

THE AFRICA DOSS

As British influence in Africa declined, so did British secret service sending hundreds of agents to African capitals like Accra, Lagos to buttress "sensitive" states against communism and protect

E. H. Cookridge continues his exclusive series on the CIA

THE adventurous operations often bordering on the bizarre which the Central Intelligence Agency pursued in many parts of the world are usually ascribed to one man: Allen Dulles. They culminated in the abortive invasion of Cuba in 1961. When Dulles departed from the directorship of CIA after the Bay of Pigs debacle, he certainly left an indelible stamp of his influence as the architect of the mighty CIA edifice and its worldwide ramifications.

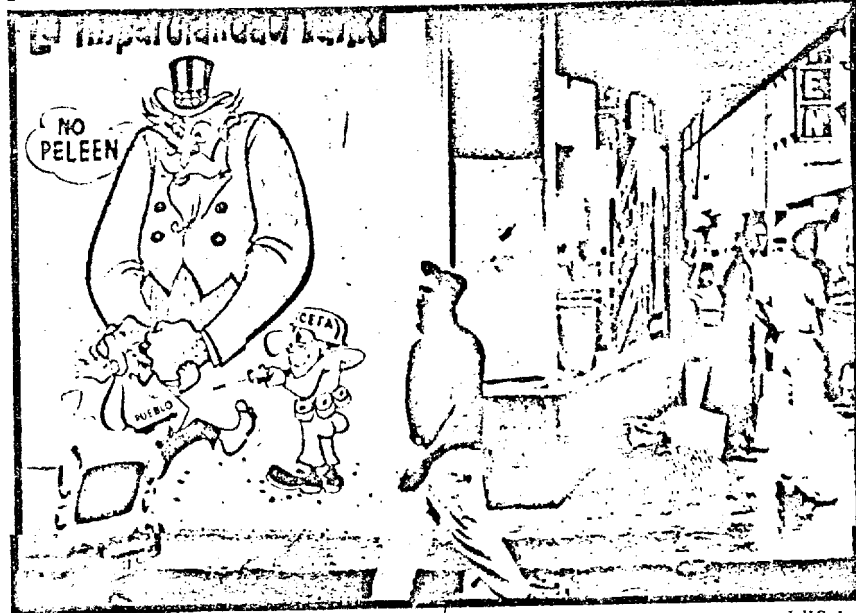
The policy of his successors has, however, been no less forceful. CIA activities under its present director, Richard McGarrah Helms, may appear less aggressive because they are being conducted with greater caution and less publicity, and because they have been adroitly adjusted to the changing climate in international politics. In the past CIA gained notoriety by promoting revolutions in Latin American banana republics, and supporting anti-communist regimes in South-East Asia. Its operations in Africa were more skilfully camouflaged. For many years they had been on a limited scale because the CIA had relied on the British secret service to provide intelligence from an area where the British had unsurpassed experience and long-established sources of information. But with the emergence of the many African independent countries, the wave of "anti-colonialist" emotions, and the growing infiltration of Africa by Soviet and Chinese "advisers", British influence declined. Washington forcefully stepped, through CIA, into the breach, with the avowed aim of containing communist expansion.

Financial investments in new industrial and mining enterprises, and lavish economic aid to the emerging governments of the "underdeveloped" countries, paved the road for the influx of hundreds of CIA agents. Some combined their intelligence assignments with genuine jobs as technical, agricultural and scientific advisers.

The British Government - particularly after the Labour Party had come to power in 1964 - withdrew most of their SIS and MI5 officials from African capitals, though some remained, at the request of the rulers, to organise their own new intelligence and security services. CIA



A bloodless coup in Uganda in January last and installed Major-General Idi Amin as military ruler (Amin is shown in a section of his troops). How far was the CIA involved in the coup? A pro-rebel poster attacks American intervention



men began hurriedly to establish their "stations" in Accra, Lagos, Nairobi, Kampala, Dar-es-Salaam, Lusaka, the "sensitive areas" in danger of slipping under communist sway.

