

UNPO plays key role in Transcaucasus blowup

by Mark Burdman

In November 1992, Lord David Ennals led a "fact-finding delegation" to the Caucasus, where he met with the region's top warring leaders: Jokhar Dudayev, exiled Zviad Gamsakhurdia, Eduard Shevardnadze, and Abkhazia's leader Vladislav Ardzinba. The delegation's report launched a British propaganda campaign on behalf of Chechen and Abkhazian secession from Russia.

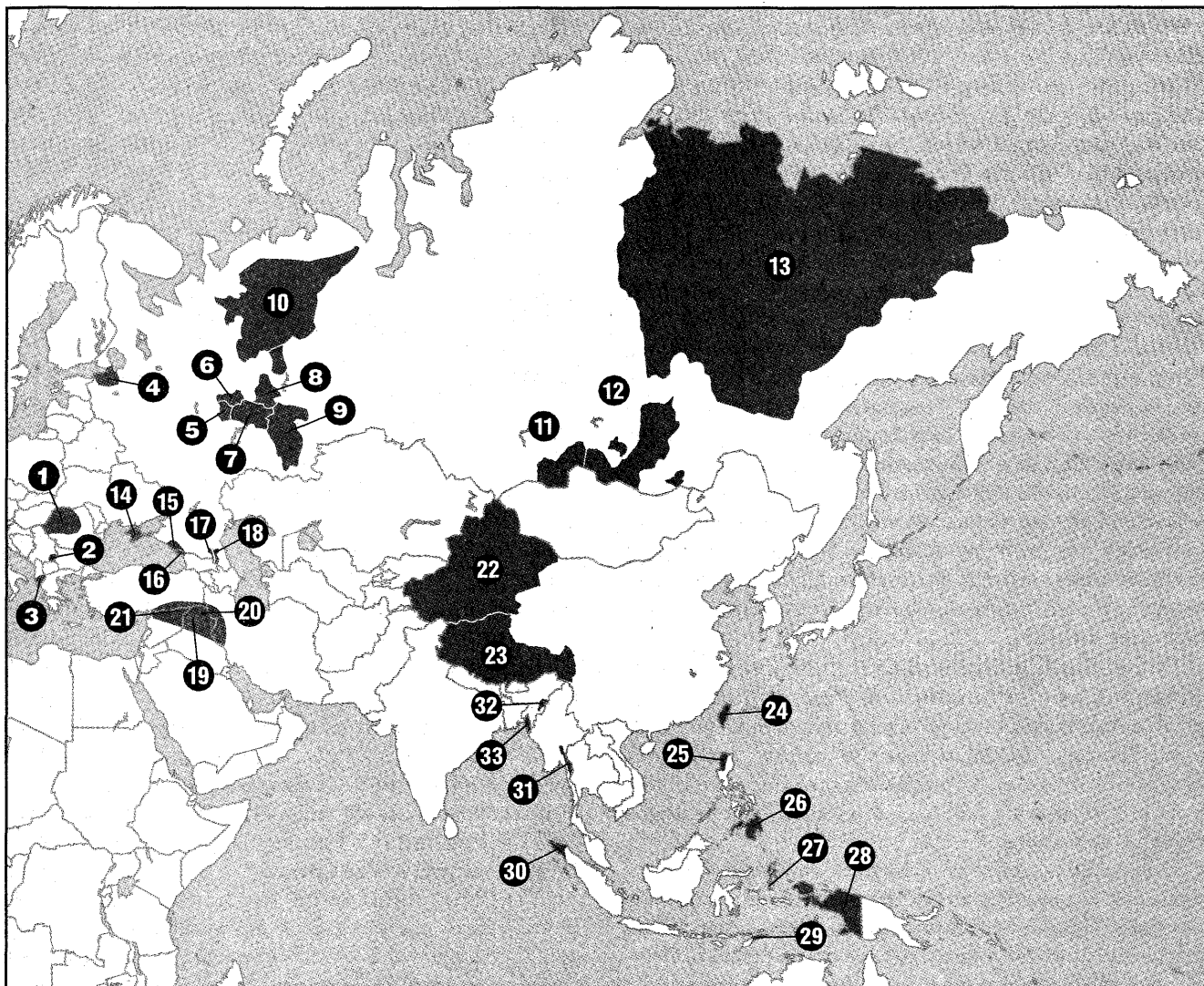
The mission had been taken on behalf of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO). Lord Ennals, a former British foreign and defense minister, and a member of the House of Lords and the Queen's Privy Council until his death in 1995, was the founder and director of the UNPO's "Urgent Action Council."

