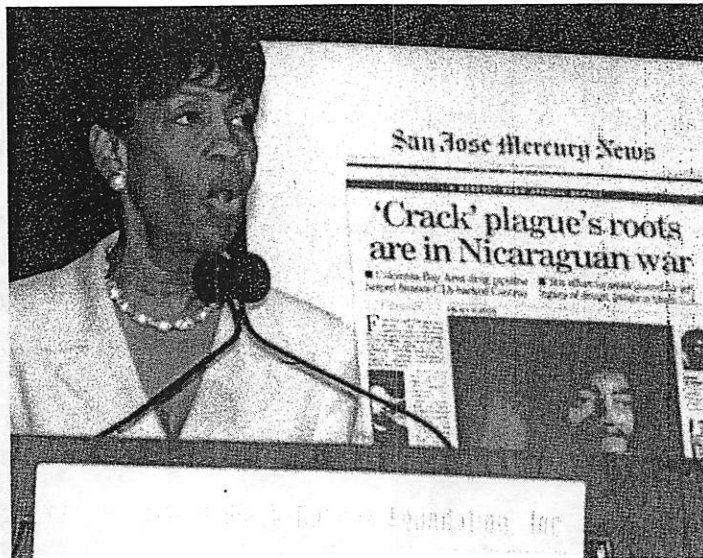
That effect is consistent with a long history of drug wars that have, without exception, demonized communities of color as the main traffickers and users. In the 1880s, the growing Chinese American population was targeted by oppressive anti-opium legislation. While they were deported and imprisoned, whites comprised the largest group of users. They were mostly women who consumed great quantities of opium-based over-the-counter “tonics” and male Civil War veterans seeking pain relief. After opium was declared illegal, these white users were channeled into the medical rather than the criminal justice system.

The turn of the century “war on drugs” made cocaine the boogie monster, and the press was full of sensationalized stories about black men — crazed by the demon drug — who raped white women and committed horrible and depraved crimes. The “responsible” *New York Times* joined the chorus, at one point running a headline that blared “Negro Cocaine ‘Fiends’ Are a New Southern Menace,” and reporting that southern sheriffs were forced to switch to higher caliber handguns to effectively stop drug-empowered blacks.²⁷ There was, in fact, no evidence of a wave of cocaine-induced crime.

During the anti-marijuana wars of the 1930s, Mexican Americans were targeted at a time when they were moving in large numbers into cities and competing for scarce jobs. Again the papers were peppered with reports of drug-crazed attacks on innocent whites. The 1950s heroin war, which coincided with the rise of the civil rights movement, followed the same pattern — once again aimed against blacks.²⁸

“The drug war is always the pretext for something else,” noted political analyst Noam Chomsky. In the United

States [it] is basically a technique for controlling dangerous populations internal to the country and doesn’t have much to do with drugs.²⁹ Politicians have long used it to excuse failed social and economic policies that have generated unrest and as an expedient campaign issue. Richard Nixon took advantage of drug war rhetoric in the 1960s and early 1970s and set the stage for the ingenuous sloganeering campaigns of the 1980s. Then, while Nancy



Rep. Maxine Waters charged that drug laws are “prosecuted in a discriminatory way which disproportionately impacts African American males.”

Reagan intoned “Just Say No [to drugs],” the president did just that to spending for social programs, aid to the cities, and most policies which had the potential to ameliorate conditions in the black community.³⁰ President George Bush and his drug czar William Bennett continued the Reagan program with greater hyperbole but with no more effect in reducing trafficking or addiction, and Dole in his 1996 failed bid for the presidency unimaginatively varied the theme to “Just Don’t Do It.”

Meanwhile, in the 1980s and into the 1990s, the black community has been ravaged by a drug crisis of historic proportions, resulting in “crack” babies, record drug overdoses, unprecedented numbers of black male youth incarcerations, a rise in AIDS, and numerous other harms. In Los Angeles County alone, according to the *Mercury News*,

there are more than 70,000 children in foster care for drug-related reasons.³¹ In Washington, DC, of the thousands of cases of neglected and abused children removed from homes, 90 percent involved crack mothers.³² In fact, however, most drug users are white, while a disproportionate number of people incarcerated for a disproportionately greater number of years are black. Maxine Waters (D-Calif.), who represents the Los Angeles district at the center of Blandon’s and Ross’ activities, wrote Attorney General Janet Reno:

In addition to the stress caused by crack cocaine use, I am also terribly disturbed by the heavy-handed, arbitrary, and discriminatory mandatory minimum sentences which politicians have attached to crack cocaine use and possession. These sentences have the effect of severely punishing small-time users, and are prosecuted in a discriminatory way which disproportionately impacts African American males.³³

Policy Implications

It was into this context that the *San Jose Mercury News* story fell. One word characterizes the black community’s response: outrage. That reaction has sparked a mass movement of sorts to distribute the *Mercury News* series as widely as possible and to force investigations into the allegations. Black community leaders and activists are mobilizing around the issues raised. From Washington, DC to California, there have been protests, rallies, and forums. Howard University law students held a march and rally on the US Capitol steps.³⁴ More than 1,500 showed up at a forum held by the Congressional Black Caucus on the issue.³⁵ In Los Angeles, 1,000 turned out for a

31. David E. Early, “MN Series Stirs National Debate,” *San Jose Mercury News*, Oct. 6, 1995.

32. *Ibid.*

33. Letter from Rep. Maxine Waters (D-Calif.) to Attorney General Janet Reno, Aug. 30, 1996. For a fuller treatment of sentencing laws and a breakdown of the relevant statistics, see Clarence Lusane, “Congratulations, It’s A Crime, Bill,” *CAQ*, Fall 1994.

