

Israel tops list of South African arms embargo violators

The State Department submitted a report to Congress last month detailing violations of the U.S. embargo on arms to South Africa. The classified report, mandated by the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986, identifies several nations that face a potential termination of U.S. aid for having provided South Africa with arms and military technology. According to press reports, Israel tops the list that also includes NATO members France, Britain, West Germany and Italy.

But Israel's arms relationship with South Africa is qualitatively different from those of the NATO countries, according to Jane Hunter, editor of the small monthly *Israeli Foreign Affairs*. The European countries have avoided direct arms treaties with South Africa but have allowed private companies to contract for military-related services. Israel, on the other hand, has direct government-to-government provisions, Hunter said.

In its arms agreement, Israel over the past year has provided South Africa with 50 Gazelle helicopters, upgraded the capacity of that country's "Cheetah" fighter-bomber and provided at least two Boeing 707s that serve as both electronic warfare platforms and refueling craft, giving South Africa an airborne



strike capacity throughout Sub-Saharan Africa.

But the ties between Israel and South Africa go deeper than simply supplying weapons systems and military equipment, said Hunter.

"It involves a very symbiotic set-up whereby South Africa plies money—of which it had a great abundance until recently—into the Israeli research-and-development phase of weapons production. The Israelis then share with the South Africans whatever the technological achievement of that match has been.

"Bowing to U.S. pressure, the Israeli government finally announced this year that it would not make any new arms agreements with South Africa and [that it would let its existing contracts lapse]. But that announcement turned out to be a red herring that will allow Israel to continue supplying arms to the apartheid government well into the next century while placating congress-

sional critics today," said Hunter.

The Israelis, according to Hunter, began to backtrack on their offer almost immediately by arguing that allowing their current contracts to lapse would thrust them into many very expensive lawsuits and throw thousands of Israelis out of work.

"In late January," Hunter said, "Israeli Defense Minister [Yitzhak] Rabin went to South Africa. It was first portrayed as a visit to tell the South Africans to keep a low profile, and that this was going to be used as a gesture to Congress to show that Israel was winding down its affairs with South Africa."

Then on March 20 the Israeli daily *Haaretz* reported that Rabin had signed military contracts with South Africa that would last into the 21st century. Consequently, said Hunter, Israel is now free to say it is going to let its existing contracts lapse and not sign any new ones.

—Robert Knight
Dennis Bernstein & Howard Levine

Simpson-Rodino's disappearing immigrant trick: out of sight, out of mind

GUATEMALA CITY—Seated in a one-room house in one of Guatemala City's poor working-class neighborhoods, Olga De Valenzuela, a 34-year-old mother of three, nurses her 10-month-old infant girl.

"My husband was desperate because he supports the family on a \$2-a-day salary he earned here as a bus driver," says Olga, "so he went to live with my brother in Santa Ana, Calif., last year to find work."

"Now he sends \$100 a month and even that's barely enough for us to get by. God only knows what we'll do if they deport him."

Olga and her children represent just one of the thousands of Guatemalan families whose relatives face deportation from the U.S. under the new Simpson-Rodino Immigration Law.

The law, which took effect May 5, will crack down on U.S. businesses employing illegal aliens. It could lead to the deportation of millions of undocumented foreigners.

While the prospect of massive deportations of Guatemalans raises panic here among families who live

off their relatives' earnings, Guatemalan officials, like their counterparts in other Latin American governments, fear potential economic and social havoc.

Feeding these fears is the economic crisis that grips Guatemala. Industry is running at half of its installed capacity and agricultural production is at 1970 levels. One out of every two Guatemalans is either unemployed or without full-time work. The annual 25 percent inflation rate since 1984 has cut workers' buying power almost in half. Consequently, in recent years thousands of Guatemalans migrated to the U.S. in search of work.

"It's shocking how many Guatemalans reside there," says Guatemalan Congressman Oliverio Garcia Rodas, who recently visited the U.S. to evaluate the effects of the Simpson-Rodino law.

He says that at least 600,000 Guatemalans live in the U.S., at least half of them illegally. He conservatively estimates that some 100,000 will be deported.

Indeed, in Olga De Valenzuela's neighborhood, the imminent deportation of relatives is the talk of the block. "Everybody here has a relative or a friend in the U.S.," says one woman. "In a few months this place will be crawling with deported people."