The UNPO, based in The Hague, the Netherlands, has become increasingly active on the world stage in the past period, charged with the task of exacerbating strategic crises, particularly aimed at Russia and China. Perceptions among highest-level planners, in both Moscow and Beijing, that there are efforts, from the outside, to break up their respective countries, are reinforced by the activities of such organizations as the UNPO.

UNPO is, in fact, one of the key institutions in the global apparatus of Prince Philip and his World Wide Fund for Nature. The royal consort has put forward the view that the United States, for example, should be broken up into smaller parts, into so-called "bio-regions." The WWF's support for "indigenism," "ecologism," and related movements, leads to the same goal, in other parts of the world.

UNPO was founded in February 1991, on the basis of an initiative by Lodi Gyari, foreign minister of the Dalai Lama's Tibetan exile government, in cooperation with friends in Estonia. The secretary general of UNPO is Michael van Walt van Praag, the son of Dutch diplomats who had become, in earlier years, a Washington lawyer and general

UNPO plots breakup of Russia and China

**Key to Map 13**

The Unrepresented Peoples Organizations "recognizes" some 50 "peoples" and "nations," which, it says, should comprise independent states. Many of these supposed peoples and nations exist within Russia and the CIS nations, China, and border lands. These include:

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| 1. The Hungarians of Romania | 6. Mari | 20. Assyria |
| 2. Kosova | 7. Tartarstan | 21. Kurdistan |
| 3. The Greeks of Albania | 8. Udmurt | 22. "East Turkestan" (Xinjiang, China) |
| 4. The Ingrian Finns of the St. Petersburg region | 9. Bashkortostan | 23. Tibet |
| 5. Chuvash | 10. Komi | 24. Taiwan |
| | 11. Tuva | 25. Cordillera (Philippines) |
| | 12. Buryat | 26. Mindanao (Philippines) |
| | 13. Yakutia | 27. Moluccas (Indonesia) |
| | 14. Crimean Tartars | 28. West Papua (Indonesia) |
| | 15. Circassia | 29. East Timor (Indonesia) |
| | 16. Abkhazia | 30. Aceh (Indonesia) |
| | 17. Ingushetia | 31. Karenni state (Myanmar) |
| | 18. Chechnya | 32. Nagaland (India) |
| | 19. Iraqi Turkoman | 33. Chittagong Hill Tracts (Bangladesh) |

counsel to the Dalai Lama. He had represented Tibet's case before the U.N. Human Rights Commission. As *EIR* has documented, the Dalai Lama operates as a special agent of British interests, most useful for the destabilization of China and other lands in Asia.

Until recently, van Walt was a board member of the U.S.-based Institute for American Democracy. The so-called "Development Coordinator" of the institute is Elsie Walker, George Bush's first cousin. Not surprisingly, van Walt, to this day, sings the praises of former President Bush's "principled" stand on the Tibet question, whenever the former President dealt with China. He contrasts this, favorably, to the "vacillations" of the Clinton administration, in dealing with Beijing.

The Eurasian geopolitical focus

The UNPO "members list," as of February 1995, included 43 "peoples": Abkhazia; aboriginals of Australia; Acheh-Sumatra; Albanians in Macedonia; Assyria; Batwa (Rwanda); Bougainville; Chechen Republic Ichkeria; Chittagong Hill Tracts; Circassians; Cordillera (Philippines); Chameria; Chuvash; Crimea (Crimean Tatars); East Timor; East Turkestan; Gagauzia; Greek Minority in Albania; Hungarian Minority in Romania; Inkeri; Ingushetia; Iraqi Turkoman; Kalahui Hawaii; Karenni State; Komi; Kosovo; Kurdistan (Iraq); Lakota Nation; Maohi People of French Polynesia; Mapuche; Mari; Nagaland; Ogoni (Nigeria); Sanjak; Scania; Republic of South Moluccas; Taiwan; Tatarstan; Tibet; Udmurt; West Papua; Sakha Republic (Yakutia); Zanzibar.