34. Natalie Hopkinson, “Law Students Protest CIA-Crack Scandal,” *The Hilltop*, Oct. 4, 1996, p. 1.

35. Early, *op. cit.*

27. Edward Hunting Williams, “Negro Cocaine ‘Fiends’ Are a New Southern Menace,” *New York Times*, Feb. 8, 1914.

28. Jack Herer, *The Emperor Wears No Clothes* (Van Nuys, Calif.: Queen of Clubs Publishing, 1990), p. 27.

29. Michaél Lopez, *et al.*, “Colombia, the US, Drugs, Terror, and Social Control,” interview, Fall 1996, p. 9.

30. See Mike Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles* (New York: Vintage, 1990).

forum while 1,500 waited outside.³⁶ Activist Dick Gregory, radio host Joe Madison, activist Mark Thompson, and President of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference Rev. Joe Lowery, have all been jailed for demonstrating at CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia or at the Justice Department. Gregory and Madison also have gone on hunger strikes.

Politicians are turning up the heat. In a letter to Attorney General Reno, Rep. Waters requested

a full and complete investigation into the connection between law enforcement agencies, most particularly the CIA, and the early 1980s importation of crack cocaine. In addition, I would like to know what actions may have allowed these drug shipments to continue. I would also like to know the status of any efforts to investigate, punish, or prosecute those involved in this matter."³⁷

California Sens. Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein,³⁸ San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown and Los Angeles Mayor Richard Riordan have all written letters calling for an investigation. Rev. Jesse Jackson is demanding that Clinton order his Intelligence Oversight Board to conduct a full and independent investigation and calling for the release of all classified documents on the CIA's involvement in the Contra war, all DEA records related to the Contras, and all DEA files on Meneses and Blandon.³⁹

While promising internal investigations, the Department of Justice, CIA, and other US agencies all issued quick

36. *Ibid.*

37. Letter from Rep. Maxine Waters (D-Calif.) to Attorney General Janet Reno, Aug. 30, 1996.

38. See letter from Sen. Barbara Boxer to CIA Director John Deutch, Aug. 29, 1996; and letter from Sen. Dianne Feinstein to Attorney General Janet Reno, Aug. 30, 1996.

39. Peter Kornbluh, "CIA, Contras & Crack," *JaxFax*, Oct. 10, 1996.

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denials. At an October 23 Senate hearing, for example, CIA Inspector General Frederick P. Hitz testified that based on the investigation up to that point, there is "no credible information" to support the *Mercury News*'s stories.⁴⁰

What Next?

The controversy around this issue underscores the necessity for black community awareness and involvement in US foreign policy issues. The creation of

That the policy was consistent, sustained, and sanctioned by the highest US officials is far more disturbing than any conspiracy theories about secret teams

the Contras was a policy initiative that emanated from the White House and was supported by policy makers. The fact that the policy was consistent, sustained, and sanctioned by the highest US officials is far more disturbing than any conspiracy theories about secret teams or rogue operations.

Black leaders must move beyond criticism of the Contra involvement in drug trafficking to questioning a foreign policy that shows little regard for democratic processes or the interests of the poor and working people in the de-

40. Associated Press, "CIA Official Sees No Evidence of Crack Role," *New York Times*, Oct. 24, 1996.

veloping world. It is not enough that those involved in drug dealing be brought to justice — an unlikely prospect at this point. What is essential is an overhaul of the mission and practices of US intelligence agencies.

It is also time to renew the call for major reform of the nation's drug laws. The current laws and policing practices are racially discriminatory in regard to arrest patterns, sentencing, imposition of mandatory minimums, crack-powder sentencing discrepancy, and punitive character of laws such as the "three strikes and you're out" provisions in a number of state and federal statutes.

It is also important to reiterate the demand that education and treatment access be given a higher priority in the federal drug budget. Under Reagan and Bush, 70 percent was aimed at law enforcement while only 30 percent was focused on education, prevention, and treatment. Under Clinton, two-thirds of the budget is still focused on law enforcement.⁴¹

In this presidential election year, both parties played the game of who was toughest on crime, and neither raised concerns about increasing treatment monies or the racialized nature of the nation's drug crisis and drug war. If the concerns raised by the *Mercury News* series are to be answered, then these reforms are only just the beginning. ■

41. Richard Berke, "Democratic Reply On Drugs; Commit another 2.2 Billion Dollars," *New York Times*, Sept. 13, 1989; *National Drug Control Strategy*, Office of National Control Policy (Washington, D.C., April 1995), p. 29.

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WHAT THEY KNEW AND WHEN THEY KNEW IT

The Crack-CIA-Contra Nexus

Testimony by Jack A. Blum

Former special counsel to the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Narcotics and International Operations to Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Blum: Mr. Chairman, I very much appreciate the invitation to appear here this morning. I find it ironic in a way that I'm here in the same room where we began hearings on the same subject ... in January of 1988. ...

The answer you get to the question you ask depends totally on how you frame the question. If you ask the question, did the CIA sell drugs in the Black neighborhoods of Los Angeles to finance the Contra war, the answer will be a categorical no. The fact of the matter is we found no evidence whatsoever to suggest that there was a targeting of the African American community.

Cocaine in the mid '80s and into the early '90s was a perfect equal opportunity destroyer. We had addiction and problems in schoolyards across America. It didn't matter what color you were, where you were from, what your national origin was. The problem became more acute in the African American community because the definition of a problem addict in America is an addict who runs out of money. And if you run out of money quickly, you become involved in the drug trade. You become a visible social problem. And you get on the screen. In fact, the stockbrokers, the entertainers, the lawyers who used cocaine around America escaped that attention, but their lives were ruined, too. Perhaps not financially.