By the mid-1960s several senior CIA officials, such as Thomas J. Gunning and Edward Foy, both former U.S. Army Intelligence officers, were firmly established at Accra. They were later joined by William B. Edmondson, who had served for many years as a skilful FBI agent before joining CIA and being employed at Addis Ababa, Nairobi, and Dar-es-Salaam, acquiring fluency in Swahili. By 1965 the Accra CIA Station had two-score active operators, distributing largesse among President Nkrumah's secret adversaries.

The Americans had every intention of helping Ghana's economy by building a dam on the Volta River, in partnership with the British consortium, the Volta Dam, thus providing hydro-electric power for the

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A reply to Nigeria critique

Following is a reply to a criticism by the Africa Research group of the Guardian's Jan. 24 Viewpoint on Nigeria. The ARG which compiles the bi-weekly Africa column in this newspaper, characterized the Viewpoint as simplistic. Richard Ward, the Guardian's foreign editor, writes:

A Vietnamese journalist recently said the struggle in his country could be viewed in terms of a piece of straw resting on a rock: the straw being the Saigon regime and the rock U.S. imperialism. Once the rock is smashed, the straw would obviously fall, he said, while making an expressive motion with his fist.

This analogy illustrates a basic truth—that U.S. imperialism is the cause of the war in Vietnam and that without the support of the U.S., the Saigon regime will collapse. This is not to say that internal questions in South Vietnam have no importance, but the fundamental element is U.S. imperialism.

A confusion of primary and secondary questions was made by the Africa Research Group's criticism of the Guardian Viewpoint Jan. 24 on the war in Nigeria. The editorial and a longer article in the same issue discussed both the internal forces within Nigeria and historical role of imperialism, providing specific facts documenting the relationship between Gen. Ojukwu's secessionist movement and the oil monopolies, demonstrating that Western oil interests were behind the war.

Ignoring the facts

ARG stated U.S. corporations should be called "into account" for their role in Nigeria and that "the presence of the oil companies was significant," yet they completely evaded discussing the actual relationship between the oil interests and Biafra. This omission invalidates their analysis. Anything can be proven in political "analysis" if one ignores basic facts.

Despite an anti-imperialist posture and claims of putting forward "a radical class-based analysis," ARG's statements in the Guardian and other publications serve to obscure the situation in Nigeria and minimize the real role of imperialism.

This was not ARG's intention, but it appears to be a classic case of inability to see the forest for the trees. ARG has called attention to certain mechanisms, such as aid programs, by which imperialism tries to maintain its control and confused them with the driving forces behind imperialism.

While advising us "to learn something about the actual conditions" in the third world, ARG appears to be unaware that the search for profit is the heart of the question of imperialism. Specifically, ARG says "our task is not to rail against the 'greed of the oil companies'" and that "the bloodshed in Nigeria did not come spouting out of an oil well." To an all too unfortunate extent, however, it did in fact come "spouting out of an oil well" and to miss this point is to miss much of the reason for the Biafran tragedy.

No popular demand

The birth of the "Biafran" nation did not accidentally coincide with Nigeria's entry into the ranks of the world's leading oil producers. Despite the "tribal rivalries" which Westerners are so fond of citing, the demand for a separate nation only arose when Ojukwu thought he could finance his bid for power with oil revenues and was given encouragement by U.S. and British oil corporations. There was no popular demand for independence, no guerrilla warfare, indicating that the Ibo masses were behind the secession.

"In 1967, the Ibos became intensely oil-minded," wrote the Paris newsweekly L'Express in its Jan. 19 issue. "From their territory, they thought they could cut the oil lines and exploit the 67% of the [Nigerian oil] reserves located in their province. This factor gave them the illusion of strength and pushed them to take the risk of secession."

"When the flag of secession was raised in Biafra," wrote Lawrence Fellows in the Jan. 30 N.Y. Times, "as the Biafrans saw it, oil was to be the foundation of their republic's wealth." As early as Jan. 23, 1967, Le Monde reported nine of 12 oil companies operating in Nigeria were American and by self-interest the U.S. was sympathetic to the cause of Lt. Col. Ojukwu. Gulf Oil in particular was said to be "very favorable to the separatists," as was Shell-British Petroleum, which then controlled 85% of Nigerian oil production.

