

(Guns, continued from p. 2)

The State Department's current annual human rights report says that Saudi government officials "torture and otherwise abuse detainees, including citizens and foreigners". One method of "torture" in Saudi Arabia, the State Department says, is "electronic shock", making the export of Tasers and electronic shock batons to Saudi authorities especially odious.

When asked if sending such items to the Saudis didn't raise concerns, Baird said that electronic shock batons and Tasers "have a very legitimate police purpose. It's far preferable to shooting people down". This argument would be more compelling if US firms haven't also been selling the Saudis — and many other countries — shotguns and ammunition.

Other countries which the Commerce Department has authorized to receive category 0A82C exports include Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Indonesia, Israel, Kuwait, Malaysia, Mexico, Nigeria and Pakistan. 0A84C exports were sent to, among others, Brazil, China, Colombia, El Salvador, Ghana, Guatemala, Mexico, Paraguay and Venezuela.

Baird said that the Commerce Department has a policy of denying any request to export "specially designed implements of torture", and that within a month or so the Department will publish new regulations in the *Federal Register* which will formally ban their export. Note, though, that Commerce apparently does not consider Premier Crown Corporation's 26-inch shock baton to fall within that grouping.

While we did not find any cases of thumbscrews being exported — and Baird stated that the Commerce Department had never authorized their sale, at least during the Clinton administration — they will not be banned for export under the new guidelines, thus preserving flexibility in the licensing process and maintaining all maximum sharpness to America's competitive edge.

The human side to this business is not forgotten. At the torture schools run by the US government, such as the School of the Americas at Ft. Benning, Georgia, officers from El Salvador to Saudi Arabia and other client nations are taught all the refinement of inflicting pain and extorting information. ■

# Punch Bowl

In a city seething with enmities and ancient feuds, few hatreds glow with fiercer incandescence than that between Scott Thompson and his former father-in-law, Paul Nitze. Thompson was a high-flier who went from Stanford to a Rhodes scholarship at Oxford to Reagan-era Washington as a cold war hawk. He counted Richard Perle and Edward Luttwak among his friends, and Nina Nitze, the daughter of Mr. Cold War, was his wife.

Then Thompson declared himself gay. This didn't prevent him from serving as No. 2 to Charles Wick at the US Information Agency, but it did pitch him into

## There was an essential "link between [Nitze's] impotence with women in his twenties and his need to press for big missiles on America's part for the duration of his career"

savage combat with the Nitze clan. Thompson, who teaches at the Fletcher School at Tufts, has now given his side of the story in *The Price of Achievement: Coming Out in Reagan Days*, published by Cassell.

According to Thompson, the Nitzes shunned no weapon, even theft, in his bitter divorce and child custody proceedings with Nina. Personal papers were plundered from Thompson's Washington home by a burglar who we are to infer was hired by the Nitzes.

Thompson certainly spares no effort to embarrass Nitze. He claims that Nitze himself has a homosexual orientation and quotes Phyllis Pratt, the Standard Oil heiress whom Nitze married in the 1930s, as telling her friends that Nitze was impotent with women. Phyllis, Thompson writes, later accused Nina of "driving Scott to homosexuality.... whereas she herself had saved Paul from homosexuality. The more I thought about it the more I realized that it was his latent homosexuality, largely suppressed

from the time he advantageously committed himself to Phyllis Pratt, that was the underlying force driving this war, and that the real divorce going on was between him and me."

Thompson applies this analysis to issues of more moment than the psychodynamics of one family. For those who remember Nitze flourishing models of mighty Soviet missiles in the heyday of the Committee on the Present Danger, these words do carry a certain resonance:

"As Paul was eventually able to learn, I prepared a paper for delivery to several fora of psychiatrists and psychohistorians, a psychohistory of his life, the basis for a larger biography forthcoming. The essential part is the link that became obvious between Paul's impotence with women in his twenties and his need to press for big missiles on America's part for the duration of his career — along with his denial that we ever had enough, that ours ever counted, and that we could ever stand up to the Soviets. Whence of course his central participation in the creation of the infamous 'Missile Gap Crisis' of 1960, which Kennedy was happy enough to forget once it had done its work and he was installed in the White House, but of which Paul continued to believe a version."

Thompson's memoir is written in a frenetic, vulgar prose that is exhausting, though sometimes unintentionally comic, as when he synthesizes his own sexual divagations with the wider conflict:

"All this [his passion for someone called Mark Altbush], internally so vast, was the minutest fleck on the tide of history that whirled upon my little bubble, as the United States and the Soviet Union seemed to be moving toward their final, historic confrontation. Everything related to everything. When I gave lectures and speeches counterpunching the glacier-like Soviet encroachment, I was not just challenging the *bienpensant* orthodoxies of the decent sleepy world; I was tearing at the unconscious bonds of the whole universe of convention from which I was now desperate to escape."