The second issue is, did the CIA do the selling of the cocaine? And did the Contras profit? And as far as we were able to determine, no member of the staff of the CIA, that is someone on the payroll as opposed to people they work with, was in the cocaine business. And certainly no one on the staff of the CIA as far as we could determine, was actively selling the drug.

This testimony is excerpted from a hearing on "The Allegations of CIA Ties to Nicaraguan Contra Rebels and Crack Cocaine in American Cities," Washington, D.C., Senate Select Intelligence Committee, Oct. 23, 1996.

And then finally the question of, was it used to support the Contras? I will tell you of two meetings that I had with Contra veterans, one in 1986 and one in 1989, at the beginning and the end of my investigation. And they said, our problem was we never had any money. Our leadership stole most of it. They had houses in Miami. They had opportunities to gamble. They had girlfriends. They traveled. And we, who were in the field, and one of the groups that I talked to had men who lost their arms and their eyes and their legs fighting the Sandinistas — we in the field had none

The policy-makers ignored their [Contra] drug dealing, their stealing, and their human rights violations. ... We knew about the connection between the West Coast cocaine trade and Contras.

of the benefit. So I submit what went on led to the profit of people in the Contra movement, not to supporting a war that we were trying to advance.

Now, having said that we have to go back to what is true. And what is true is the policy makers absolutely closed their eyes to the criminal behavior of our allies and supporters in that war. The policy makers ignored their drug dealing, their stealing, and their human rights violations. The policy-makers — and I stress policy-makers — allowed them to compensate themselves for helping us in that war by remaining silent in the face of their impropriety and by quietly undercutting law enforcement and human rights agencies that might have caused them difficulty.

We knew about the connection between the West Coast cocaine trade and

Contras. There was an astonishing case called the Frogman Case. In that case — I believe it was in that case — the United States attorney from San Francisco, a man by the name of Russoniello, returned \$35,000 of cocaine proceeds voluntarily to the Contras when it had been seized as proceeds of drug trafficking. ... We had a telephone conversation with Mr. Russoniello, asking him to provide us documents and access to the people involved in the case. And he shouted at us. He shouted at Senator John Kerry, who chaired the committee. He accused us of being subversive for wanting to go into it.

It should be stressed that the Blandon-Meneses ring was part of a very much larger picture. And to give you an idea of how large that picture was, there was a point where the wholesale price of cocaine on the street in Los Angeles reached \$2,500 a kilo. We were talking about cocaine that was available in such quantity they could not find buyers. ... [that] is, below cost. And that is a flood of cocaine. And our friend "Freeway" Ricky [named in the *San Jose Mercury* article as the street level dealer who worked with the Contras] was touching only a tiny fraction of what was coming in. We had a definite cocaine epidemic.

Now, you might ask, why did ... the hearings we ran in '88 and the report we released in 1989 not get more attention? And the answer is, we were subject to a systematic campaign to discredit everything we did. Every night after there was a public hearing, Justice Department people, administration people would get on the phone [and] call the press and say the witnesses were all liars, they were talking to us to get a better deal. That we were on a political vendetta, that none of it was to be believed, and please don't cover it. ... It was a sys-

tematic effort to discredit us that prevented the conclusions from receiving the attention I believe they warranted.

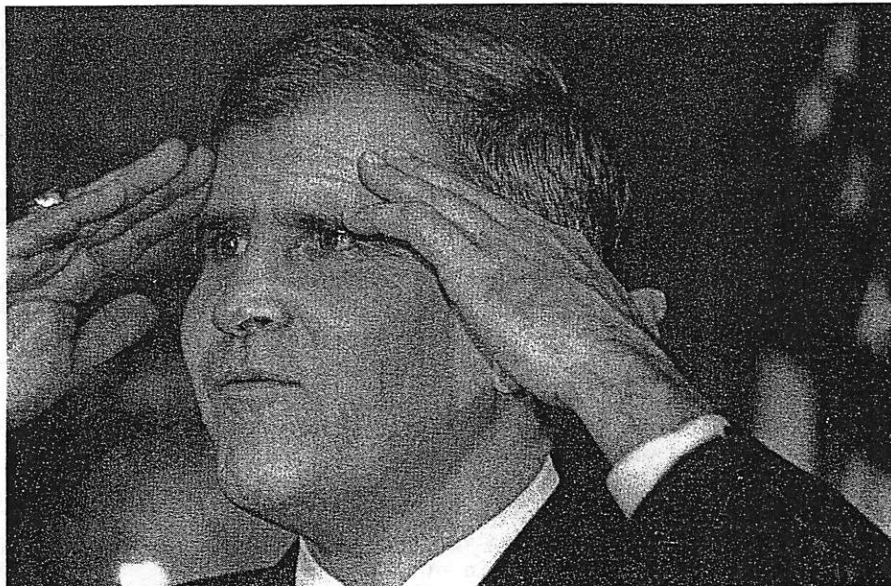
Now, I would argue that over a long period of years, covert operations were undertaken — and it's not only the CIA, obviously, the decision in that area is at a political level, and the CIA would be an implementing agency — were taken on an ideological basis that verged on religious belief, and with an eye to short-term results and not long-term consequences. Never again should that kind of ideological blindness and short-term vision infect intelligence assessments.

In the 1980s, all of us could count the number of people dead on the streets of America as a result of the drug problem. You couldn't find me a single person in America who had died as a result of an attack by a Sandinista inside our borders.

There should have been some ability to notice that distinction and understand the importance of the drug problem and understand that that had to be addressed and, at the very least, that anything you did to solve any other foreign policy problem not make the drug problem worse.

