

Countergangs in Nicaragua

Valerie Rush explains Eden Pastora's role in Central America and the British psychological-warfare tradition from which it stems.

On April 15, former Sandinista leader Eden Pastora convoked a press conference in San José, Costa Rica, to declare war against the Nicaraguan regime he had helped put into power. Pastora, who became famous throughout the world during the 1979 revolution against Somoza as "Comandante Cero," denounced the Nicaraguan junta as "bourgeois . . . corrupt, and traitors," and pledged that the nine junta members would be driven "from their mansions and Mercedes Benzes with bullets." The former Nicaraguan Vice-Minister of Defense also denounced foreign influences in Nicaragua, a presumed reference to Cuban advisers inside the country, and insisted that "only Nicaraguans can solve the problems of Nicaragua." At Pastora's side throughout the press conference was his close associate, former Panamanian Vice-Minister of Health Hugo Spadafora, a member of an oligarchic Italian family who founded a Latin American-wide mercenary force, the "Internationalist Bolivarian Brigades," which he calls the "natural allies of the Socialist International."

This is not a case of natural political fissures, betrayals, and rivalries. It is an example of the "gang/countergang" method of "low-intensity operations" perfected by British intelligence in the course of the 20th century in order to subject target populations to violent insurgencies and utter disorientation as to the identity of their true enemies, the colonial gamemasters.

The making of 'Comandante Cero'

Pastora was sponsored in the early period of the Sandinista movement by the Costa Rican ex-President, "United Brands socialist" José 'Pepe' Figueres, who had bankrolled a succession of guerrilla movements since seizing power in his own country in 1948. Figueres provided both his money and his son to the Southern Front of the Sandinistas in the 1970s, and made Pastora his pet project. Remembered as the Costa Rican president who welcomed fugitive swindler Robert Vesco and his stolen millions in the early 1970s, Figueres has been a stockholder in United Brands Company since the

1940s, when UB in Costa Rica financed the arms for his original guerrilla bands.

Since his split from the Sandinistas nine months ago, Pastora's operation has been quietly built up as an "asset" by the State Department and certain Socialist International-tainted sections of the Central Intelligence Agency. His one-time colleague, former Deputy Minister of the Interior José Valdivia, revealed at a press conference in Managua April 19 that Pastora held meetings with U.S. government officials late last year.

Asked at his press conference who is supporting his operation, Pastora answered with a smile that he was willing to accept aid from anywhere—"the CIA, the Soviet Union, political parties"—for his military campaigns.

After leaving Nicaragua, Pastora went to Guatemala to offer his services to that country's guerrilla movement. He also visited Libya, where he claims Qaddafi offered him \$5 million for his mercenary army. On a trip to the Sahara, he reported to have pledged his full support to the terrorist Polisario "national liberation struggle." His generous pledges notwithstanding, Pastora apparently lacked the courage to go with his reputation. In the Sahara, he begged off from joining the Polisario guerrillas because he said he was "a man of the tropics." Observers of his press conference in Costa Rica report that Pastora appeared under the influence of drugs.

Aptly dubbed Commander Zero, one State Department official not long ago remarked that Pastora is known to "lack smarts" but nonetheless has dreams of becoming the next "Fidel Castro or Omar Torrijos" of the region. Pastora himself once offered an insight when he stated that the only thing he has in common with Castro "is that we were both educated by the Jesuits."

A new civil war

Pastora's usefulness is far from over, however, for he is intended to play a role in fomenting the three-way civil war now looming over Nicaragua. From the north

an estimated 6,000 Somocistas, the former National Guardsmen of Anastasio Somoza, are carrying out commando raids into Nicaragua from camps across the border in Honduras. Inside the country, the Democratic Forces of Nicaragua (FDN), another group of ex-Sandinistas who are expected to join forces with Pastora, are fighting government troops in at least seven different parts of the country. And from the south, bordering Costa Rica, Pastora's commandos are launching operations as the newly-formed "Revolutionary Sandinista Front."