"When some 70,000 or more people suddenly return to the country,

it will be a negative blow to the economy," says Deputy Economic Minister Eduardo Estrada. The director of the central bank's foreign exchange department, Carlos Najera, estimates the country could lose an estimated \$36 million a year in foreign exchange money that those deported would have sent to their families.

Minister of Labor Catalina Sobe-ranis admits the government is financially unable to confront immediate, massive deportations, and says Guatemala has been seeking the support of the other Central American nations to jointly request a temporary postponement of the Simpson-Rodino law to allow those countries preparation time.

Sobe-ranis estimates that 1.5 million Central Americans face deportation from the U.S. "The effect on all of the Central American countries of the U.S.' sovereign but unilateral decision must be considered by the Reagan administration," says Sobe-ranis.

President Vinicio Cerezo will formally request a moratorium of the law in a meeting with President Reagan in Washington next week. The Guatemalan government may also seek economic aid through the Reagan administration's Caribbean Basin Initiative Fund and from other countries.

—Kevin Robinson

tough re-election campaign this year and having barely survived a bitter controversy over dumping gypsum into the Mississippi River, has taken a strong stand against the smelly barge in favor of low-profile hazardous wastes that are transported regularly but more quietly into the state for incineration. But it turns out that there's no place like home. As *In These Times* went to press the down-in-the-dumps barge was ending its nine-week Caribbean vacation and heading back to New York.

Dumping on our southern neighbors

Business representatives of U.S. waste disposal firms are touring Latin America looking for countries to rent them land for industrial and municipal waste dumps, reports Manuel Torres Calderon in the *Excelsior* of Mexico City. One of these companies, Applied Resources Technology (ART) of Los Angeles, tried to strike a \$30-million deal with Honduras that would turn that country's southern coastal swamplands (the poorest area of Honduras) into a 900,000-acre dump. ART proposed to pay Honduras \$8 a ton for the right to dump unmarked containers of hazardous waste at the rate of 10,000 tons a day. Apparently the waste shipments would be approved by the Environmental Protection Agency but that responsibility would stop as soon as the waste left U.S. territory. Minister of the Presidency Celso Arias, supporting the deal, said, "With this money we will be able to irrigate the whole southern area of the country." Others called for rejection of ART's proposal. President of the United Federation of Workers Hector Hernandez said, "We have enough garbage with the contras, we don't need any more thrown on top of us." Although ART's proposal was officially rejected by Honduras, government sources claim that the decision was merely postponed.

EPA respects Mexican sovereignty

The U.S. and Mexico signed an agreement last November to allow American companies to ship hazardous waste to Mexico for processing and disposal, according to a recent report by Fred Bonavita and Rob Meckel in the *Houston Post*. Although this previously unnoticed agreement may solve the waste disposal problems for American corporations and consequently save them lots of money, it offers no protection to the environment. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) officials admit all of the following: that the EPA has no knowledge of the quality of Mexico's waste disposal or treatment sites; that the EPA has not tried to inspect those sites because it does not have the right to do so; that the EPA has no authority over or interest in what happens when the wastes cross the border; that the EPA relies on the company shipping the waste to provide information on what wastes are being exported. The U.S. Customs Service, out of concern for safety, has told agents not to check the contents of hazardous and potentially deadly waste containers against the bills of shipment.

Do legitimate waste disposal sites exist in Mexico? Manuel Fernandez of the Mexican Conservation Federation in Mexico City said that he knows of no facilities in his country able to handle hazardous wastes properly. "We don't want our country to be a receiver of toxic wastes... Even if it is brought here legally, nobody knows what to do with it," Nick Kamp, an environmentalist in southern Arizona, said he has heard "lots and lots of stories" about illegal waste dumping in northern Mexico. EPA's Wendy Grieder said she too has heard "lots of rumors" but has seen "no concrete evidence." And if Mexico's waste-processing facilities are a sham? "There is nothing we can do about it," said Grieder. "It's really none of our business; it's a sovereignty issue."