I think that among the other things you should be looking at is a review of the relationship in general between covert operations and criminal organizations. The two go together like love and marriage. ... Criminal organizations are perfect allies in a covert operation. ... They know who the corrupt government officials are, and they have them on the payroll. They'll do anything I want for money. It's a terrific working partnership. The problem is that they then get empowered by the fact that they work with us. So now they have stature and influence and impact on their country. And if they have influence with politicians and people who come to power, we now have a new powerful criminal enterprise, and we can't always control what they do once we stand down. And unfortunately, we have yet to figure out how to prevent criminal friends from becoming an albatross.

There's a second problem, and that is when you run covert operations, you train people in a lot of skills, ... [and] once you've bitten the apple of knowledge, you can't unlearn it, ever. And when you



Ollie North, saluting drug dealers and thugs.

Noriega replies: "I'll assassinate the entire Sandinista leadership. I'll blow up buildings in Managua." Ollie doesn't call the cops. ... He goes back to Poindexter, [who] says, "Gee, that's a little bit extreme. Can't you get 'em to tone it down?"

teach people how to change their identity, how to hide from the law, how to build bombs, how to assassinate people, they don't forget how to do it. And you wind up, after the covert action is over, with a disposal problem. [Blum briefly describes the history of the relation between drug trafficking and covert ops from the '50s with the Kuomintang army,

to the Vietnam War to Afghanistan. For a fuller treatment, see pp. 53-59.]

Untrue North

Now, to turn specifically to the Latin American story and where our investigation picks up on the drug trail. We had testimony from a man who was a civilian employee of Argentine military intelligence, Liandro Sanchez Ris. [phonetic spelling — ed.] He told us that the United States had encouraged the Argentine military to act as proxy for the United States during the Carter administration because we had a public policy of supporting human rights and another policy of really trying to sustain our anticommunist efforts.

And the Argentines, he said, sponsored the cocaine coup in Bolivia and then set up a money-laundering operation in Fort Lauderdale. ... And, indeed, he had set up that operation. He used the money-laundering operation in Fort Lauderdale to provide funds to the Argentines all over Latin America who were in the business of "fighting communism." We should remember it was the Argentines who were the original trainers of the Contras. They were the ones who brought the original Contras to Honduras [and] Guatemala and began to teach them how to do what they had to do against the Sandinista government.

Sanchez Ris told us that he believed that the reason the Argentines were so willing to go to war with the British over the Falklands was that the Argentine generals seriously thought that the assistance they had given us, the covert assistance they had given us, was going to put them in our good graces to the point where we would side with them — a tragic mistake indeed if he was correct.

The second man who turned up on our screen very big time was General Noriega. And, as you'll recall, ... Noriega was on our payroll. The accounts we heard were that he was getting paid some \$200,000 a year by the United States government. At the time that was going on, virtually everybody who dealt with him knew he was in the drug business. It was an open secret. In fact, it was so open it appeared on the front page of the *New York Times* in June of 1986. I testified about it in a closed session of the Foreign Relations Committee in 1986.

We have, as the absolute low point of the Contra War, Ollie North having a meeting with General Noriega. And he recorded that meeting in great detail in his notebooks in which he's bargaining with Noriega. Noriega says to him, "I've got this terrible public relations problem over drugs. What can you do to help me?" [Noriega replies] "Here's what I'll do to help you. I'll assassinate the entire Sandinista leadership. I'll blow up buildings in Managua." Ollie doesn't call the cops. What Ollie does is he goes back to Poindexter, and Poindexter says, "Gee, that's a little bit extreme. Can't you get 'em to tone it down? Go back and meet with 'em again." Which Ollie does.

When our committee asked the General Accounting Office to do a step-by-step analysis of just who in our government knew that General Noriega was dealing drugs, and when they knew it, and what they did to act on that knowledge, the administration told every agency of the government not to cooperate with GAO, labeled it a national security matter, and swept it into the White House and cloaked it in executive privilege. That investigation never went forward, should have gone forward. I was very much dismayed.

Our committee subpoenaed Ollie North's notebooks. And the history of those notebooks is quite astonishing. Not many people realize this, but the Senate never got a clean copy of those notebooks. North's lawyers were permitted to expurgate sections of the notebooks based on "relevance." ... And we engaged in a ten-month battle to get them. And ultimately the investigation ended, the subcommittee's mandate ended, we never got them. ... The notebooks in their entirety are still not public, and my belief is that your committee, the Intelligence Committee, should undertake at the earliest opportunity a complete investigation of the notebook situation and do your best to make it public to restore some degree of confidence in the process.

Criminal Behavior

Now, the problem of General Noriega and Ollie North's notebooks and what was in them is only [one] of a number of problems related to this war and related to drug trafficking that we stumbled into. We had problems in Haiti, where friends of ours, that is, intelligence sources in the Haitian military, had turned their facilities, their ranches and their farms over

to drug traffickers. Instead of putting pressure on that rotten leadership of the Haitian military, we defended them. We held our noses. We looked the other way. And they and their criminal friends distributed, through a variety of networks, cocaine in the United States, in Miami, in Philadelphia, in New York, in parts of Pennsylvania.

Honduras was another country that was key for the Contras. Honduras was the base of Contra operations. Most of the Contra supplies came through Honduras. We wanted to do nothing to embarrass the Honduran military. Ramon

Remember that our dear friends in the Argentine military disappeared thousands of people. Look at the horrible, brutal reality of Pinochet's Chile and ask what kind of threat there was to the United States that warranted that kind of behavior.

Matta Ballesteros, a member of the gang that was involved in the Camarena murder, went to Honduras and found refuge there. He was walking in the streets of Tegucigalpa, openly and publicly. The response of the United States government was to close the DEA office in Honduras and move the agents stationed there to Guatemala. We took testimony from that DEA agent. He said it made no sense. The drug trafficking was going on in Honduras. And the Honduran military were at the center of it. ... But we sat by as long as they were helping us and allowed them to carry on their illegal business.

