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Casey's smart (and rich), but does he run a fit

TINKER, TINKER, TINKER

BY MORTON KONDRACKI

UNITED STATES intelligence apparently had an idea that the so-called Party of God, an Iranian-connected, Syrian-protected Shiite Moslem group that car-bombed the U.S. Embassy in Beirut last April, was planning an attack on U.S. Marines. But U.S. intelligence did not have agents inside the group and therefore could not warn with precision that it was planning the truck-bombing that killed more than 230 Marines on October 23. U.S. intelligence knew, too, that Cuba and the Soviet Union were militarizing Grenada, but again the United States had no intelligence agents on the island and underestimated Cuban troop strength. The U.S. had not penetrated Maurice Bishop's New Jewel Movement, and did not know that Bishop's colleagues were planning to oust and kill him. And when Prime Minister Eugenia Charles of Dominica reported to the White House press on October 25 that "we noted with great interest the movements between Soviet Embassies and known activists" prior to Bishop's assassination, it also was news to White House policymakers.

On the other hand, the Central Intelligence Agency did predict correctly that the Soviet Union would not invade Poland in 1981, but would crack down through Polish authorities instead. Using its superb technical capabilities, U.S. intelligence was able to develop a precise analysis of how Korean Air Lines' Flight 007 was tracked by the Soviet Union, lost, found again, and shot down. And, several months before Leonid Brezhnev's death, the director of Central Intelligence, William Casey, reported to President Reagan that Brezhnev likely would not be succeeded by a collective leadership, as agency analysts had concluded. "Chernenko peaked too soon," Casey wrote Reagan in a memo. "Kirilenko

faded in the stretch bet money, I'd say across the board."

Casey's prescience, is likely to be ing to well-informed more disturbing re tell the President dropov had pushed



DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

zier was kidnapped by the Red Brigades in Italy, the C.I.A. dug hard to discover who had him and where; but U.S. officials say that in general, journalists like Claire Sterling have put together a better picture of international terrorist networks than the C.I.A. When Turkish gunman Mohammed Ali Agca shot the Pope, they say, the President found out more about Soviet and Bulgarian involvement from *Reader's Digest* than from U.S. intelligence.

The C.I.A. can't know everything, but the Republican Party correctly declared in its 1980 election platform that "the United States requires a realistic assessment of the threats it faces" and "must have the best intelligence capability in the world." The platform said, "Republicans pledge this for the United States." Three years into this Republican Administration, the United States certainly has a better intelligence capability than it did in 1980—it could hardly fail in that—but overall it is still far from the best in the world. Can William J. Casey make it so? Well, he gets credit for trying—even from his adversaries—but there's reason to doubt that he can.

CONTINUED

Congress at Work

U.S. Spying: Partisanship Re-Emerges

By ROBERT C. TOTH,
Times Staff Writer

WASHINGTON—Seven years ago, in the wake of charges that U.S. intelligence agencies had engaged in assassination attempts and domestic spying, the United States became the world's first democracy to try to control secret spy activities through legislative committees.

The Senate and House intelligence committees created then are the only significant reform to have come from sensational congressional investigations that produced 200 formal findings and more than 40 proposals for change. All other major reform attempts have failed.

Across the political spectrum, from conservative Sen. Barry Goldwater (R-Ariz.) to liberal former Vice President Walter F. Mondale, the committees are given high grades for their performance in monitoring U.S. intelligence activities. But within the last year, partisanship has erupted and thrown a deep shadow over the future of the committees.

Consensus Breaks Down

The consensus on which the panels operated for six years— that intelligence oversight, much like intelligence activities themselves and the military services, should be above politics—broke down when the Democratic-controlled House Intelligence Committee voted along party lines to release a staff report critical of U.S. intelligence efforts in Nicaragua.

This "politicization of intelligence" has since been decried by conservatives, who see the House committee as having become "a weapon against this Administration" and fear that the same thing would occur in the Senate committee if it were not Republican-controlled. Some liberals, on the other hand, applaud it as a fair extension of party fights over foreign policy.

The immediate danger, according to Adm. Bobby R. Inman, the highly respected former deputy director of central intelligence who served in high posts in both Democratic and Republican administrations, "is that when (the committees) make decisions along party lines, they run a high risk of drawing a partisan reaction from the Administration in power."

Possible Retaliation Seen

Some Democrats believe that such a retaliation may have occurred this year with release of an FBI report suggesting that the Soviet secret police manipulate nuclear freeze advocates, among whom were most of the Democrats in the House.

Some Republicans, for their part, suggest that the Democrats resorted to partisanship after news leaks became ineffective as a congressional weapon for vetoing intelligence operations. In Nicaragua, for instance, U.S. funding and arming of anti-Sandinista guerrillas—"the most overt covert operation in history," as one intelligence official put it—has continued and even increased, despite news leaks about the operation. Leaks about similar aid to anti-Soviet Afghan rebels and anti-Libyan forces in Chad have not forced a curtailment in the operations.

The partisanship, which each

party accuses the other of starting, seems certain to continue on the issue of Central America. It also could spill over into two other controversial areas in which the Administration has recently acted:

—Paramilitary operations. The total number of covert, or secret, activities by the CIA has risen only marginally, to perhaps 15 compared to 10 or 12 in the last years of the Jimmy Carter Administration. "Covert activities per se are not controversial, but covert paramilitary operations are," one congressman said.

To the dismay of many Democrats, most of the new Reagan Administration covert activities have been paramilitary, involving the costly purchase of foreign arms and equipment to disguise the source. The Carter Administration put greater emphasis on secret programs to spread disinformation and to fund pro-American politicians in foreign countries, sources said.