Not one of the groups involved has a program of action other than "liberating"—with bullets—Nicaragua. Radio broadcasts from the FDN inside Nicaragua could be mistaken for those of Radio Verceremos in El Salvador, the underground radio of the Salvadoran leftists. Both promise that the "freedom bullets of the liberation commandos will soon beat back the dictatorship."

In anticipation of widespread fighting, the Nicaraguan government has declared a state of emergency, constructing barricades and trenches throughout the country, and has promised to defend the revolution to the last man. Sandinista soldiers are reportedly burning their membership cards bearing Pastora's signature en masse, pledging "death to the traitor."

The outcome of these contending "liberation" forces will be a level of violence and destruction that will make the battles of 1979, in which 50,000 died, look mild by comparison, since none of the forces has the power to successfully overthrow the others.

Central America, as seen in the case of El Salvador, has been targeted for what the State Department has dubbed a "population war," where manipulated fighting among controlled forces will decimate what remains of the country's productive infrastructure and a large portion of the working-age population. What is not destroyed by war will fall to famine and disease.

Why? Thomas Ferguson, the Latin American case officer for the State Department's Office of Population Affairs, has explained it as strategic necessity. "There is a single theme behind all our work," he told an interviewer last year. "We must reduce population levels. . . . We look at our strategic needs, and we say that this country must lower its population—or else we will have trouble. So steps are taken." Ferguson described "your average" civil war, as in El Salvador, as too slow "to do the job." To be effective, he emphasized, "you have to pull all the males into the fighting and kill significant numbers of fertile, child-bearing-age females."

William Paddock, a United Brands employee himself for decades and adviser to Carter's *Global 2000 Report*, explained it in more strategic terms at a seminar on demographics at Georgetown University last April. Paddock, author of the Malthusian tracts *We Don't*

Know How and *Famine*, 1975, told his audience of policy planners that an unending cycle of instability must be created, a sort of perpetual death machine. The United States, he argued, must first support the opposition to a government, and then "the opposition to the opposition," and then the opponents of the opposition.

Gang/countergang

Paddock's lunatic scenario is not original. It was formulated at least 30 years ago by British Brigadier Frank Kitson, then in charge of British special forces and covert operations for Kenya. Kitson, who elaborates his "gang/countergang" theory of psychological warfare manipulation of national populations in his two books, *Low Intensity Operations* and *Gang-Counter-gang*, was a trainee of John Rawlings Rees, a director of London's Tavistock Institute. Rees's concern was to use psychological profiling to determine a neurotic "map" of national sectors, thereby separating out the "constitutionally inferior" layers of the population, or the "dullards," as he called them, "for proper allocation of skills." Rees was quick to determine that the dullards included most of the world's dark-skinned populations; the policy planners of the State Department have renamed the problem "overpopulation."

Kitson's strategy for defeating the potential independence movement in Kenya in the 1950s, the Mau Mau, was to use Reesian methods to create a pseudo-guerrilla, or counter-gang, movement of insurgency, then used to infiltrate, take over, and ultimately disorient and destroy the original guerrilla force. In Ireland, Kitson personally set up the provisional Irish Republican Army as a counter-gang used to perpetuate civil war in that country as well as provide a ready training-ground for British troops. In his memorandum to the British army, *Low Intensity Operations*, Kitson stresses the importance of "organizing the population along lines similar to those employed by the enemy," getting "right under the skin of the population" by using "a carefully planned and coordinated campaign of what for want of a better word must regrettably be called psychological operations."

What Kitson does not elaborate in his writings is the inevitable genocidal outcome of his Tavistockian manipulations. These were described by an American businessman close to the present situation in Central America:

"The right infiltrated the leftist movements to identify the leadership, to then kill them all. But then the left got the same idea, and infiltrated the right, and began killing its leaders. Now the countries are controlled through political assassination, and the criminals end up running the whole show."

Is Nicaragua to be the next Kitsonian testing ground?