We also became aware of deep connections between the law enforcement community and the intelligence community. I personally repeatedly heard from prosecutors and people in the law enforcement world that CIA agents were required to sit in on the debriefing of various people who were being questioned about the drug trade. They were required to be present when witnesses were being prepped for certain drug trials. ... At various times the intelligence community inserted itself in that legal process. I believe that that was an impropriety, that that should not have occurred. [Asked by Sen. Arlen Specter

(R-Pa.) if he was "suggesting that the intelligence community thwarted or stopped prosecutions which should have gone forward," Blum replied] ... That too; that too. ...

When there were criminal cases that threatened to expose various covert operations in the region, those criminals would be then put aside for one reason or another. And there was a procedure for doing that within the Department of Justice. We attempted to probe that procedure. The Department of Justice rebuffed us rather systematically. We had some conversations with one of the Justice Department officials involved and took his deposition. But we were never able to get really satisfactory responses to the questions we asked.

We do know that Ollie North directly intervened in a number of cases to help people who had helped the covert war. ...

Looking the Other Way

There was a flip side to this drug problem as well. One of the favored techniques of various people in this operation was, whenever there was someone they didn't like, they would label him a drug trafficker.

We ran into the case of Ron Martin who had set up an arms warehouse in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, and he did it at the request of various friends of his in the US government and it was sort of a pre-positioning of weapons to help the Contras. And the idea was that when the ban on direct aid was lifted, his stuff could be sold.

Ron Martin was a potential competitor of the Second-North supply network. North started telling everyone that the Martin warehouse was financed by cocaine, not to deal with it. And the impact was to destroy Ron Martin financially. So this became a matter of affirmative and negative use.

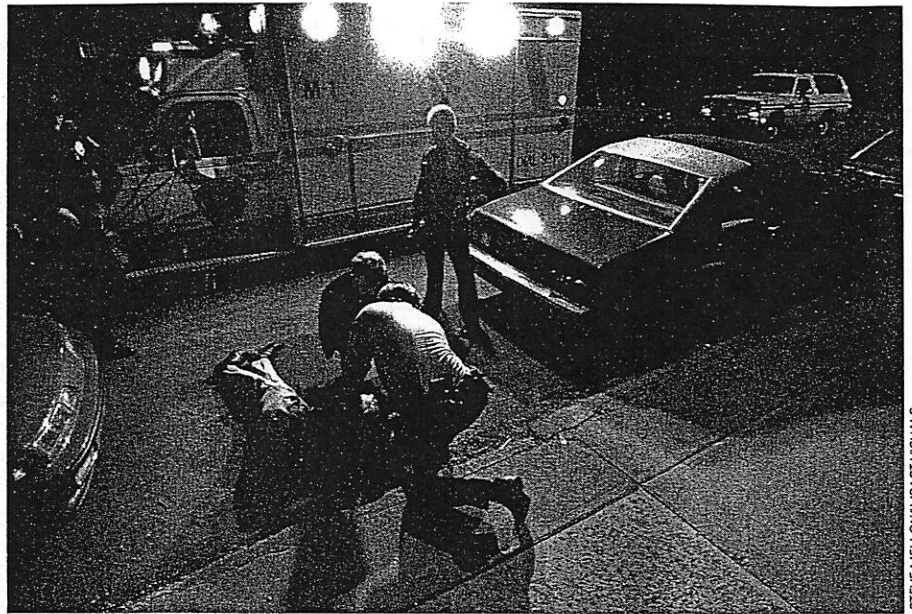
I would say, based on my experience with this affair and my look at the long history of our covert operations dealing with criminals and drug dealers, that this entire affair needs a thorough review, a historical review as well as the narrow review of the issues posed by the article in the *San Jose Mercury*. The problem as I see it is, if you go to bed with dogs, you get up with fleas. If you empower criminals because empowering them happens to be helpful at the time, the criminals are sure to turn on you next. ...

The most important loss that we had as a result of the covert war in Central America was the loss of public trust in the honesty and integrity of the people who run America's clandestine operations. ... We had people in the Contra movement, southern front Contras, and indeed there is a television, a video deposition of one of them, who says look, I discussed the problem of the drug dealing among our number with my case officer. And he told me ... This is a Contra leader. He was a member of the Contra directorate. We took his deposition in video form, in San Jose, Costa Rica. ... He told us that he had discussed the drug problem and his case officer said look, there is nothing we can do about it. ... [Asked by Specter, "what kind of a case officer," Blum replied] CIA. [Asked if "you're saying is that the CIA individual did not stop them from dealing in drugs," Blum replied:] Right.

[After saying he did not believe the CIA encouraged the Contras to sell drugs, Blum added] Now, there's one other thing you have to understand about the situation in Central America at the time. And it's relevant to the question you asked. There were facilities that were needed for running the war. Clandestine airstrips. Cowboy pilots who would fly junker airplanes. People who would make arrangements

In the 1980s, all of us could count the number of people dead on the streets of America as a result of the drug problem. You couldn't find me a single person in America who had died as a result of an attack by a Sandinista inside our borders.

for the clandestine movement of money. Every one of those facilities was a perfect facility for someone in the drug business. So there [were] people who were connected very directly to the CIA who had those facilities, and allowed them to be used, and indeed personally profited from their use as drug trafficking. ... It's not that someone from the CIA permitted them to be used. It's that a contract employee had the facilities. He was doing a job. That job wasn't delivering drugs for the CIA ...