Associated Press

Barry Goldwater

more difficult.

But the need for tactical, on-the-ground intelligence for the military services was starkly demonstrated last month in the Grenada invasion. That "intelligence failure" showed that the CIA, with its larger focus on foreign political, economic and strategic issues, often does not satisfy military needs. (The CIA also has tended to ignore Central America generally, closing its station in El Salvador two years before the rebellion began there in 1980.) Pentagon requests for its own clandestine collection service could be revived as a result.

Political conditions and public attitudes toward intelligence agencies have changed significantly since 1976 when Congress conducted investigations into intelligence abuses and the committees, headed by former Sen. Frank Church (D-Ida.) and former Rep. Otis Pike (D-N.Y.), called for drastic reforms.

Experts Say 5 Arms Pacts Suggest Moscow Had Designs on Grenada

By PHILIP TAUBMAN

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Nov. 5 — United States military and intelligence experts said today that five Soviet-bloc military aid agreements with the former Government of Grenada suggested that the Soviet Union and Cuba appeared to have been preparing to use Grenada as a guerrilla training site or a depot for the shipment of military equipment to leftist rebels in Latin America.

The experts said the agreements would have provided aid that exceeded the needs of the Grenadian armed forces.

Russians Promised Weapons

The specialists, including former senior officials in Republican and Democratic Administrations, said the amount of military aid outlined in the agreements, more than \$38 million over five years, did not show in themselves that the island was in danger of being occupied by Cuba.

Copies of the agreements were made public by the State Department on Friday.

Under the secret agreements, the Soviet Union and North Korea promised to send Grenada large numbers of weapons, including 4,000 submachine guns, 2,500 automatic rifles, 7,000 mines, 15,000 grenades, 60 armored personnel carriers and more than 10,000 military uniforms. Cuba agreed to base 27 military advisers in Grenada full time until the expiration of its

agreement with Grenada on Dec. 31, 1984.

But, the experts said, the quantity of arms and ammunition, and the number of advisers called for in the agreements, did not by themselves necessarily mean that the island was becoming a Soviet-Cuban colony.

President Reagan, in an address to the nation on Oct. 27, two days after United States forces invaded Grenada, said American troops reached the island "just in time" to prevent a planned "Cuban occupation."

Reagan Administration officials said today that the military agreements formed only part of the Government's contention that Grenada was rapidly falling under Soviet and Cuban control. The officials cited earlier Administration reports about large stockpiles of military equipment already located on the island, the construction of a 10,000-foot runway at Point Salines that could accommodate long-range Soviet bombers and advanced jet fighter aircraft and minutes of meetings among Grenadian leaders.

Bobby R. Inman, Deputy Director of Central Intelligence in the first two years of the Reagan Administration, said today that based on descriptions of the agreements he had seen in news reports, "it appears that Grenada was going to be used by the Soviet Union and Cuba as a contingency depot to facilitate the export of revolution in this hemisphere."

Mr. Inman, who resigned last year to go into private business, added: "I can't draw an automatic conclusion about the degree of Soviet and Cuban control these agreements meant for Grenada. In democratic countries, where military aid is usually overt, the control that flows from such agreements is relatively limited, but in nations with an authoritarian government, whether right or left, the potential for a handful of outsiders to exert control becomes much greater."

A former senior Defense Department official who served in the Carter Administration said: "The amount of aid specified in the agreements was far more than Grenada could absorb for its own use, suggesting that the weapons were going to be re-exported or used for training paramilitary forces from

other nations. But if you break it down over five years, \$7 or \$8 million a year in military aid doesn't buy control of a country, even one as small as Grenada."

Differing Interpretations

Another former Defense Department official who specialized in military assistance matters for the Carter Administration said the military aid packages with Grenada could be interpreted several ways.

The official said: "If you're predisposed to see a Soviet and Cuban threat, then you can find evidence of a significant military buildup in Grenada and carry it one step farther to see the makings of a Soviet-Cuban puppet state. On the other hand, if you bring a different bias to the agreements, it's possible to argue that a paranoid, Marxist leadership was rushing to improve its armed forces for fear that Grenada might be invaded someday."

Minutes of Grenadians' Meetings

The official added, "It might not be convincing, but the Russians could take the United States military assistance program in El Salvador or Honduras and by just presenting the raw numbers of guns and ammunition make the propaganda argument that the United States is turning those countries into a military bastion."

Reagan Administration officials said that minutes of meetings among Grenadian leftist leaders showed a growing dependence on Cuba, with frequent references to meetings with the Cuban Ambassador and repeated concern about how the Cubans would react to various political decisions. These records were also made public by the State Department on Friday.

Deputy Secretary of State Kenneth W. Dam told an editors' conference in Kentucky on Friday that, taken together, these pieces of intelligence information suggested "that Grenada would have become a fortified Soviet military outpost."

He said the Soviet and Cuban presence the United States found in Grenada "may be summed up as the military underpinnings" for the use of Grenada as "a staging area for subversion of nearby countries, for interdiction of shipping lanes and for transit of troops and supplies from Cuba to Africa and from Eastern Europe and Libya to Central America."

Administration officials denied today that the State Department, concerned that the documents would not fully support the Administration's statements about Soviet and Cuban activities in Grenada, intentionally delayed public release of the papers until early evening on Friday to limit coverage on television news broadcasts.

The officials said that the release of the documents was delayed because of mechanical problems in copying and assembling the papers and getting final approval for their publication from Sir Paul Scoon, the Governor General of