The Biafra war effort quickly bogged down after an initial summer 1967 offensive and its U.S. and British backers quickly changed their stance, but then the smaller vultures, the French and Italian national oil companies, stepped in and gambled on Ojukwu. C.L. Sulzberger has clearly revealed that in the eyes of imperialism the era of Rudyard Kipling was not dead. In the Jan. 23 N.Y. Times; Sulzberger wrote:

"French policy in Nigeria laid down by de Gaulle, paralleled French policy in the Congo. In each case it sought to pry loose from an 'Anglo-Saxon' zone of influence huge and prosperous chunks—Katanga, with its copper and uranium, from a pro-American Congo, and Biafra, with its oil, from a pro-British Nigeria.

Another article, "A Strong Smell of Oil," in the Jan. 27 Jeune Afrique, calls attention to the role of AGIP, a subsidiary of ENI, the Italian national oil corporation, which reportedly paid the Biafran treasury \$3 million in June 1969.

France was one of the main arms suppliers to Biafra. With characteristic imperialistic candor, Paris claimed that the French-made arms must have been given by sympathetic African countries. But Jacques Decornoy reported in the Jan. 20 Le Monde that this assertion caused smiles in Libreville, capital of Gabon. "One cannot see how Gabon could have furnished thousands of tons of arms and munitions,"

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Finally, the role of the U.S. and Britain is different than they would like the world to believe. Both nominally supported Nigeria, once Ojukwu floundered. The British supplied arms, but not enough to bring the war to a conclusion. The U.S. embargoed arms to both the Nigerians and Biafrans (if we discount reports of CIA involvement) and it furnished economic aid to both, as did Britain. Neither British nor U.S. actions are consistent with the view that they favored a strong, unified Nigeria. What they wanted was a prolonged war which they thought would leave Nigeria riven by internal rivalries, as were fostered by the federal institutions imposed under British colonialism.

This does not exhaust the story of imperialist intervention in Nigeria. But it should be clear that although Africans did the fighting, it was at bottom a war for oil, a war instigated and promoted by the greed of the oil companies.

The Africa Research Group's article in the Jan. 31 Guardian contained the sentence: "Imperialist institutions cannot be checked." That and its preceding sentence should be: "If imperialist institutions cannot be checked, the pattern of Nigeria-Biafra may be repeated in other parts of Africa."

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Lagos Radio Assails U.S., Britain, Holland

Exclusive to The Times from Reuters

LAGOS, Nigeria—Radio Nigeria Tuesday criticized the United States, Britain and the Netherlands as fair weather friends and said the Soviet Union had done more than any other nation to help Nigeria crush its rebellion.

In a commentary, read after news bulletins, the station said the United States had adopted a policy of negative neutrality while the Central Intelligence Agency was pouring weapons and money into the rebel camp.

The commentary singled out for greatest criticism the Netherlands, which did not "give a damn" over what happened in Nigeria as long as its oil interests were not affected.

Britain developed cold feet at the crucial moment in the early stages of the war, the commentary said, when the rebels had appeared to be gaining strength. However, it had changed later, the statement added.

The commentary said the Soviet Union, toward which Nigerian relations had been cool in the past, had stepped in like a true friend when fair weather friends had failed.

Russia sold arms and equipment for "raw cash," the commentary said.

"Thanks to the Soviet Union, the federal government succeeded in crushing the rebellion," it concluded.

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deal with than a united Nigeria—particularly if oil money were used to gain "independence."

In this connection it is important to remember that before Biafra's secession the federal government had presented a request for an increase of its share in the oil revenues. General Ojukwu and the group he spoke for were willing to settle for less—and Biafra was launched.