Victim of a drug deal gone bad lies in a Pittsburgh street.

The point is that this was going on in tandem with the war. And the people who were organizing it from our side saw all of it. In fact, you had to be blind not to see it. And instead of trying to stop it or say, "Wait a minute, we really ought to change our policy here, or rethink how we're doing it," they went forward and said, "We're going to solve the problem with the Sandinistas, and the devil take this other set of issues."

Ban Covert Ops?

[Asked by Specter if "Congress as a matter of public policy ought to ban covert operations," Blum replied] I think that there may in some circumstances, desperate matters of national urgency, be some kind of argument for them. But I will say that in my experience we have rarely considered the blowback, we have rarely considered the long-term political consequence. And if you look at the kind of catastrophic record that the operations that got us tangled up in the drug business led to, I would say they failed. Remember, we lost the war in Nicaragua. Remember that our dear friends in the Argentine military disappeared thousands of people. Look at the horrible, brutal reality of Pinochet's Chile. And ask what kind of threat there was to the United States that warranted that kind of behavior. ... Here's my problem. I think that if

people in the government of the United States make a secret decision to sacrifice some portion of the American population, in the form of exposing them let's say — deliberately exposing them to drugs, that is a terrible decision that should never be made in secret. ... [After explaining that he didn't think that had been the case, Blum returned to a discussion of when or if covert operations are justified.]

There was a judgment call here. And that judgment call erred so far on the wrong side of where judgment should have been that we wound up with a terrible problem. And that terrible problem was a de facto result that I was describing; that is, where many people did suffer as a consequence.

And I started to say, when DEA allows a controlled delivery of drugs, there is a furious debate. Those controlled deliveries are monitored because DEA says, our job is to prevent it from coming in. And if it escapes on the street, for any reason, we've blown it. And that kind of standard is really the kind of standard that should have, I think, been applied here. And maybe you can give me — and maybe we would both agree, that there is some dreadful circumstance where this should have occurred and been allowed to occur and so on. And I probably could be convinced in the right set of circumstances. But the problem was that that issue wasn't put that way. And the sensitivity to what was going on was simply missing. ■

Off the Shelf:

CAQ'S BOOKS OF INTEREST

Who Killed George Polk: The Press Covers Up A Death in the Family

by *Elias Vlanton with Zak Mettger*

TEMPLE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1996, ENDNOTES, BIBLIOGRAPHY, INDEX, 322 PP., \$27.95 HB.

Nearly five decades have passed since a Greek fisherman pulled the body of CBS Middle East correspondent George Polk out of Salonika Bay. Polk had been bound and blindfolded, shot in the back of the head, and dumped, still alive, into the water. Because of his reporting on corruption and human rights abuses in the Greek government's civil war against communist partisans, the regime and its right-wing allies were the prime suspects in his murder.

Under great pressure from the Truman administration to solve the case, the Greeks quickly convicted one man — whom they painted as a communist rebel. The US government and an ad hoc, high-profile journalists' group, the Lippmann Committee, pronounced itself satisfied that the crime had been solved and the Greek communists were responsible. With few exceptions, the US journalistic community agreed, and the Polk Affair, which had threatened to derail the fledgling US aid program to Greece, faded from the front pages.

Over the years, various authors have challenged the official version and offered alternate theories about who really murdered George Polk and why. The cast of suspects includes the Greek right wing, the CIA, British intelligence, and Greek or US profiteers. At first glance, yet another book on the Polk Affair appears gratuitous, but Greek-American writer and researcher Elias Vlanton has produced the definitive study. Relying on extensive research in the State Department archives, contemporary press reports, interviews, and other archival materials, Vlanton demolishes the official

story. He also tells the tale of a craven US press establishment that kowtowed to US foreign policy imperatives instead of pursuing the truth.

In 1948, the birth of the Cold War, Greece was the frontline of the US anti-communist crusade. Communist guerrillas who had fought the Nazis during World War II now battled right-wing Greek Royalists for the country's future. President Truman, determined to foil "communist expansionism," announced the Truman Doctrine, and the US began pouring millions of dollars into Greece. Vlanton shows how the administration counted on the press to play a vital role in manufacturing support for its new, interventionist policy.

He also shows how the press largely complied. Along the way, Vlanton illuminates the unseemly relationship between the press and the US government. Although some of Polk's comrades in the Newspaper Guild attempted to initiate an independent investigation, moves by establishment press luminaries led by Walter Lippmann undercut their effort. Instead, the Lippmann Committee (whose general counsel was Col. Bill Donovan, former head of the CIA's predecessor, the OSS) agreed to monitor the Greek investigation. With State Department and other records, Vlanton exposes the close collaboration between the US Embassy in Athens and the Lippmann Committee.

Vlanton does not cry conspiracy, nor does he claim US involvement in Polk's death. What he does argue, quite convincingly, is that the US government and the establishment press shared fundamental assumptions about the Cold War and the critical importance of the Greek anticommunist struggle. For both, solving Polk's murder was less important than resolving it. Similarly, the Greek regime used the Polk Affair to advance on two fronts: It pleased and appeased its sponsor, and scored a propaganda victory against its communist foes. What both the Greeks and the Americans wanted was to quickly dispose of this looming scandal; justice for George Polk came in a distant second.

Vlanton and coauthor Zak Mettger provide a minute-by-minute account of Polk's peregrinations before his death, the Greek government's investigation, the lone trial in the case, and the flurry of US diplomatic activity designed to keep the lid on. They do so with pa-

nache; the book reads as much like a thriller as a historical investigation. They also evaluate earlier theories of Polk's murder (and find them wanting) and present their own, based on documents uncovered during Vlanton's research.

