

By Diana Johnstone

PARIS

RICHARD ULLMAN'S ARTICLE ON "THE SECRET French Connection" in this summer's issue of *Foreign Policy* had the ingredients to explode official myths surrounding the French nuclear *force de frappe*. French officials and media hastened to defuse the bombshell by playing down the revelations. As a result there was no immediate explosion of scandal. But the story remains a time bomb.

Ullman, a Princeton professor of international relations who worked on the policy planning staff of the Pentagon and the National Security Council in the '60s, revealed what he called "the best-kept secret" in Washington: a close Franco-U.S. nuclear cooperation that began in 1961, was interrupted when Charles de Gaulle took France out of the NATO military command in 1966, resumed in 1972 and was strengthened in the '80s under Francois Mitterrand.

To get around laws banning sharing of nuclear secrets, Americans let French weapons designers play "20 questions" to get them on the right track of weapons innovations, Ullman said. The French in return agreed to plan Soviet targets jointly, thus letting themselves be drawn back into the NATO military command they still officially refuse to rejoin.

From a legalistic American point of view, the main scandal is that this cooperation was apparently against the law, because Congress had authorized nuclear cooperation only with Britain. From a French point of view, the scandal is the loss of credibility of the much-vaunted independence of the nuclear deterrent that a generation of political leaders have claimed guaranteed France's independence—from the Americans, among others.

The broader geopolitical and strategic scandal, however, is much worse.

Coup of the decade: The Ullman revelations confirm the "Gaullist" policy option taken by Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger in 1972, when looming defeat in Vietnam led them to seek military surrogates. Kissinger's biggest coup was the alliance with China against the Russians at the expense of the Vietnamese. This most cynical of all real-politik coups allowed the U.S. to abandon Vietnam, while China took up the harassment of that unfortunate country by arming fanatical Maoist Cambodians (Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge) to strike across the border in the late '70s, provoking the Vietnamese invasion and keeping Indochina in turmoil to this day. China justified this reversal of alliances by adopting the doctrine identifying Soviet "hegemonism" as "enemy No. 1."

The opposite number of the Nixon-Kissinger China gambit was a much less ambitious French maneuver. France, like China, is one of the five permanent members of the Security Council, which are also the five overt nuclear powers. In the '60s, France, like China, had broken with its "superpower," although in an incomparably less concrete and more purely rhetorical way.

In January 1968 de Gaulle made a startling speech to his war college, pointing to the world's political uncertainties (who will govern the U.S. or the USSR in 20 years time? he asked) and concluding that France's nuclear retaliation capacity must be pointed "in all directions." The French expression used by de Gaulle, *tous azimuts*, was odd enough to catch on. More often than not, it

U.S. nuclear policy hides an old French connection



Henry Kissinger and Richard Nixon: playing nuclear footsie with France.

was used ironically, hinting at the general's unlimited pretensions.

Within half a year de Gaulle was shaken by May 1968, and 15 months later he resigned as president of the Fifth Republic. *Tous azimuts* never really got off the ground.

Still, the Gaullist claims to total French national independence had created a rhetorical standard that other French politicians

FRANCE

had to keep up or risk appearing servile to the American superpower. It has remained habitual for French leaders to stress the independence of France's nuclear defense. For the president, his sole access to the nuclear doomsday button makes him the very embodiment of national sovereignty and greatly enhances his domestic prestige.

Perhaps more than most other American leaders, Nixon and Kissinger knew not to take mere words too seriously. They saw, first, that an "independent" French force needn't necessarily be independent, and second, that the illusion of its independence could be a useful card in European politics.

In the early '70s, the U.S. was negotiating arms control agreements with the Soviet Union. The principle had to be parity between the two superpowers. But the U.S.-Soviet symmetry was in fact accompanied by a major strategic asymmetry: while the U.S. had no major nuclear adversary other than the Soviet Union, the Soviet Union had to think about a hostile China to the East and two nuclear NATO countries, Britain in France, in the West.

