

'Command Control' Unit In Place In El Paso

A month ago, one of the nation's top terror scenario writers proposed that the Carter Administration set up a "command organization" to coordinate the government's response to terrorism here and internationally. The command unit proposed by Brian Jenkins, the Director of Research on International Terrorism at the Rand Corporation and a consultant to the State Department's Office for Combating Terrorism, would supersede all existing police and intelligence agency operations, with ultimate authority resting in the hands of Zbigniew Brzezinski and the National Security Council.

The Jenkins plan, as he laid it out in the March 27 *Washington Post* was to create a command organization that could develop and carry out Entebbe-style military contingency plans to deal with international terrorism. The primary thrust of the Jenkins plan is *designed to institutionalize the 1976 Entebbe Raid precedent of "limited sovereignty."* All of the government forces to be involved in the proposed operations however, the CIA, FBI, and other specialized enforcement agencies, are known not only to "monitor" terrorism — their official capacity — but to manufacture and control terrorists and terror scenarios (as well as gun and drug running) on a global basis.

A prototype "command organization" is now being implemented by the Carter Administration along the Mexican border. As the following report documents, the El Paso Intelligence Center, or EPIC, run under the aegis of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), is being geared up exactly along the lines Jenkins proposed, supposedly to monitor illegal drug traffic and illegal aliens. In actuality, as is evident from the exposé, EPIC will use this extensive intelligence capability as a cover to run terrorism within Mexico and into the United States.

"A Tool of Awesome Capacity"

EPIC, hailed in the U.S. press as "a tool of awesome capacity," was created in August 1974 by the DEA Intelligence Division as the first integrated intelligence center in the annals of federal law enforcement. The center came into full bloom a year later, after the installation of Rockefeller's Edward Levi as Attorney General and Levi's nephew Peter Bensinger became DEA Director in 1975. At that time the center was equipped with elaborate computer facilities and a war room to monitor its activities.

According to DEA officials, EPIC has become "an increasingly sophisticated intelligence sharing

operation," staffed round-the clock to "provide *actionable* intelligence for the immediate use of federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies." In addition to being what DEA officials refer to as the intelligence "nerve center" of the DEA's poppy eradication program, EPIC's joint work with Mexican officials in this program has given it access to and control of relevant Mexican military and police intelligence agencies.

EPIC's headquarters in El Paso, Texas are staffed by agents of the DEA, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the Treasury Department's Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, the U.S. Customs Service, the Coast Guard, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and the State Department's Cabinet Committee on International Narcotics Control (CCINC). Also included is the State Department's Munitions Control Office which handles all foreign weapons and munitions sales licensing. All of these agencies have documented links to the terrorists, drug runners, and gun runners they are supposed to control.

The *Christian Science Monitor* reported April 19 that EPIC will expand its "awesome capacity" through a new computer system, code-named Pathfinder, which was developed in collaboration with the CIA and the Pentagon. Pathfinder is scheduled to go into operation no later than mid-May and allows EPIC to "gain access to classified intelligence from such exotic sources as the Pentagon's defense mapping service" as well as to upgrade its existing access to classified data from the participating Justice and Treasury Departments. EPIC, it should be noted, is not subject to claims for disclosure of files under the Freedom of Information Act.

The Justice and Treasury Department data bank systems which now interface with EPIC — and Interpol — include those systems engaged in collection-analysis regarding terrorism, domestic security, and weapons and drug smuggling.

EPIC and the Border Scenario

The upgrading of the EPIC intelligence capacity means that it is now fully integrated into the terrorist operations planned for Mexico by the New York banks' financier faction and their allied private intelligence agencies like Interpol — and it will all be under the cover of the Carter program to police illegal aliens and his supposed war against drugs.

As an interagency center, EPIC will subsume the Interpol coordination of the activities of terrorists within Mexico — most notably the 23rd of September League

that is run by agents of Interpol and the Institute for Policy Studies. And because it will control the border, EPIC can at will cause such terrorist outbursts to spill over across the border into the United States.