Texans react in style

Texas lawmakers have concerns about this new hazardous waste agreement. One at least was noble: "I'm really concerned for Mexico," said State Sen. Hector Uribe. "The whole country is in a financial disadvantage, but I really question the wisdom of permitting one's country to become a dumping ground for the country that generates more hazardous wastes than any other country in the world." Others are concerned about the dangers of hosting the Mexican-bound hazardous waste while it is in transit across the state. State Sen. Tati Santiesteban wants Texas officials to be notified about the hazardous waste shipments. "I believe that it would be ideal if Mexico would take our wastes, but I think we should be informed on the transportation."

By Richard Ryan

WASHINGTON, D.C.

THE CHANTING, EXUBERANT CROWD OF MORE than 100,000 people evoked memories of the great anti-war demonstrations of the late '60s and early '70s as it took two hours to file past the White House.

But the April 25 National Mobilization for Justice and Peace in Central America and Southern Africa differed from the peace marches of the Vietnam era in one important way: the single-largest contingent at the march was made up of labor unionists. By the Mobilization's estimate, some 25,000 unionists marched. Indeed, the Mobilization prides itself on having brought organized labor into the peace and justice movement to a previously unequalled degree. Support from unions like the United Auto Workers would have been unthinkable even a few years ago. The presidents of 21 national and international unions were among the co-sponsors of the march, and the labor turnout was especially impressive in the face of the cold, wet weather and weeks of denunciations from hawkish AFL-CIO leaders.

Protestations about the protests: The controversy surrounding the Mobilization was highlighted by a series of articles in publications like the *New Republic* and the conservative *Washington Times*. These pieces criticized the labor unions for joining a coalition that included groups like CISPEL, which supports the guerrillas in El Salvador. The *New Republic's* Morton Kondracke suggested that behind the Mobilization's "idealistic liberal front" there lurked a "radical left-wing" reality out to aid 'Marxist-Leninist revolutionaries' in Central America." Kondracke called the coalition of labor, churches and students "ominous."

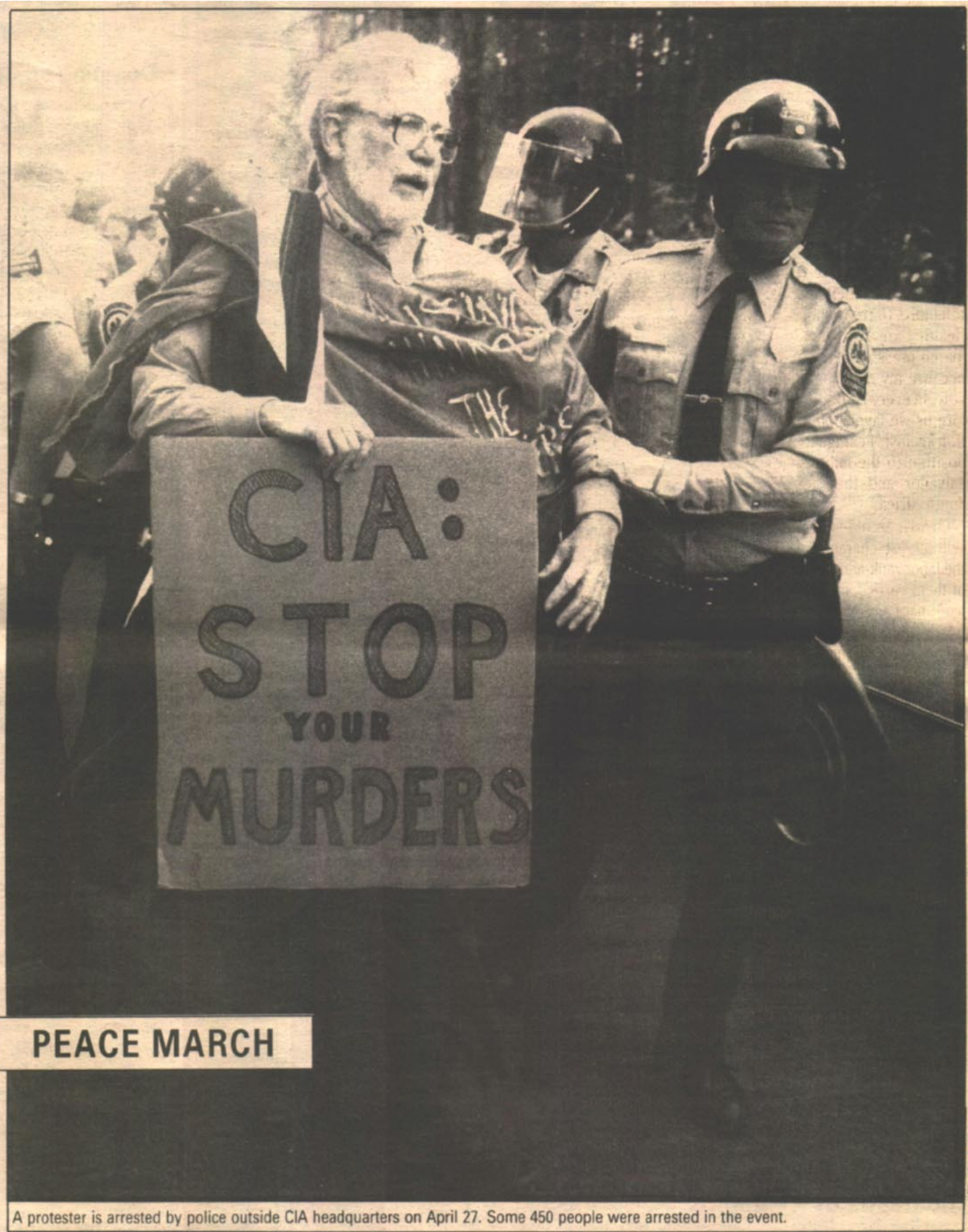
But the Reagan administration's allies in the press cannot be credited with having launched the red-baiting. That dishonor is reserved for AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland, who on March 23 sent a letter to the labor group's affiliates asking them to shun the Mobilization as a front for pro-communist organizations. He claimed the Mobilization sought elimination of all aid to Central America (a touchy issue for Kirkland, who had joined a call for a regional "Marshall Plan" while a member of the Reagan-Kissinger Commission on Central America). A group of religious leaders supporting the Mobilization responded in writing to Kirkland: "The appeal we have issued to the American people makes no reference whatsoever to supporting a cutoff of all aid."