Contrary to the expectations of the oil companies and despite the assistance from the West, Ojukwu's effort quickly bogged down and the Nigerian army, which was not simply fighting tiny Biafra but countering a major drive by Western imperialism, never lost the upper hand.

After plans for a quick secession had been frustrated, only France and the French oil interests fully backed Ojukwu to the end. France was betting on Ojukwu in hopes of gaining a larger share of the oil concession at the expense of British and U.S. companies.

Once it was clear that a long war was in prospect, the U.S. and Britain backed Nigeria officially but did nothing to hinder the huge "private" relief operations, which were an important factor in keeping the war going. Armaments, it is well known, sometimes arrived on the relief planes; CIA involvement in these mercy flights may well be confirmed when the full story is told. Last week the London Express reported that Ojukwu was spirited out of Nigeria in an unmarked aircraft—one of the CIA's so-called ghost planes used for especially secret operations.

The U.S. policy called for a compromise settlement. If secession would not work, the oil companies and Washington sought some kind of semi-autonomous arrangement which would have weakened Nigeria although it would have preserved Nigerian hegemony.

The actual outcome, total defeat for Biafra, was the last development anticipated by imperialist interests. It was an important victory for Nigeria, but it cannot be forgotten that imperialism remains solidly entrenched in Nigeria. British and U.S. capital dominate the economy.

The strategy of contemporary imperialism—neocolonialism—involves the uses of puppets like Diem, Thieu, Ky and the others who do U.S. bidding in Vietnam, or like Ojukwu, from one of Nigeria's richest families and closely tied to Western economic interests. Neocolonialism also seeks to perpetuate the internal rivalries it fostered in the colonial era, when Africa was carved up without the slightest regard for national or tribal boundaries. What appeared to be tribal rivalry in Nigeria actually was a struggle for imperialist interests.

Contrary to the propaganda of Ojukwu's supporters, it should be pointed out that the federal Nigerian government was not responsible for the Ibo massacres in 1966 nor did it ever have any interest in Ibo genocide, as the Western admirers of Biafra have charged. The 1966 massacre was primarily a legacy of British colonialism, which gave the Ibo advantages over other peoples—the majority of the Nigerian population. When the British left, bourgeois elements among the Ibos dreamed of dominating Nigeria in collaboration with the Western interests. The 1966 massacres, encouraged by regional feudal elements, should have warned the Ibo leaders of the dangers of making a bid for control. But the Ibo bourgeoisie persisted in its bid for power, concealing it behind the alleged threat of genocide.

It would be naive to assume that the groundswell of popular support in the West for Biafra was a completely spontaneous development. Although the campaign for Biafra enlisted the support of many honest persons who

VIEW POINT

The war ends

None but the most diehard reactionaries could feel anything but satisfaction that the civil war in Nigeria has finally ended.

The attempted secession of Biafra was never in the interests of the Nigerian masses, including the Ibos, who dominated Biafra.

Recognizing how far Nigeria must go to produce a social system reflecting the needs of the Nigerian people, there was never any question that the break up of Africa's largest state was a regressive development, bound only to benefit imperialism.

In essence, the struggle over Biafra was a consequence of neo-colonialism, of Western imperialism striving to increase its profits in Nigeria. It is not a mere coincidence that when Biafra sought to secede in May 1967 the overwhelming bulk of Nigeria's known oil resources were to be found within "Biafran" territory.

It was, in a sense, an oil war, having little resemblance to liberation struggles as they have come to be defined in numerous wars for national liberation fought throughout the world.

At the beginning of the conflict, Biafra was supported by U.S., British, French and other oil interests. Without this support, which implied future backing by respective Western nations and without the expectation of oil revenues to finance the new state, it is hardly likely General Ojukwu and the Biafran comprador bourgeoisie he represented—a class which could rule only in collusion with imperialist interests—would have contemplated secession. Without the cash payment by the oil monopolies and military and economic aid from abroad, it is doubtful Biafra could have held out for more than a few weeks. In the final stages of the war the "mercy" shipments of food only prolonged a futile and losing venture at the expense of millions of people in Biafra.

