

according to testimony delivered to a U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Oceans and International Environment in January and March 1974 by Dr. Gordon McDonald, Vice President of the Pentagon's Institute for Defense Research.

"Two techniques have been suggested through recent experience."

1. In the course of the underground testing of nuclear weapons at the Nevada test site, it was observed that an explosion apparently released local strain in the earth. The hypothesis is that the swift build-up of strain due to the sudden release of energy in an explosion discharges strain energy over a large volume of material."

2. Another method of releasing strain energy has appeared from pumping of underground water in the vicinity of Denver, Colorado, which has led to a series of small earthquakes. The hypothesis here is that underground water has provided local lubrication permitting adjacent blocks to slip by one another."

"The use as a weapon system of the strain energy instability within the solid earth requires an effective triggering mechanism. A scheme for pumping water seems clumsy and easily detectable. On the other hand, if the strain pattern in the crust can be accurately determined, the phased or timed release of energy from the smaller faults, designed to trigger a large fault at some distance, could be contemplated."

Mr. McDonald then elaborated on the possibilities of "secret war."

"Eventually...means other than open warfare may be used...by a nation...to create a disturbed environment for its competitors. Operations producing such conditions might be carried out covertly, since nature's great irregularity permits storms, floods, droughts, earthquakes and tidal waves to be viewed as unusual but not unexpected. Such a 'secret war' need never be declared or even known by the affected population. It could go on for years with only the security forces involved being aware of it...only after a nation was thoroughly drained would an armed takeover be attempted."

Mr. McDonald also noted that, besides their greater efficiency of destruction, these forms of unconventional warfare provide the advantage that their utilization can be undertaken secretly and therefore, against "domestic" and allied populations.

Last Spring, Soviet Head of State and Chairman of the Soviet Communist Party, Marshall Leonid Brezhnev directly warned against NATO and his own nation's development of "new weapons of mass destruction more terrible" than nuclear weapons unless strict arms limitation agreements

were reached. Soviet Ambassador to the United Nations, Adam Malik extended Brezhnev's warning in June, 1975: "Natural cataclysms can be far more destructive than even the largest thermonuclear bombs."

This Soviet emphasis on the threat posed by NATO 'geothermal warfare' development efforts was against the subject in a feature article in the April 1976 edition of the official East German publication, Deutsche Aussenpolitik (German Foreign Politics). The author, Dr. M.M. Schneider of the Central Institute of Terrestrial Physics in Potsdam, made clear his government's belief that the U.S. Defense Department and Dr. McDonald's research colleagues were more than merely "contemplating" geo-physical warfare. Referencing U.S. military use of weather modification in Vietnam, Schneider warned that "interference into the natural environment is a means to optimize both the tactical and strategic basis of military operations. But it is a blind weapon, acting against both enemy military and civilian populations...The importance attached by the Western military to environmental warfare...is indicated by the deliberations of the Vice President of the Pentagon's Institute of Defense Research, McDonald, in his 1968 book, **Unless Peach Comes** ... assessing the feasibility of developing geophysical warfare in a prognostic way."

Dr. Schneider continued: "...The elastic tensions within the upper layers of the earth due to processes of energy exchange will either be reduced slowly by flowing movements, or they are stored and accumulated up to a certain critical mass, at which point they are suddenly released as earthquakes. It is possible to trigger the accumulated energy deliberately if one injects such an amount of energy by an initial blast that the critical mass is surpassed."

In fact, since the late 1960's if not earlier, the U.S. Department of Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA) has conducted "numerous and successful" experiments to initiate and control earthquakes. These experiments have involved both of the method "contemplated" by Dr. McDonald and outlined by Dr. Schneider: underground nuclear explosions at Colorado and Nevada testing sites, and the injection of high pressure fluids to effect "lubrication" and sudden shifts in lithospheric rocks at the Rangely Chevron Oil Fields. In fact, virtually all seismologists and geophysicists contacted by IPS in the past week have refused to comment on the possibility of NATO tampering in the Friuli earthquake, but have admitted that the capability for such tampering exists — either as the actualization of a naturally developing earthquake, or as inducement of after-shocks (as in Friuli) following an initial earthquake.

## NATO's Disaster Relief Studies

Since 1969, NATO has had a special agency devoted to the study and planning of military intervention into "natural disaster areas" — the Committee for the Challenges of the Modern World (CCMS). Of startling relevance, one of the most ambitious CCMS projects began on "Disaster Assistance" — was begun in 1973 with a special emphasis on earthquakes and floods. The U.S. as "pilot" site for this project while the "co-pilot" was Italy!

The CCMS was created within NATO in 1969, following months of intensive propaganda in NATO circles favoring an agency to plan for military intervention into civilian life in cases of "natural man-made or unusual (sic)" disasters. Most of this propaganda was concentrated in the U.S.: State Department Bulletin under the direction of Rockefeller family mouthpiece, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger.

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CCMS projects and pilot programs show a heavy emphasis on disaster-related studies and "low intensity" counterinsurgency operations with these pretext. Essentially, CCMS gathers ecological, industrial and population profile data along the lines involved in the 1944-48 period of U.S.-Allied occupation of Western Europe.

