

More evidence of 'secret government' role in 1986 raid on LaRouche movement

by Edward Spannaus

Information recently obtained under the Freedom of Information Act is shedding additional light on the role of the Reagan-Bush "secret government" team in the raid on facilities associated with Lyndon LaRouche in Leesburg, Virginia in October 1986. That 400-man raid, which culminated in the unjust imprisonment of LaRouche and many of his associates, was intended to result in the same sort of bloodbath which has just been staged in Waco, Texas. The new information provides further confirmation of the involvement of the "Iran-Contra" gang centered around National Security Council staffer Oliver North and his inter-agency task force.

The evidence implicates the FBI's Special Operations Groups (SOG) in the planning for the 1986 raid. These SOG units have been called the FBI's "political hit squads," and were known to have been deployed against critics of North's supply operation to the Nicaraguan Contra rebels. Also involved in the planning for the Leesburg raid was the secret office in the Pentagon through which the CIA sought Defense Department assistance for covert operations in Central America.

NSC's 'Operations Sub-Group'

In early January, *EIR* obtained copies of the secret correspondence between the Justice Department and the Pentagon, by which it was arranged for U.S. military units to take custody of the documents seized in the October 1986 raid. Two large truckloads of documents were confiscated, and then were secretly transported to a military base in Arlington, Virginia.

The newly disclosed documents include a memorandum from Kent S. Robinson, the lead prosecutor for the LaRouche frameup trial in Alexandria, Virginia, to William F. Weld, then the head of the Justice Department's Criminal Division. The Robinson memo is dated Oct. 1, 1986; it was classified "Secret" and also stamped "Urgent." It states: "Attached please find a draft of a letter from you to the Director, Joint Special Operations Agency, OJCS, requesting the assistance of the military in providing secure office space for the storing of documentary materials we hope soon to seize from the LaRouche organizations."

The director of the Joint Special Operations Agency (JSOA) of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to whom the Weld letter was addressed, was Maj. Gen. Tom Kelly of the U.S. Marine

Corps. Kelly sat on the National Security Council's elite counter-terrorism working group, along with North, the FBI's Buck Revell, National Security Adviser John Poindexter, and other officials from the Pentagon, State Department, and CIA. This NSC group was known as the Operations Sub-Group of the Terrorism Incident Working Group (OSG/TIWG), and it played a key role in the Iran-Contra operation.

Pentagon special operations

JSOA was created in 1984, and incorporated the functions of the Special Operations Division of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and related functions such as psychological warfare and civil affairs. Some say that Gen. Richard Secord played a key role in the creation of JSOA; although he had retired from the Pentagon by that time, he still was a paid consultant and sat on the Special Operations Policy Advisory Committee (SOPAG) which oversaw JSOA and the Joint Special Operations Command based at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Secord attended every known meeting of SOPAG in 1984 and 1985. General Kelly, the JSOA director to whom the Weld letter was sent, and Kelly's predecessor at JSOA, were also members of SOPAG.

The Weld letter was sent to the attention of Col. B.R. Hooten, chief of the Support Activities Branch of JSOA at the Joint Chiefs of Staff. It was Hooten's branch which made the arrangements for the seized LaRouche documents to be secretly taken to Henderson Hall at Fort Meyer, Virginia. Colonel Hooten's Support Activities Branch serves as the "focal point" office in the Joint Chiefs of Staff; historically, the "focal point" office was the point of contact (POC) for the CIA when it needed Pentagon support, going back to the days of the CIA's counterinsurgency programs in Vietnam.

The Support Activities Branch still played this role in 1986, as shown by a document released by the congressional Iran-Contra committee. This was a March 7, 1986 message from North to Poindexter, sent under the super-secret "Private Blank Check" caption in order to bypass the NSC staff.

The undeleted portions of the March 7 message begins with a reference to "the OSG/TIWG plan," and states that "CIA approached DOD thru the [deleted] to conduct joint . . ." It then mentions "a call back to the [deleted] POC" from "Col. Hooten," in which Hooten said that "there were

War Powers Act implications to the request.”

North goes on to complain that the Joint Chiefs of Staff want a written request “tasking the CIA/DOD planning.” North protests that “this is wrong,” that this is something “that Dick Secord has bitched about” and that such a rigid requirement “destroys the very purpose for which OSG was established.”