The U.S. could obviously not be held responsible for China. And thanks to the

worldwide renown of Gaullist rhetoric, it might not be held responsible for France either. Thus as the U.S. cut back its NATO nuclear commitments in balanced agreements with Moscow, France could be building up "independent" nuclear forces to take their place.

This, anyway, is what has been happening. Under the label of "modernizing," France has been expanding its nuclear arsenal, while refusing to take part in nuclear disarmament negotiations between the superpowers.

In December 1987 in Washington, Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachov signed the treaty getting rid of their land-based intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF). This outlawed all land-based nuclear missiles of a range between 500 kilometers (310 miles) and 5,000 kilometers (3,100 kilometers)—so long as they are American or Soviet. French, Chinese and Israeli missiles are not covered.

Behind closed doors: Ullman discloses that the U.S. helped France develop miniature warheads and independently targetable multiple warheads. In return, French presidents and commanders agreed to coordinate target plans. This information about targeting is particularly significant because it tends to rule out any possible independent French use of its "independent" *force de frappe*.

The French deterrence doctrine has always remained deliberately vague, the better to deter. The official Gaullist doctrine is that the *force de frappe* is only to deter a Soviet violation of French territory, and not for use inside NATO to fight battles over Germany. The idea is that France could destroy enough of the Soviet Union—at least several cities—

to cancel any Soviet gains from conquering France. This is called *la défense du faible au fort*—defense of the weak from the strong.

An alternative and older doctrine that integrated the French force into the defense of Europe, but in a bizarre and necessarily sneaky way, was the "trigger" doctrine. This was developed by General André Beaufre in the early '60s, in response to the new U.S. "flexible response," interpreted in Paris as a de facto withdrawal of the French strategic nuclear umbrella in favor of a nuclear battlefield in Europe. The idea was that in case the Americans refused to use their strategic forces to counter a Soviet invasion, the relatively small French force could serve as a "trigger" to set off a strategic nuclear exchange between the superpowers.

It could do that best, of course, if it could fire missiles from its nuclear submarines in such a way that nobody could be sure who fired.

An interesting detail of recent revelations about Franco-U.S. cooperation is that the U.S. has refused to help France with technology to make nuclear submarines more silent. Keeping track of the French subs is also a measure of protection against the "trigger." Obviously, American strategists cannot seriously encourage a French strategy aimed at forcing the U.S. into a doomsday nuclear exchange with the Soviet Union it prefers to avoid.

Finally, the U.S. is getting ready to introduce a completely new electronic Air Command and Control System (ACCS) into European NATO in the '90s. France has no early-warning system of its own and has to depend on information passed along from the U.S. Last February Mitterrand agreed to open negotiations with NATO for France to take part in ACCS. Meanwhile, the French are developing the short-range Hades missile that, despite its formal appellation of "pre-strategic," is a battlefield weapon. The ongoing French nuclear weapons testing at Mururoa in the South Pacific aims at miniaturization. Whatever it's called, the French program is becoming more and more of a surrogate for the Americans in Europe—under U.S. control.

Calm after the storm: In the current political torpor in France, Ullman's disclosures caused no visible ripple. The leftist weekly *Politis* ran a cover story, using a copy of the 1961 Franco-U.S. accord obtained in Washington. In France, such texts simply are not to be found. *Politis* wondered whether more than \$6 billion a year wasn't too much to pay for a myth.

Even on the left, criticism is on grounds of national independence. *Politis* saw the Ullman article as part of a U.S. political strategy: the Americans would certainly like "to be able to count the French *force de frappe* in East-West negotiations. That would allow Washington to resume leadership in Europe, thus justifying its armaments projects like SDI, the sinister Star Wars."

Which Americans are *Politis* talking about? Those who seriously want to pursue disarmament with Moscow must eventually think of including the French forces, one way or another.

