

Haig seeks showdown in Caribbean and Africa

by Richard Cohen, Washington Bureau Chief

Secretary of State Haig has "gotten his way" on what is reported to be his pet project. In the wake of the Polish upheavals, he is moving quickly to threaten Soviet and Cuban flanks in Angola and, most intensively, in the Caribbean.

Fred C. Iklé, Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, warned for the first time on Dec. 15 that the Pentagon is drafting contingency plans to "respond as required to further military threats and acts of aggression," citing a military buildup in Nicaragua and Cuban subversion in the Caribbean Basin. Iklé was testifying before the senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere.

While he bowed to the prevailing military opinion, shared by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, that limited actions against Cuba or putative "Cuban proxies" in the Caribbean would be ineffective and counterproductive, he signaled that the Pentagon is under redoubled pressure from Haig and others to back the State Department's military-confrontation approach.

Intelligence officials suggest that the Pentagon's partial acquiescence to Haig's approach to Central America and the Caribbean has been prompted by the Polish developments. Tough talk and material penalties against the U.S.S.R. have been urged by Haig, by former National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, and by the group around Henry Kissinger's Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) at Georgetown University.

The day before Iklé's warning, Haig's lieutenant Thomas O. Enders, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, announced before the same Senate subcommittee that U.S. plans have been assembled for possible military action against Cuba and Nicaragua. Enders presented the Senators with a 37-page State Department research paper on what he termed Cuba's coordination of violent revolution in Nicaragua and attempts at the same in El Salvador and Guatemala, charges echoed by Iklé.

It is important to note that sources close to Mr. Reagan had confirmed during the White House transition period that the President-Elect and his closest strategic advisers considered Cuba "an ace in the hole" under conditions of global crisis. The original Reagan strategy for the Persian Gulf, they reported, discounted the efficacy of the Rapid Deployment Force on any other theatre deployment as effective deterrents to a large-scale Soviet move in the area. Instead, according to these sources, under conditions of full strategic showdown, full-scale invasion of Cuba would be the probable response. In modified form, that approach was adopted as Pentagon strategy under Caspar Weinberger.

Haig's policy is different. His noisy hard-line rhetoric has chronically been used by Fidel Castro and hard-line Sandinista factions in Nicaragua to enforce their control. This is deliberate: Haig has played a tit-for-tat game with Castro and his Brandt-Mitterrand patrons in Europe's Socialist International, each increasing their own credi-

bility through the other's attacks, with the intended result of throwing Central America and the Caribbean into a bloody vortex. The ultimate aim is to superimpose Malthusian slaughter upon Malthusian impoverishment, and ignite an uncontrollable new Spanish Civil War throughout the region.

While under the auspices of Jesuit-controlled Castro and the Socialist International, Nicaragua has become a training base for radical insurgents throughout Latin America. Haig has attempted to lure Latin American nations into putting together a military force against Cuba, a development which would among other things guarantee Mexico's destabilization.

A fly in the ointment for this Haig policy has been the relative success, over recent weeks, of combined efforts of the Mexican and Soviet governments to restrain Fidel Castro's most radical excesses. Reliable sources have told *EIR* that Castro has grudgingly agreed to cool the rhetoric—but not so the Nicaraguan Sandinistas, who remain committed to play out Haig's game of regional proxy warfare. Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escotto was in Moscow earlier this week, where Prime Minister Nicolai Tikhonov, a Brezhnev ally, lectured D'Escotto: "Efforts to preserve peace and restore the climate of detente and confidence have assumed particular importance under conditions of an exacerbated world situation, including that in Central America and the Caribbean," reported the Soviet news agency TASS. But there is no indication at this time that the Sandinistas are listening.

Helping to make sure that they don't, and to try to push Castro back over the edge, top representatives of the Socialist International have deployed across Mexico and Central America over the past week. Most relevant are the activities of Spanish Socialist Felipe González, who is engaging in Kissinger-style "shuttle diplomacy" between Panama, Havana, and Mexico City, where he has met with Castro, López Portillo, and others.

On the Angolan front

Sources report that even prior to the mid-December Polish developments, a consensus had been reached in the administration to move forcefully on what is believed to be Cuba's weakest flank, Angola.

For two weeks before the expected Dec. 9 vote in the House of Representatives on repeal of the Clark Amendment's restriction on covert aid to Angolan rebels, Jonas Savimbi, leader of the UNITA rebel band still operating against the Angolan government, visited Washington. Savimbi met extensively with African Affairs Assistant Secretary Chester Crocker, who as National Security Council specialist on Africa during the reign of Henry Kissinger, knows Savimbi well. Savimbi also reportedly met with Pentagon officials and with Haig himself. Although administration officials finally

pulled back on their plan to repeal the Clark Amendment, Haig pronounced Savimbi a legitimate Angolan political figure.

Upon completing his Washington tour, sponsored by the New York-based right-wing Social-Democratic Freedom House, Savimbi called his mission to the United States a "breakthrough." This is translated in Washington as acknowledgement of the fact that pressure will be brought to bear on an Angolan government now housing 20,000 to 30,000 Cuban troops, reportedly low in morale and in military trouble. While Haig's recently cancelled trip to Israel was to be followed by a trip to South Africa to discuss Namibia, sources close to the State Department consider the Namibia issue a smokescreen.

Intelligence withheld?

Even more striking than apparent Pentagon submission to Haig's Malthusian Latin American and African crusades is evidence suggesting that the President has been shielded from critical intelligence on, at least, the Polish crisis. On Dec. 10, the President was reported to have reversed himself on the long-standing question of substantial increases in U.S. food and medical aid to Poland. Having been lobbied for several months by sections of the State Department and Defense for dramatic increases in Polish aid, Reagan decided to go along with a new \$10,000,000 package. Intelligence specialists were astonished to learn of the decision, along with a new \$100,000,000 package. Intelligence including approval of the sale of Caterpillar equipment to the Soviet Union. These analysts note that sections of U.S. intelligence most closely associated with the CIA and the DOS must have known that the Polish military was preparing martial law. That information clearly never reached the White House.

Thus, while President Reagan's security screen and most trusted intelligence capabilities were focused on the Qaddafi threat, and while a series of timed scandals targeting key personnel in the administration was being pursued by the Henry Kissinger-Max Fisher faction—scandals which one of the President's closest friends recently told me are believed to be directed against the President himself—the President was being shielded from essential intelligence concerning the Polish crisis by Haig et al.

One day following the declaration of martial law Haig in concert with Brzezinski and with the support of others began urging stiffer administration rhetoric against the military regime and the Soviets. This was quickly escalated into promotion of food embargoes against Poland plus immediate total embargo of the Soviets if their troops enter Poland. Haig's embargo line has the same genocidal goal as his Latin American and African policies.