There has already been pressure to make the Pentagon interface with EPIC action oriented from the Senate Government Operations Subcommittee on Permanent Investigations. Subcommittee members Sam Nunn (D-Ga.) and Charles Percy (R-Ill.) sent a letter to Defense Department Secretary Harold Brown recently stating that: "the Defense Department alone possesses the air and land vehicles needed to pursue and overtake drug traffickers." The Senators said that agencies within EPIC "lack sufficient planes, radar sensors, and other equipment to adequately protect our borders; the equipment it does have largely consists of second generation or ill-equipped models." Controlling the border, they write, will take "resources comparable in sophistication to those used by the smugglers themselves."

The Senators' worries about equipment are entirely unwarranted.

EPIC's Capabilities

EPIC's present capabilities are formidable:

* Former EPIC Director Jacques Kiere, as of August 1975, was dispatched to the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City as DEA regional station chief. The Kiere assignment coincided with a significant increase of DEA "advisors" into Mexico to oversee the training and paramilitary actions of Mexican forces engaged in the DEA's so-called poppy eradication program.

Funding for the DEA-EPIC "war on drugs" training programs are primarily provided by the U.S. Agency for International Development aid, channeled through the State Department's CCINC.

In keeping with the counterinsurgency models developed in Vietnam by AID and the police experts from Michigan State University, former Senior Advisor and CCINC Director Sheldon B. Vance stated in his July 28, 1975 congressional testimony that the purpose of the AID overseas narcotics enforcement training program was "institution building." Vance said it was essential "for the U.S. government to build up a cadre of narcotics enforcement agents abroad to expeditiously set up cooperative projects with foreign enforcement officials to make cases, assist in seizures, and develop joint techniques for penetrating and breaking up major trafficking organizations."

Indeed, declared Vance, "by far the greatest portion of expenditures has gone into institution building," and "in many instances, ... the institution building had to begin from the ground floor."

Mexico has been subjected to this "institution building" under EPIC's anti-drug plan. The personnel for this virtual takeover operation are EPIC's elite, most of whom were trained at the Treasury-run Consolidated Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Glynco, Georgia. The Glynco training operation is under the directorship of Arthur Brandstetter, a top police expert from Michigan State University who has made his career on building AID's reputation — from creating police units like the Brazilian "Death Squads," the South Vietnamese domestic security units, and the post-World War II West German Bundeskriminalamt. Equipment developed and used in Vietnam's DMZ has already been transported to the 2,000 mile U.S.-Mexican border.

* A high level EPIC official described Interpol's role in these operations as being focused on "fugitives from justice" and those "fairly active in the terrorist areas." Both DEA and EPIC have identified many of the major heroin and weapons traffickers operating inside Mexico as "fugitives from U.S. justice."

In an unguarded moment, the State Department's official liaison to Latin America on narcotics matters confirmed that the plan mapped out by the "American Escape Committee" during a spring 1976 meeting in California for the dramatic freeing of American drug and gun smugglers held in Mexican jails (under the cover of a "human rights" protest), was actually carried out by the Interpol-Institute for Policy Studies 23rd of September League terrorists.

* The Carter Administration has given EPIC the authority to "seal the border" under the pretext of controlling the "uncontrollable flow of illegal aliens." Deputy Director of EPIC, Gerald O'Connor also serves as the National Chief of the Immigration and Naturalization Service Border Patrol, an outfit being beefed up by Carter's newly appointed INS Commissioner Lionel J. Castillo. According to the State Department official mentioned above, Carter will go for full "control" of the border, rather than "sealing the border completely" since this latter option would only "lead to total chaos inside Mexico and the United States."

* EPIC will have full jurisdiction over weapons and munitions smuggling operations. As recent DEA and ATF reports indicate, the bulk of illegal weapons seized from terrorists and smugglers inside Mexico are from U.S. military installations.

* The center will also assume the responsibility for averting interagency conflicts, to ensure that any resistance to Carter-NSC terrorist plans from within the law enforcement agencies is aborted.

— by Marilyn James