On the other hand, all-too-clever strategists in the Nixon-Kissinger tradition may think that it is fine to go on flattering the French fiction of total independence, while using the *force de frappe* as a nuclear wild card in the game with Moscow. □

IN THESE TIMES SEPTEMBER 6-12, 1989 9

Drugs

Continued from page 3

foul home-brewed liquor, in which household garbage, decayed meat, or even dead rodents were used for fermentation. Heavy drinking became fashionable as well. Edmund Wilson made a list of the terms of the day used to connote drunkenness ("blind, blotto, buried, canned, cockeyed, cracked, embalmed...") and stopped at No. 155 not because he had run out of words but because he had run out of energy. In the U.S. on a visit, the English writer G.K. Chesterton noted that "alcoholism has never threatened disaster as it is threatening America today. It isn't normal that girls of 16 should go to dances and drink raw alcohol."

No tomorrow: In Cincinnati, middle-class citizens complained that that dances were no longer the sedate, decorous affairs they had been prior to passage of the 18th Amend-

ment. "Rarely did an evening pass without someone passing out or a fight starting," recalled one man quoted by Henry Lee in his lively 1963 account, *How Dry We Were*. "The raw liquor of those days was not the kind that induced sleep," Lee's source added. "It made people wild." In Chicago, a Croatian immigrant complained that when working men got their hands on liquor, "they take one drink, then two, then another because they know it will be long before they can have more, and end by spending their whole pay and then getting very sick." Another of Lee's sources observed: "Everybody drank as if there would never be another drink. If you opened a bottle, you killed it."

Particularly interesting, however, was the effect on beer: it was roundly spurned—by imbibers because it was too tame and by rum-runners because it was too unprofitable. As a Rockefeller-financed study observed at the time: "The growth of the

cocktail habit has accompanied Prohibition, and has indeed been stimulated by it because bootleggers could more readily furnish alcohol in concentrated form suitable for making cocktails than they could the bulkier alcoholic beverages." A study conducted at the tail end of Prohibition found that beer consumption had fallen 70 percent since the 18th Amendment went into effect, while consumption of hard liquor had actually risen. Beer, that all-American brew, was suddenly too mellow, too laid back, too non-intoxicating for the feverish atmosphere under Prohibition.

Half a century later, the more moderate consumption habits that pertained prior to Prohibition have begun to reassert themselves. A certain equilibrium has been introduced. As Arnold Trebach, president of the pro-reform Drug Policy Foundation, points out, when it comes to legal substances such as alcohol, caffeine and nicotine, the Amer-

ican trend has been to lowered potency, i.e., white wine and low-alcohol beer, decaffeinated coffee and low-tar cigarettes (if any cigarettes at all). Except for single-malt scotch and other expensive imports meant to be sipped rather than gulped, sales of distilled spirits have languished since the '70s.

On the other hand, when it comes to illegal substances, the pattern is reversed. An innocuous herb like marijuana is out, while crack, the '80s answer to white lightning, is in. Instead of the mellow high of the '60s, the revved-up market of the '80s is promoting an intense rush more suitable to the ultraviolence of the age of Reagan and Bush. If Prohibition II is repealed and other aspects of Reaganism removed with it, there is every reason to believe that instead of using drugs to destroy themselves, people will go back to using drugs that make them feel good. □

Sister cities

Continued from page 6

said, "we should not as a city take a position." The measure failed, 71-to-29 percent.

Other options: Not all modern sister city relationships are overtly political. Many focus on trade and economic development. Visiting Hong Kong, for example, Virginia Gov. Gerald Baliles was surprised to find that chicken feet were considered to be a local delicacy. The same not being the case back home, Baliles soon was able to establish a Virginia/Hong Kong poultry foot link to local chicken farms.

In addition to such traditional trade arrangements, the Center for Innovative Diplomacy is encouraging U.S. cities to join the trend of European cities providing direct development aid to cities in the Third World, including transfers of technology and managerial skills. "It's much more logical than asking someone to contribute two or three years to the Peace Corps," says Irvine's Agran. "People with skills and commitment could lend assistance to a neighboring community in Latin America, let's say, for a period of six weeks." Agran hopes to promote just such a relationship with Irvine's prospective sister city of Hermosillo, Mexico.