By February 1996, four more had been added: Baskhorostan, Buryatia, the Mon People, and Tuva. Three of these four are in the territory of the Russian Federation.

As can be seen in **Map 13**, the vast majority of members are in the former Soviet Union, China, India, the Balkans, and countries in Asia, especially Indonesia. UNPO's focus of activity may not be unrelated to the fact that it receives part of its funding from the Dutch Foreign Ministry. The Dutch formerly had an empire, with special focus on current UNPO "target" country Indonesia. Since the complicated monarchical rearrangements in Britain beginning in the late seventeenth century, the key imperial power in the world is properly understood as *Anglo-Dutch*, rather than simply British, because Great Britain and Holland became the two most important northern "clones" of the earlier Venetian empire.

Visiting Dudayev's mountain retreat

Vis-à-vis China, UNPO is a key promoter of Tibetan independence. Beyond Tibet, others of its members include Taiwan and "East Turkestan," the name UNPO accords to the Uighur-populated region of China's northwestern Xinjiang province. As for Taiwan, Parris Chang, president of the UNPO steering committee, is a Taiwanese senator from the

British-backed, pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party.

Fifteen of UNPO's members are from the former Soviet Union, mostly in areas of the Russian Federation.

UNPO has a high-profile role in the conflict in Chechnya. To give a flavor of this, one need only cite a July 24, 1995 UNPO press release:

"UNPO General Secretary Michael van Walt spent many hours in discussion with President Dudayev at his mountain headquarters in Chechnya. During the two official meetings, the Chechen President spoke of his commitment to peace, and the desire of the Chechen people for independence for their war-torn republic. Dr. van Walt was in Grozny to attend the talks between the Russians and the Chechens, which appeared to have reached a stalemate due to the issue of Chechen independence. . . . Before attending the negotiations, he visited the neighboring Ingush Republic, where he met with President Aushev, Ingush officials, and humanitarian aid officials."

This was one of many releases issued since December 1994, the time of the Russian invasion of Chechnya. Although sometimes distancing themselves from the UNPO's more extreme acts of violence, such as taking hospital patients hostages, the releases most often read like outbursts from Dudayev's own Ministry of Propaganda.

Covering up the truth

As it does with other such situations, the UNPO intervention is based on fallacy of composition, sin of omission, and misrepresentation of the facts. What purports to be a campaign for oppressed peoples, is really a program to enforce a certain agenda: the elevation of the concept of ethnicity to the highest rank in international political and strategic considerations, and the phasing-out of the sovereign nation-state.

To accomplish its aims, the UNPO must obscure not only its deeper aims, but also the true nature of the situations it is meddling in. In the case of Chechnya, it is no secret that Russian military actions there have been brutal—often, by the way, destroying the fabric of life of Russians, not only Chechens, who live in Grozny and other cities of Chechnya. But given that, and other grievances of the Chechens, UNPO's literature mysteriously omits the well-known fact that Grozny, under Dudayev, has become a focal point of international criminal activity, especially drug trafficking, and terrorism.

Also omitted in UNPO propaganda, is the activity in the Caucasus of British, French, and other operatives, whose efforts inflame the Russians' anger and paranoia.

Breaking up sovereign entities

Van Walt and his circle are playing a delicate game, but one completely coherent with British geopolitical strategy. Much like waving a red flag in front of a bull, they support

separatist-secessionist tendencies, counting on the Russians, mainland Chinese, and others (e.g., Indonesians) to react according to a profile of their usual proclivities under such situations, namely, to brutally suppress the "ethnicity" movements in question. The suppression has the short- to medium-term effect of dissuading these and potentially other movements from challenging "the center," but has the longer-term effect, it is calculated, of fuelling a mood of revolt. It is a classic trap, utilized repeatedly by the British imperialists to break up other nations or empires over the past decades.

One would wish that the leaders of nations targetted in such a strategy would break profile, and act with greater sophistication and adeptness. One element of such a more sophisticated strategy, would be to punish less the populations and peoples involved, and to focus more on exposing the higher-level institutions, including the UNPO, which are manipulating or controlling the insurrections from outside.