This is not the first time that the psychosexual dynamics of the cold war have

been examined, re missiles. The prime deviser of the nuclear deterrence theory at RAND in the Fifties was Bernard Brodie. He formulated concepts of "nuclear exchange", "escalation" and "mutual assured destruction" in between sessions with his psychoanalyst.

## Sweatshop Czarina's Bouquets From Hillary

**H**illary Clinton delivered a fiery speech at the United Nations women's summit in Peking on the plight

### Navasky's First Amendment

“It is in the nature of the journal of opinion — left, right and far right — to question the powers that be, to cast an independent eye on the ideas and inhabitants of the conventional center ... Independent political commentary requires independence and with it the freest possible play to test ideas, exercise the power of reason, and make the case for the importance of moral argument.”

— Victor Navasky, *The New York Times*, Sept. 24, 1995, in op-ed article criticizing Rupert Murdoch, “the enemy of independence”.

“Alex, you are, as always a joy to read and at a time when we are reconsidering every aspect of the magazine including space allocations, our preference is to maintain you in your current privileged position. But, as you may gather from the guidelines, we are unenthusiastic about devoting any serious space (even when arguably deserved) to bashing our allies on the liberal left, given the fact (as hordes of callers and readers increasingly remind us) that the near right, the far right, the neo-right and the Christian right are already doing much of that job, albeit from their own warped perspective, and are very much in the saddle (not least because a weary DLC-oriented administration and its neo-lib supporters seems reluctant to take them on).”

— Letter from *Nation* editorial director Victor Navasky and *Nation* editor Katrina vanden Heuvel to Alexander Cockburn, August 7, 1995.

of Chinese women in their native country. But when it comes to mistreatment of Chinese women in the United States, the First Lady's feminist zeal abruptly disappears. **Ajantha Subramanian** sends us this report:

Despite the protests of an Asian women's group, Hillary Clinton accepted an invitation to give the keynote speech at a September 20 ceremony honoring a notorious employer of sweatshop labor.

The “Gala Art of Achievement Awards”, sponsored jointly by *Working Woman* magazine and the National Foundation for Women Business Owners, pays homage to the top 50 US businesswomen. On this year's list was Jessica McClintock, a dress manufacturer and also the target of a three-year boycott waged by the Garment Workers Justice Campaign and the Asian Immigrant Women's Advocates (AIWA). They charge that McClintock has refused to pay back wages to 20 Chinese immigrant women who sewed party and prom dresses for her company.

The women were employed by one of McClintock's subcontractors, Lucky Sewing Company of Oakland, California, where they worked 10-12 hours a day. They received no vacation time, overtime or health benefits and earned piece rate wages — \$5 for a McClintock designer dress that fetches \$175 in stores.

In 1992, Lucky Sewing declared bankruptcy, leaving the women not only jobless but also holding more than \$15,000 in bounced paychecks. After long claiming that she had no legal obligation to the workers, McClintock—whose firm racked up \$145 million in profits last year — recently changed her position. Though still refusing to negotiate with AIWA, she has agreed to pay \$2,000 to each worker who signs a written statement absolving her of responsibility for their unpaid wages and stating that the money represents charity. Meanwhile, McClintock has obtained a court order restricting the women from picketing her business premises.

*Working Woman* and the Foundation for Women Business Owners rejected the demand of the Asian Immigrant Women's Advocates that McClintock be removed from the list of awardees. They explained blandly that the awards are based solely on profits and have nothing to do with social responsibility. Their one

## Exocet Subsidizes George

**J**ohn F. Kennedy Jr.'s new magazine, *George*, launched its career last month, graced with a photo of Cindy Crawford on its cover. It contained 175 pages of advertising, a record for a new magazine.

*George*'s publisher is Hachette Filipacchi Magazines, the biggest magazine company in the world. Hachette in turn is owned by the Lagardere Groupe of France, which is headed by Jean-Luc Lagardere. In addition to publishing, Lagardere's firms make weaponry, including the Exocet missile.

Recall that it was the Exocet which almost allowed the Argentine air force to defeat the British in the war for the Falkland Islands. Lagardere has sold this product to customers including Brazil, Saudi Arabia and Indonesia.

So every time Lagardere sells another Exocet, his company will be better able to spare the \$20 million it's expected to sink into *George*. ■

concession was to edit Jessica McClintock out of a videotape highlighting the awardees' successes, which was shown at the gala affair.

*Working Woman* and the National Foundation for Women Business Owners pretend to champion “working women”. Their preference is for women CEOs whose firms buy advertising space in the former or contribute money to the latter.