Besides getting involved in small-scale international development projects, both Agran and Shuman foresee cities increasingly engaged in global environmental issues. Out of concern for the greenhouse effect, for example, Los Angeles is embarked on an ambitious tree-planting project. Other localities, in recognition of both solid waste disposal and ozone destruction problems, have banned styrofoam products produced with chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs). Agran's city of Irvine is now going them one better by trying to impose strict controls on CFCs in both auto and home air-conditioning systems, as well as banning CFC use in insulation materials and the degreasing of electronic circuitry.

"People are desperately eager to assist in the salvation of the environment," says Agran. "As people recognize this whole environmental issue and its connection with Third World exploitation, the destruction of rain forests and the like, the case for cities getting involved in development issues will begin to grow." □

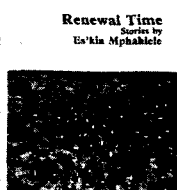
Paul Rauber writes for the *East Bay Express* and other Bay Area publications.

The Center for Innovative Diplomacy publishes a quarterly journal, *The Bulletin of Municipal Foreign Policy*, available for \$15 a year from CID, 17931 "F" Sky Park Circle, Irvine, CA 92714-9654.

Read the World. Start with Africa. FREE!

Read READERS INTERNATIONAL.

RI publishes the best in world literature. Subscribe to RI's annual series of six sewn, hardcover editions - at paperback prices - and we'll send you any *TWO* African titles below...*absolutely FREE!*



Renewal Time (056)
by Es'kia Mphahlele
'Poignant and eloquently political' *Pub. Wkly*
'A haunting echo of Orwell'
Kirkus Reviews



Hajji Musa and the Hindu Fire-Walker (052)
by Ahmed Essop
'Ironic, candid, and stringent,' says Nadine Gordimer



Fools (020)
by Njabulo Ndebele
'Convinces us of the genuineness of his vision in everything he writes'
N. Y. Times Book Review

Read any *black* South Africans lately?

Brink, Coetzee, Gordimer, the late Alan Paton - each enlightens us on South Africa, but none would claim to speak for their black countrymen.

Yet, in the townships and cities of South Africa there *are* world-class writers in the black and Indian communities. They write in English, enriching our common language. They speak to their own people, and give them a voice. They explore universal human issues that touch us all. They confront the barriers of apartheid: banning, censorship, and exile.

RI selects the best books from the world over: from Africa, Asia, Latin America, Europe,

the Middle East. Subscribers receive a sewn, hardbound edition every other month - six finely produced volumes a year.

The S. African titles above were sold out, in hardback, to subscribers. We've reprinted them in paperback for this **FREE** offer. And we're adding other African & Caribbean books, too.

Subscribe for **only \$9.30** (+ p&p), and you'll get the next RI hardback selection, *plus* the African/Caribbean book of your choice, **FREE**.

Or, subscribe for a year, as you would for a magazine. You'll get six hardcover selections, *plus* **TWO FREE** titles of your choice.

Put the world in your library today.



The Laughing Cry (033)
by Henri Lopes
(Congo) 'Satirical, tender, bawdy, savage and filled with love and hope.'
Washington Post



'Mestre' Tamoda (031)
by Uanhenga Xitu (Angola)
'The stuff of which modern African comedy is made'
N. Y. Times Book Review



Cathedral of the August Heat (043)
by Pierre Clitandre (Haiti)
'Encapsulates what the Third World is all about' *London's Guardian*

READERS INTERNATIONAL

P. O. Box 959 Columbia LA 71418

Please begin my subscription to RI at the special \$9.30 subscriber price, + \$1.65 p&p. I'll get RI's newest title every other month at the same special price. I may cancel at any time.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Apt. no. _____

State/Prov. _____

ZIP/Postcode _____

☐ \$10.95 (Can \$13.75) enclosed. My FREE book, no. _____

☐ Bill my ☐ VISA or ☐ MasterCard.

Card No. _____

Expiry date _____

Signature _____

SPECIAL SAVINGS and two free books:

☐ \$55 (Can \$65) enclosed for an annual subscription. I get RI's six newest world titles, plus two FREE books: _____ (title numbers)

☐ Bill my credit card for \$55 (US currency only).