In this connection, CCMS projects have involved blueprinting of military intervention on the basis of a profile of how, for example, the Italians would tend to respond to floods and earthquakes! The evident difference between the 1944-48 operations and CCMS planning is that military rules, chaos, starvation and disease are being phased in rather than out.

As a thoughtful U.S. report to a 1971 CCMS Conference on earthquakes put the matter: "The potential for serious natural disasters exists and is growing (sic)."

Prior to that announcement of NATO capability, a U.S. report published in the February 1970 NATO Review announced a "10 year CCMS research program on earthquake prediction and engineering." With Italy as a focus for the program, CCMS was joined by several universities and foundations in the effort, including the Rockefeller Foundation. Upon completion of the specific Italian pilot project in mid-1974, a CCMS report stated: "Follow-up implementation is proceeding."

The CCMS participated in an "Environment 74" conference held in Turin, Italy from May 1-10, 1974 sponsored by

the Agnelli-owned La Stampa and the Agnelli Foundation. NATO Secretary General Luns appeared at the conference May 6 — exactly two years before the Friuli earthquake — after attending a closed door meeting of the CCMS in Verona. Verona.

"NATO is not purely a military organization," Luns said referring to the CCMS, "We take on the important activities of political consultation and we do much work in the ecological and scientific fields .... Luns then reported that NATO was involved in studying problems involved in, among other things, providing aid in natural disasters." Italy, he reported, is actively participating in this project. The NATO Secretary's remarks were widely reported in the Italian press at the time.

A short time after Luns went public with the CCMS disaster planning, Italy became the site of a full dry-run disaster. A simulated flood "took place" in the area of the Mediterranean port city, Livorno. According to a report appearing in La Stampa, the area was taken over by Carabinieri and NATO military personnel who evacuated large numbers of civilians. These "special forces" helped set up functioning local governments, hospitals, aid stations, made preparations to administer flood relief, etc. — precisely what NATO is now handling on an extended scale in Friuli.

## The Deliberate Disaster

The initial "incompetent" handling of relief for the earthquake catastrophe in northern Italy over the past week stands in marked contrast to the known operational capacity of NATO forces, as frequently demonstrated in large military maneuvers in which hundreds of thousands of troops are airlifted and relocated within 24 hours, adequate safe shelter for the troops is set up within hours, food and water are supplied, etc. NATO's bungling in the quake area can therefore only be an act of deliberate sabotage, whose aim is to set the preconditions for the acceptance of military rule by the exacerbation of existing physical and psycho-social chaos.

Even the Red Cross, which is long experienced in the kinds of chaos which "normally" accompanies disasters, has expressed shock at the degree of bungling. A Red Cross official in West Germany, interviewed by IPS five days after the quake struck, said "I've read the same reports as you have of shortages of food and supplies. But we've already sent them more than enough food and tents to take care of the (affected) population, and we're amazed that it still hasn't been delivered. We could have delivered it on site ourselves, but we were forced to funnel everything through the army (NATO) and they're not doing the job."

While the Atlanticist-controlled press attempted to blame the Italian government for bungling to maximize political chaos in the country, it is clear from initial reports that NATO forces and collaborators in especially the Interior and Defense Ministries were deliberately mis-managing the relief operation.

More than 15,000 NATO and Italian troops are in the area, "supervising" all aspects of food distribution, medical treatment, emergency housing, etc. NATO Secretary Luns has activated the NATO Center for Aid Coordination, which has directed the Civilian Emergency Plans Committee under General Alexander Haig to airlift supplies. According to on-site reports and coverage in the Italian press, the great majority of supplies have gone undelivered, many have been mismarked so that some areas have too much allotted, some areas have none, more than a week after the disaster, some

areas have not been reached at all — not even by helicopter.

Large amounts of funds, earmarked for the area, have not arrived. Millions more, supposedly sent into the area from labor organizations, charity organizations, etc., have "mysteriously" not arrived, according to local government officials in the struck province of Friuli.

Even more explicit sabotage of the on-site conditions has been documented by the Italian press. According to these reports, the bodies of hundreds of dead victims were left unburied in the streets for several days after the quake, increasing the potential for the outbreak of epidemic disease. The decontamination of wrecked buildings with quicklime was likewise unnecessarily delayed for several days, again ensuring that epidemics, such as typhoid, cholera, and dysentery, would likely spread.

NATO forces administering the "relief" have destroyed more than a hundred tons of food sent into the area, including bread, meat, and milk, saying "It is better to eliminate all that can represent a potential vehicle of contamination," but nowhere stating that any actual contamination was found.

Nor is there any attempt to relocate the hundreds of thousands of homeless victims. Zamberletti, special assistant to the Minister of the Interior Cossiga, has repeatedly issued instructions that the homeless should remain near their demolished towns, that tents will be set up, etc.

Meanwhile, the setting up of tents has been delayed. Those in tents are swimming in mud due to heavy rains. In many areas, there is still no drinkable water, forcing the populations to drink contaminated water, thereby running the risk of developing "cholera, hepatitis and typhoid," health officials in the area report.

Any such epidemic would quickly inundate the entire country since the sewers and water supply for all of Italy has been systematically destroyed in municipal austerity measures, as evidenced by the ease of spread of the 1973 cholera epidemic through Italy in which thousands were affected and hundreds perished.