Hillary Clinton responded to protests by the Asian Immigrant Women's Advocates by summoning the Labor Department's Women's Bureau to help re-write her speech. She refused to criticize McClintock directly. The most she would do was insert emollient language regarding the sad plight of low-wage workers.

Some 60 people protested the awards ceremony at the DC Capitol Hilton. According to AIWA's Stacy Kono, “All we want is for Jessica McClintock to sit down with the workers and negotiate a fair settlement.” One woman making her way into the ceremony offered protesters an alternative solution: “Why don't you just work harder?”

## The Wold Bank's Refugee Romeo

The World Bank's annual meeting is about to get underway and Bank flacks are flooding the media with stories about the institution's ongoing transformation into a friend of the Third World poor and the global environment. But Bank officials are not keen to discuss the activities of one of its newest employees, Jose Cordoba Montoya.

Just a few years ago, Montoya was one of the most powerful men in Mexico, Carlos Salinas's chief of staff and generalissimo of Mexico's war on drugs. He met regularly with US officials, and received the usual hosannas for being a dashing "free-market reformer".

But Montoya was forced to resign after he was linked to the March, 1994 murder of Luis Donaldo Colosio, the ruling party's presidential candidate.

## Montoya resigned after he was linked to the murder of Luis Donaldo Colosio, but now makes \$1,000 per day from the World Bank.

Earlier this year he suffered fresh humiliation when wiretaps conducted by Mexico's intelligence agency and leaked to the press revealed that Montoya ("my little pirate") had been carrying on a torrid affair with Marcela ("my little dear") Bodenstedt — former cop, ex-television announcer, and alleged associate of members of the Garcia Abregon drug cartel.

After he was tied to the Colosio murder, Montoya was shunted off to the Inter-American Development Bank. But when his presence there became an embarrassment to the IADB, the refugee had to hit the streets once more.

Montoya was quickly offered asylum by the World Bank, and now earns the princely sum of \$1,000 per day as a consultant. We called Bank spokesman Mario del Castilla to ask what Montoya was doing to earn his keep. Not surprisingly, Castilla would not discuss the matter. ■

# Pecksniff's Progress

## Carter's Zaire Con

One of the great mysteries of our age is why ex-President Jimmy Carter is held in such high regard. *The Nation* ran a story on him a few years back, hailing the man from Plains as "The Very Model of an Ex-President".

Here is a man who while in office introduced Cold War II and what later came to be known as Reaganomics. As a roving diplomat in recent years he has occasionally performed useful service, but more often than not his work has served to bolster a variety of dictators.

Amid burning admiration — as he later confessed — for Yanick Cedras, wife of Haiti's bloodthirsty General Raul Cedras, Carter forced concessions on Jean-Bertrand Aristide before the latter's return to Haiti as president. Cedras himself received an invitation to teach the Bible to Carter's Sunday School class in Georgia. Carter once served as an election observer in Ghana and duly certified a rigged balloting conducted by "President" Jerry Rawlings, a favorite of the US government and the International Monetary Fund.

Carter's latest project is to give aid and comfort to one of the world's most corrupt and ruthless tyrants, Zaire's Mobutu Sese Seko. His efforts in this regard have the backing of the Clinton administration and the United Nations.

Mobutu, who has stolen some \$5 billion since taking power in a CIA sponsored coup in 1965, has been isolated politically since protests rocked Kinshasa, the capital, four years ago. Though he has a friend installed as prime minister — Kengo Wa Dondo — Mobutu no longer exercises iron-clad control of the army or of the national treasury. Despite discreet support from France and the US, most notably the former, Mobutu is an international pariah (see **CounterPunch**, Vol. 1, No. 14).

However, Mobutu's room to maneuver has greatly increased due to the crises in Burundi and especially in Rwanda. Millions of people from the latter country fled across the border into Zaire following the civil war that erupted in early 1994. The UN has paid Mobutu about \$15 million to run refugee camps for the Rwandans, even as Zairian troops have

committed terrible abuses against the camp's inhabitants.

Mobutu has also allowed Hutu military officials, perpetrators of genocide against Rwanda's minority Tutsis, to control the camps. His army has been supplying the Hutus with training, weapons and military bases as they prepare to return to war against the new government in Rwanda.

Organizations in Washington which track central African affairs, including human rights groups, relief organizations and ruling elite forums like the Council on Foreign Relations and the Global Coalition on Africa — the latter headed by George Bush's former assistant secretary of state Herman Cohen — have become alarmed by the situation on the Rwanda-Zaire border. There has been a consensus that Mobutu is a large factor in destabilizing the region.

The Atlanta-based Carter Center has been holding a series of panel discussions on the situation in Rwanda, and has invited members of these groups for the stated purpose of hearing suggestions

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