

control over intelligence gathering and other executive functions. This led straight to the abuses attributed to "Project Democracy" in the Iran-Contra scandal.

In early 1982, Ronald Reagan created the Special Situations Group (SSG) through his National Security Decision Directive 3, entitled "Crisis Management." A former Trilateral Commission member, Vice President George Bush, was designated its chairman.

On May 14, President Reagan's trusted adviser, Judge William Clark, issued a memorandum which announced that the SSG "is charged, *inter alia*, with formulating plans in anticipation of crisis. In order to facilitate this crisis pre-planning responsibility, a standing Crisis Pre-Planning Group (CPPG) is hereby established."

Marine Lt. Col. Oliver North was assigned to the CPPG. Through outgrowths of this structure, North, Col. Robert McFarlane, Adm. John Poindexter, Gen. Richard Secord, and others came to wield extraordinary power, running various foreign and domestic initiatives for the secret government apparatus, including but not limited to the Iran-Contra operations, the overthrow of President Ferdinand Marcos of

the Philippines through what became known as the "Project Democracy" apparatus, and a "Get LaRouche" task force.

On July 22, 1982, President Reagan issued his National Security Decision Directive 47 to complement the operations of the SSG and CPPG. Entitled "Emergency Mobilization Preparedness," NSDD 47 defined the responsibilities of federal departments and branches of the U.S. government to respond to a national security crisis or domestic emergency. The President invested the Emergency Mobilization Preparedness Board with the responsibility to implement the programs detailed in the directive. The directive included an overzealous restriction of civil rights, bordering on explicit police-state measures.

On July 5, 1987, *Miami Herald* writer Alfonso Chardy published an article headlined "Reagan Aides and the 'Secret' Government." This article was one of several to appear detailing the expansion of the secret government apparatus during the 1980s. According to sources, and confirmed by a FEMA spokesman, it reported that Lt. Col. Oliver North was assigned to meet with top officials of FEMA from some time in 1982 through April 1984, in order to carry out the imple-

## FEMA 'handles' Three Mile Island

The Federal Emergency Management Agency's first operational exercise was in response to the safety problem that developed at the Three Mile Island nuclear plant in Middletown, just outside of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

Although FEMA was not scheduled to become operational until April 1, 1979, the National Security Council "jumped the gun" and set FEMA into operation Tuesday, March 27—one day before the incident. Under the direction of the NSC and a White House Emergency Task Force, FEMA personnel coordinated the emergency evacuation panic scenario, while the National Security Council's Jack Watson and Nuclear Regulatory Commission personnel managed the content and flow of news.

This news from the top was key to the creation of a climate of panic—making people feel helpless and feel as though there were no rigorous scientific principles to adequately evaluate the crisis situation.

*Executive Intelligence Review* correspondent Stuart Pettingell described the on-the-scene situation in Harrisburg this way at a special briefing by the Fusion Energy

Foundation April 6: "We expected to come down into the Harrisburg area and find a ghost town, deserted streets. What we found in Middletown was business as usual, with reporters wandering around trying to find some news.

"There was no competent briefing to the press after Metropolitan Edison [part owner of the plant] was officially gagged by the White House, on the request of Gov. Richard Thornburgh. There were no written technical statements out and no technical advisers were allowed to get near the reporters to explain what was going on. So, the reports coming out of Middletown—H-blasts, gigantic bubbles, and so forth—were based on small shreds of evidence given to the reporters in small doses that these reporters then had to elaborate into 500-word and 1,000-word articles.

"Until April 1, there was not one technical adviser on the scene who was capable of explaining how a nuclear power plant works to reporters, who were generally not clear on this. In terms of where the initial incident occurred, for example, everybody assumed it was in the core of the reactor. No one understood how the entire system worked. When the technical advisers finally came in, they had to spend virtually the whole night answering reporters' questions to try to clear up the complete unreality about what people thought had gone on.

"To a certain extent, the press is to blame for the sensational coverage for something that was not sensational, but the honest reporters did not have a chance to find out the true story."