Every year, the US journalistic community presents the George Polk award for "the best in American journalism" (last year's winner was Alan Nairn). But, as Vlanton makes achingly clear, "the best in American journalism" did much less than their best when it came to uncovering Polk's killers.

The Laundrymen: Inside Money Laundering, The World's Third-Largest Business by *Jeffrey Robinson*

ARCADE PRESS, 1996, BIBLIOGRAPHY, INDEX, 358 PP., \$25.95 HB.

In its unending war against "international crime, drug trafficking, and terrorism," the US legal system has proven ingenious at creating new crimes with which to snare its targets. Criminal syndicalism ordinances begat conspiracy prosecutions begat RICO. Now, money laundering laws are prosecutors' latest statutory weapon. Having defined the failure to report certain financial transactions to federal authorities as a crime, the feds are understandably eager to glamorize their tactics.

They have found their messenger in Jeffrey Robinson, a professional writer (he also wrote books on Brigitte Bardot and Grace Kelly), who seems to have talked exclusively to bankers, cops, and prosecutors. Unsurprisingly, Robinson suffers from the tendency to identify with the protagonists of his book, the law enforcers.

Still, he knows how to spin a tale as he relates the money-laundering schemes of such varied scoundrels as Heidi Fleiss, Saddam Hussein, Richard Nixon, and the Cali Cartel. He also clarifies the nuts and bolts: the shell companies, off-the-shelf banks, false invoicing ruses, and the rest. In the end, writes Robinson, the enforcers are fighting a losing battle. Bankers and governments worldwide scramble to make sure some of the estimated several hundred billion dollars in laundered funds each year sticks to their fingers. Even worse, he writes, new technologies such as "cybercash" will soon leave the launderers further ahead.

As a popular overview, *The Laundrymen* serves well, but as a serious study it has problems, not least its failure to source sometimes incredible claims. Although Robinson has compiled an impressive bibliography, he forgoes footnotes and frequently omits sources in the text. The reader can thus only wonder where he heard, for instance, that "the North Vietnamese used drugs as an effective weapon in the guerrilla war" against the US, or that hundreds of East European Communist officials raked in fortunes from drug trafficking. Perhaps such anecdotes are more than apocryphal, but *The Laundrymen* won't help you find out.

More likely, such sweeping claims, along with similar unsourced tales about Nicaragua, Cuba, the IRA, and other US demons, reveal the author's sympathies. Such biases also color Robinson's portrayal of European bankers as somehow soft because they refuse to go along with the US. Similarly, his immersion in fed-culture leads him to suggest that only applying the death penalty to bankers, attorneys, and brokers as well as international dope dealers might cure the problem. And even he admits that probably wouldn't work.

The Militarization of the US-Mexico Border, 1978-1992: Low-Intensity Conflict Doctrine Comes Home

by Timothy J. Dunn

CMAS BOOKS/UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS PRESS, 1996, ENDNOTES, BIBLIOGRAPHY, INDEX, 307 PP., \$14.95 PB.

The US-Mexico border has been contested terrain, both geographically and symbolically, ever since the Mexican-American War ended in 1848. As Timothy Dunn points out, it took the US Army, National Guard, and Texas Rangers to subdue Mexicano discontent along the Rio Grande until the 1920s. Relative tranquility reigned until the 1960s when Chicano nationalism emerged from the fields and *barrios* of the Southwest. Once again, the border looms large in US domestic politics, marking the frontier between apple-pie America and the Third World menace.

As Dunn perceptively notes, controlling the human traffic across the border serves primarily to regulate labor flows for the benefit of US business. But such functions are not discussed in mainstream political discourse. Instead, the border becomes a symbolic locus for US

phobias about security and identity. Here, two of the hottest hot-button issues — immigration and drug trafficking — provide politicians the opportunity to outbid one another as protectors of "the American way of life." Amid the posturing and symbolism, however, the push to tighten the lid on the border produces real effects on the ground.

In detailing those effects, Dunn takes a fresh, unconventional, and ultimately rewarding approach. The University of Texas sociologist views efforts to control the border through the prism of low-intensity conflict doctrine (LIC). After all, Dunn argues, although LIC was designed as a counterinsurgency strategy against Third World revolutionaries, enforcement measures along the border fit well within its parameters. Trends toward an increasingly paramilitary Border Patrol, the coordination of police and military functions, the use of military equipment, and, most disturbingly, the doctrinal blind spot toward human rights abuses are all present.

Since 1992, the end of the period under his gaze, the pace of militarization has quickened dramatically. The size of the Border Patrol doubled in the 15 years of Dunn's study; it will double again under the new immigration bill. Similarly, coordinated state-local-federal law enforcement efforts have multiplied, and are expanding eastward.

American Militias: Rebellion, Racism, and Religion by Richard Abanes

INTERVARSITY PRESS, 1996, ENDNOTES, BIBLIOGRAPHY, INDEX, 296 PP., \$25.95 HB.

More than two years after the Oklahoma City bombing, the militias continue to make headlines. Before the Olympics, some Georgia militiamen were caught playing with dynamite, and this summer, the FBI and ATF busted the Arizona Viper militia for allegedly plotting to blow up parts of downtown Phoenix. In October, the West Virginia Mountaineer Militia went down in another alleged plot, this time to destroy the FBI's fingerprint headquarters.

The militia phenomenon has likewise spurred a publishing cottage industry including a frenzy of reprints of decade-old works on militia precursors such as the Order and the Posse Comitatus. This year, professional militia-watchers Morris Dees of the Southern Poverty Law Center and Kenneth

Stern of the ADL contributed worried tomes calling for tougher laws and stricter law enforcement. Anti-racist activist Mike Novick's *White Lies*, *White Power* also raised the alarm but cautioned not to rely on the state to fight the fringe right.