The rhetoric of the Biafran struggle was independence but the reality would have been Biafra's subordination to oil imperialism. Biafra would have been easier to

New Relief Shipments Arrive in Lagos

Reuters

LAGOS, Jan. 23—New relief shipments from the United States, Canada and Britain landed here today but there still was no word on when food and medical supplies might be flown to three former Biafran airstrips the government has cleared for such cargoes.

The airports at Port Harcourt, Enugu and Calabar form a triangle embracing most of the former secessionist territory. The government yesterday approved use of the airfields but ruled out use of Uli airport, last major lifeline to Biafra before the civil war ended.

The first of three mobile hospitals requested by Nigeria arrived by air from Boston with 26 Jeeps, supplies of drugs and two American medical advisers. Air Canada flew in 10 tons of drugs donated by the Canadian Red Cross.

Charter flights from Britain brought two heavy trucks and several tons of medical supplies.

Many doctors and nurses already had left for the war-torn east-central state and 15 more doctors and 13 nurses were due in Lagos Monday.

Officials continued to examine reports sent from Owerri in former Biafran territory by correspondents flown there on an authorized visit earlier in the week. Officials were known to be incensed at some reports they considered unbalanced and with no mention of government relief efforts.

Radio Nigeria exhorts war refugees hourly to stay where they are until relief supplies arrive, but workers say there are not nearly enough trucks available to get the job done.

[Reports of victorious Nigerian troops raping nurses gained credence today when Brig. John Drewry, Canadian member of an international observer team here, said some nurses "who have been raped are hiding in the bush afraid to come out," a UPI dispatch said.

[In Geneva today, Joint Church Aid, the group barred by Nigeria because it helped relieve Biafran suffering during the war, said it would withdraw its aircraft from Sao Tome but would leave tons of relief supplies stored there

for other agencies to distribute.]

Ivory Coast Gives Asylum To Ojukwu

From News Dispatches

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast, Jan. 23—Gen. C. Odumegwu Ojukwu, who fled Biafra before its capitulation to Nigeria Jan. 12, has been granted political asylum in this West African country, a government communique announced today.

His whereabouts had been a mystery since he left Biafra Jan. 10 on a plane that flew him to the Portuguese island of Sao Tome off Nigeria. The announcement said Ojukwu is now in the Ivory Coast.

Today's communique noted that President Felix Houphouet-Boigny had said recently: "The Ivory Coast will never give asylum to a government in exile. The Ivory Coast will never serve as a base for subversion to no matter whom against no matter whom. This very clear position permits our country to receive any political refugee who agrees to respect this rule.

"It is by virtue of this solemn principle that we accorded the right of asylum to Gen. Ojukwu when he arrived in the Ivory Coast. It is by virtue of this solemn principle that Gen. Ojukwu, although entirely free in his movements, will have no political activity in the Ivory Coast."

Ojukwu, 36, left the provisional secessionist capital of Owerri as the Biafran state, set up May 30, 1967, was on the point of collapse.

[In Sweden, the count who led the tiny Biafran air force said tonight Ojukwu left Biafra voluntarily. Count Carl Gustav von Rosen added that as far as he knew the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency "had nothing to do with" Ojukwu's air escape.]

Nigeria Reassures Rogers of Welcome

Associated Press

The Nigerian government has assured the United States that Secretary of State William P. Rogers will be a welcome guest when he visits Lagos next month.

The assurance, State Department press officer Robert J. McCloskey said today, was

given to U.S. Ambassador William C. Trueheart by an unidentified Nigerian official.

It sharply contradicted an editorial in the Lagos newspaper Morning Post, which said that Rogers would not be welcome because of alleged antagonistic statements he made about Nigeria.

"We had renewed assurances that the secretary will be welcome and that the Nigerian government is looking forward to his visit," McCloskey told a news conference. "The official in Lagos expressed regret that the editorial had appeared and assured us that it did not reflect government policy."

Rogers is due in Lagos Feb. 19 for a 24-hour visit at the Nigerian capital during his 10-nation visit to Africa.