The ultimate aim of van Walt is unambiguous.

Speaking of Russia, for example, he affirms: "What happens in Russia, is very dependent on what will happen at the center of power, how the power struggles will be resolved. The situation there is very unstable, with many peoples simply waiting for the opportunity to break out, or get some autonomy. The Chechen war was supposed to nip this in the bud, but it has changed everything, with the exactly opposite effect. Russia is becoming a test case, in which statehood is being redefined, and in which local authorities are demonstrating extensive rights on the international level. Places like Bashkiristan, Tatarstan, are establishing their individual trade relations abroad, and defining their own rights. Whole sectors of Russia are moving in this direction."

"Russia is caught in a bit of a Catch-22," he said. "They ostensibly started the war in Chechnya, using the excuse that 'Chechen separatism' would create a precedent, with other peoples doing the same. But, in fact, as we said from the start, Russia's military action will *precipitate* the splitting up of Russia. We have 14 member-peoples in UNPO from the former Soviet Union, most of them inside the Russian Republic. For the moment, they are all scared that if they do something, they will be treated like the Chechens. But at the same time, they have had an awakening, that the issue is not, in fact, *communism*, as they always thought it was, but Russian imperialism."

Van Walt also believes that Indonesia is heading for break-up.

As for China, Van Walt asserts that the country will have a hard time holding together "in the long run." The immediate challenge would be from "the determination of Taiwan to preserve its de facto independence. . . . This, in turn, and over time, will affect the situations in Tibet and Xinjiang. Here, like in Russia, the outcome will depend on the outcome of the power struggles in China itself."

Or, as he stated in a recent discussion: "Russia and China are either not going to survive in their present state structures,

or they will survive, but only through major changes in their constitutional set-up, by beginning from the bottom up, rather than the top down, in dealing with various of their peoples."

With help from von Hapsburg

UNPO has built up some curious allies. While it presumes to be "liberal," it has developed close working relations with the Pan-European Union, headed by Otto von Hapsburg. In October 1995, UNPO and PEU held parallel conferences in Estonia. The participants in both conferences were representatives from 14 "peoples" that had been invited to Estonia by UNPO. The PEU "line" on the future of Russia is almost identical, word for word, to that of van Walt and UNPO.

Another group with which UNPO cooperates closely, is the Copenhagen-based International Working Group in Indigenous Affairs. IWGIA was founded at the International Congress of Americanists in 1967. Like UNPO, IWGIA receives funds from Scandinavian "aid" organizations, including Denmark's Danida and Norway's NORAD, and from certain of the Scandinavian churches.

On Oct. 9-11, 1995, IWGIA held a conference in Chiang-mai, Thailand, on the theme "Asian Indigenous and Mountain and Hill Peoples." The conference was financially supported by NORAD and Danida. Representative "indigenous" groups there included the Naga and other peoples of India, Bangladesh, and Nepal; the "Cordillera Peoples Alliance" of the Philippines; "Taiwan Aborigines"; and various "indigenous activists" and government officials from Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Burma, and Vietnam.

The event focussed on a "Declaration on the Rights of Asian Indigenous Tribal Peoples," a draft of which states that one key aim is to fight "development aggression," which involves "the encroachment to our lands for logging, mining, hydroelectric dams, geothermal and nuclear energy projects, including nuclear waste dumping, national parks, industrial zones, agribusiness projects, and tourism. As the traditional custodians of the regions' rainforests, land, water, and the resources therein, which are being exploited ruthlessly by commercial firms causing extensive damage to environment, we assert that the world can benefit from our experience, in the management of nature for a sustainable future."

The declaration, "We Are of the Land," asserted that these peoples are "distinct from the rest of the prevailing society. . . . We assert the right to our identities which are linked to our territories and ancestral domain. We assert our right to the full control of our lands, as the foundation of our existence, our customary laws, and indigenous social systems. . . . We assert the right to determine the form of self-government, the rights to uphold indigenous political systems, the right to engage in foreign relations and trade, the right to form alliances and federations with other indigenous peoples, for ushering a life of peace and security, and for pursuing our common goal."