The FBI’s ‘hit squad’

OSG shows up on the FBI side also. The Oct. 1, 1986 memorandum from Kent Robinson to Weld, enclosing the draft of the Weld letter to JSOA, concluded with the following: “This letter should not be mailed. Rather, [deleted] FBI Special Operations Division, will pick it up from you and hand carry it to the appropriate person. He may be reached at 324-5675, and should be contacted once the letter is signed.”

There is no FBI “Special Operations Division.” However, there *is* an “Aviation and Special Operations Unit” at FBI headquarters, which is the unit reached by the phone number in the Robinson memo. Its duties involve surveillance of all sorts, not just aerial surveillance. This unit oversees all FBI aviation programs and Special Operations Groups. SOGs exist in all of the FBI’s major field offices, and handle “special cases,” sensitive cases such as terrorism, foreign nationals, espionage, etc.

In July 1986, North and Revell deployed the FBI SOGs against a prominent opponent of the Contra operation, Jack Terrell, who was working with the Christic Institute and its lawsuit against North, Secord, et al. Declassified documents show that on July 17, 1986, Revell called North to get information on Terrell. In a memorandum to Poindexter on the same date, North claimed that Terrell was a participant in the disinformation/active measures campaign against the Contra operation. The North memo says: “The FBI has notified the Secret Service and is preparing a counter-intelligence/counter-terrorism operations plan for review by OSG-TIWG tomorrow.”

The next day, July 18, 1986, there was a meeting in the FBI’s Washington Field Office; the official memorandum of the meeting states that “we need full-time SOG coverage on Terrell.”

More spooks

The Weld letter to JSOA also states that Assistant U.S. Attorney Theodore Greenberg had already informally contacted someone to inquire about the availability of the space at Henderson Hall. It is highly significant that contact with the Pentagon’s Special Operations Agency was initiated by Greenberg, who is one of the spookiest characters in the entire U.S. Department of Justice.

Greenberg is known to have extremely close ties to the CIA and the Israeli Mossad; some believe his strongest loyalties are to the latter. While he was a federal prosecutor in Alexandria, Greenberg handled every case coming through

that court involving the CIA or the intelligence community, including the Wilson-Terpil case, the Dale Duncan/Yellow Fruit case (involving Army special operations personnel), and numerous others. Greenberg was also consulted on the involuntary bankruptcy used in 1987 to illegally shut down three publishing companies identified with LaRouche.

Why the military?

Military involvement in a domestic criminal case is flagrantly illegal, and it shows the outlaw character of the U.S. government’s conduct in the LaRouche case. By law, the military units involved cannot be engaged in domestic law enforcement or domestic covert operations.

But why, then, was the military involved in the raid?

Even though the documents had been seized under both federal and state search warrants, and were supposed to be in the joint custody of the FBI and the Virginia State Police, the Virginia authorities were denied access to the documents for several weeks while they were being held at Henderson Hall.

Just who was rummaging through the documents during the first days and weeks after the raid? Was it Oliver North and his gang? Was it allied networks in the secret government, trying to ferret out the names of military and intelligence sources in contact with LaRouche’s associates?

Or was it done so that evidence could be tampered with, and false leads manufactured, in the event the Leesburg raid turned into the Waco-style bloodbath that many of those conducting that raid wanted?

‘Our man here’

The military’s special operations apparatus has in fact been a key part of the “secret government” apparatus since the Vietnam era, and it was closely linked to the illegal Iran-Contra operation run by North and Secord. When the late CIA director William Casey told North to set up a covert mechanism for supplying the Contras in Central America, North naturally enough turned to personnel from Special Operations. Among those recruited by North was special operations veteran Secord. North and Secord recruited heavily among special operations veterans to help set up the Contra supply operation. One of these was Master Sgt. John H. Cupp.

Five months before the Leesburg raid, Secord used his National Security Agency-supplied encryption device to send a secret message to North, which stated that “our man here claims Lewis has collected info on LaRouche.” “Our man here” was the above-cited John H. Cupp. “Lewis” was Frederick Lewis, another special operations veteran.

Five months later, on Oct. 6, 1986, North and his gang seemed to have found a better way to “collect info on LaRouche”—through use of the secret government apparatus which spreads from the FBI SOGs to the most secret parts of the Pentagon.