Kirkland's letter was followed up by a vehement letter by John Joyce, president of the International Bricklayers Union and Allied Craftsmen. Attached to Joyce's letter was a lengthy memo by an aide, Joel Freedman, that berated the Mobilization's organizers for support of Nicaragua's Sandinista government and other popular revolutionary movements in Central America. In the face of these attacks, some labor watchers predicted that the Communications Workers and the United Food and Commercial Workers would withdraw from the rally. But not a single union repented.

More than disagreement: "We don't have any problem with other unionists disagreeing with us," commented David Dyson of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union, the labor representative on the Mobilization's steering committee. "The

6 IN THESE TIMES MAY 6-12, 1987

New protest leaves labor with old question: 'Which side are you on?'



PEACE MARCH

A protester is arrested by police outside CIA headquarters on April 27. Some 450 people were arrested in the event.

problem has been in the tone and the accuracy of their statements. It's one thing to have people disagree with you; it's another thing to be red-baited and lied about. I'm not saying we haven't raised questions about use of the economic aid in Central America. Some [U.S. tax] money is obviously going into the pockets of the military [in Latin America]."

(Mobilization literature cites U.S. funding of the Salvadoran army's rural pacification program as an example of indirect war-related aid. The Salvadoran military receives this support through the U.S. Agency for In-

ternational Development. And though Joel Freedman claimed in his memo for the Bricklayers Union that the Mobilization had demanded a cutoff of all aid to Central America, he was unable, when contacted by *In These Times*, to cite any document that would refute the Mobilization's repeated denial of his assertions.)

Dyson, who accurately predicted "an enormous number" of unionists would participate in the rally, chided the AFL-CIO's leadership for falling behind American working people on peace and justice issues. He believes that AFL-CIO leaders "need to listen

to the rank and file on this issue. The leadership is locked into this Cold War mentality."

Accusations against march organizers ascended to a comic pitch on the day before the event, when the *Washington Times* ran an undocumented story accusing the Mobilization of having received \$3 million from Libyan Col. Muammar Khadafy channelled through the Nicaraguan embassy. Mobilization spokesman Ned Greenberg described the story as a "bald-faced lie," and said most of the Mobilization's approximately \$200,000 in finances came from union and church contributions. "The unions have been great,"