Like the other militia-related books, Richard Abanes' *American Militias* points to the Waco-Ruby Ridge-Brady Bill trinity as sparking the movement. He also agrees that the pivotal Estes Park, Colorado, meeting cemented the unholy alliance among white supremacists, Christian Identity followers, and "angry white guys." Similarly, all provide portraits of key militia figures and trace the connections among the different components of the militia movement.

Abanes separates himself from the pack on several counts. His nuanced exploration of the lengthy conspiracy pedigree behind such militia bugaboos as the New World Order, the black helicopters, and the international bankers is especially illuminating. Abanes traces modern conspiracy thought back to foes of the French Revolution, who in turn used the template provided by the blood libels against the Jews in early and medieval Europe. Along the way, he demolishes one by one the current myths of the militia movement.

Similarly, Abanes, founder and director of the Religious Information Center of Southern California, is alone in adequately explaining the tenets of Christian Identity, the racist, apocalyptic dogma adapted by Randy Weaver, the Aryan Nations, and a significant — if unknown — portion of the militia movement. And it is here that Abanes has a point to make: Christian Identity is not, he says, a Christian denomination. Citing chapter and verse, Abanes takes great pains to separate the hate-filled racism of Pastor Pete Peters and his ilk from the fellowship of mainstream Christianity. Along the way, he takes some well-deserved pokes at conservative Christians such as Pat Robertson and militia members and leaders. He shows how they willfully ignore or, at best, fail to confront the hateful heresies of Christian Identity.

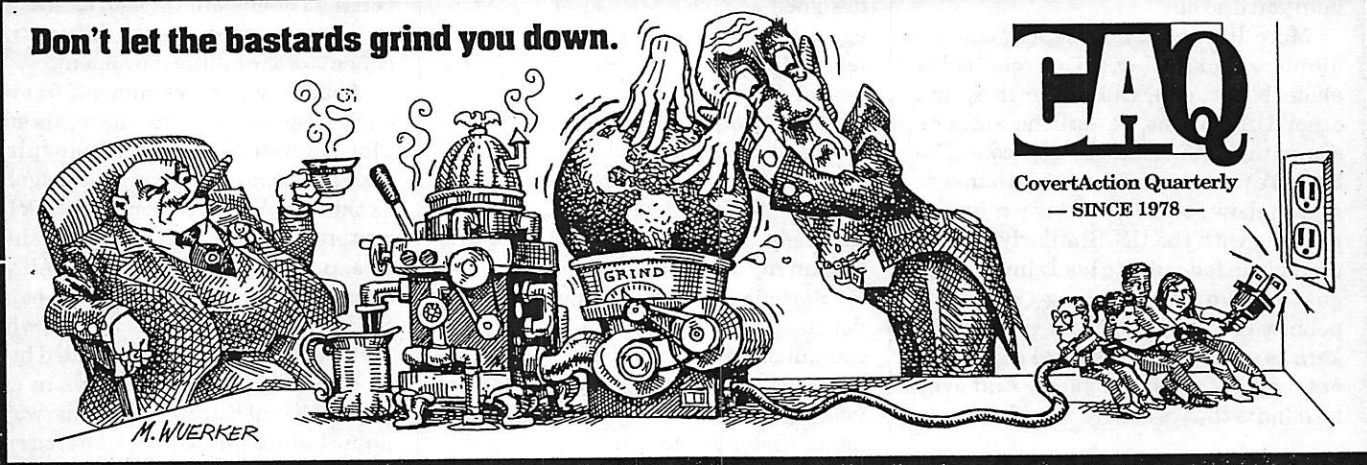
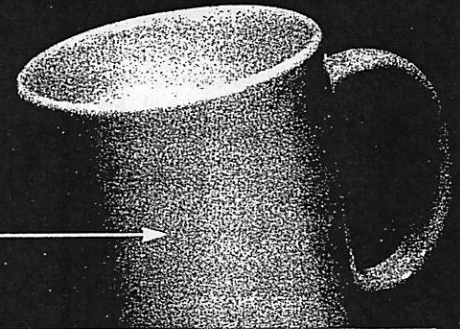
Abanes has an ax to grind, but it is a worthy one. And on the way to the grindstone, he has produced an exhaustively documented, smoothly written, and excellent portrait of a phenomenon. ■

— Phillip Smith

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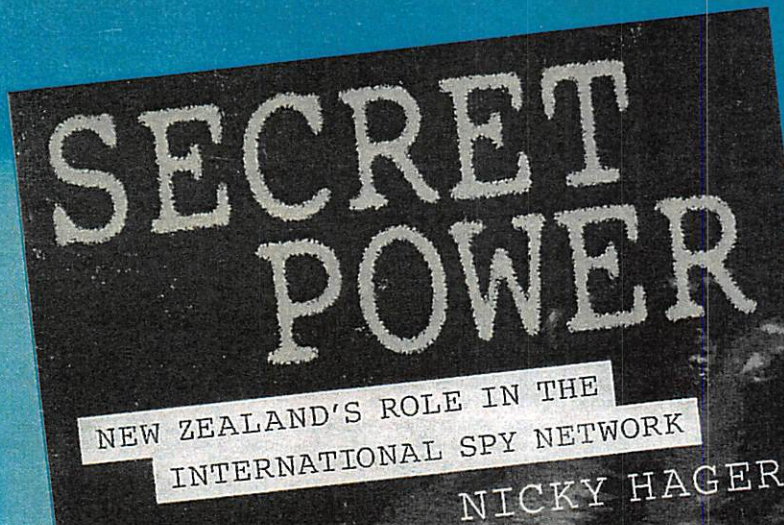
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