ITT 25

By Merrill Collett

AMID ALL OF COLOMBIA'S RECENT BLOOD-shed and bombing, one act of violence serves to explain what is really going on in that country's strange civil war. On August 25 gunmen believed to be working for drug traffickers set fire to an exclusive country club outside Medellin, capital of the cocaine trade.

Why would traffickers burn a country club? Police headquarters, newspaper offices, court buildings or the U.S. Embassy would all seem to be more suitable targets.

In fact, a country club perfectly represents what the traffickers want to win with their "total war"—social acceptance for them and their children. The multibillion-dollar drug business has pushed up a new "narco-bourgeoisie," and these former car thieves and street urchins are demanding room at the top. Colombia's exclusive private clubs are the place where the country's stiff-necked elites reaffirm their membership in the oligarchy. So the traffickers burned a club to get their point across—they want in.

Colombia's top drug traffickers have a certain right to claim entrance to the oligarchy. They have constructed an enormously successful enterprise that links coca cultivators in Peru, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia and Ecuador with cocaine consumers in the U.S. and Europe. Latin America's "first successful multinational" is the way Peruvian President Alan Garcia Perez has described the Medellin cartel. It employs some half-million Colombians in producing, processing, packaging, protecting, transporting and marketing cocaine, marijuana and a small but increasing amount of heroin.

Estimates of earnings range from \$4 billion to \$10 billion annually, making those at the top fabulously wealthy. The Medellin cartel around Pablo Escobar, Gonzalo Rodriguez Gacha and the members of the Ochoa clan and the leaders of the rival Rodriguez Orejuela group in the city of Cali are billionaires. In addition there are at least 1,000 Colombian "narcotraficantes" who have from \$15 million to \$200 million, according to Fernando Alvarez, the respected drug expert on the staff of the Bogota newsweekly *Semana*.

Change of heart: There was a time when Colombia's elites seemed ready to choke down their disdain and accept the crude cocaine kings into the inner sanctum of the ruling class. Drug dollars bought them social access. They entertained jet-set glitterati at the best hotels and paid for campaign banquets where they fraternized with big-name politicians.

The traffickers even ran for office themselves. Carlos Lehder, now serving out a drug sentence in the U.S., launched his own neo-fascist political party. Escobar was elected as an alternate congressman from Medellin in 1982. He was later hounded out of office by a determined enemy of drug trafficking, Sen. Rodrigo Lara Bonilla. Lara Bonilla continued his anti-drug crusade until he was shot down in 1984 while serving as justice minister. His hired killers were traced to Escobar, who reportedly paid them \$8,000.

The slaying shocked Colombia and embarrassed the elite into excluding traffickers from high society. All of a sudden no amount of drug dollars could buy them a drink in the best clubs. "I don't need those sons of bitches in the clubs," Lehder once fumed after he was barred from a major social event. The practical expression of this rejection is extradition to the U.S., which ratifies in Colombia the U.S. definition of traffickers



Shortly after drug traffickers declared a "total war" on the Colombian government, the Conservative Party's Medellin offices were attacked.

U.S. demolishes a country, not a cartel

as criminal deviants, not successful businessmen.

Extradition was made the big gun of U.S. anti-drug policy in Colombia under the Reagan administration, which saw the solution to the drug problem in law-and-order

COLOMBIA

terms. According to this logic, prosecution in the U.S. was the only effective weapon against the traffickers, who could buy or bludgeon their way out of any jail in Colombia.

A monster: Yet the cocaine trade had become much bigger than a law-enforcement issue. Cocaine smuggling had grown into a vast transnational business that could not be bankrupted by jailing top traffickers and snuffing out crime "families." The Medellin cartel's decentralized hierarchy was stronger than its individual leaders. Arrest simply created new room at the top, allowing ambitious narcos to move into the jobs of those jailed. In February 1987 Colombian police captured Lehder in what was seen as a great victory for the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. After Lehder was sent to the U.S. for trial, his place was promptly filled by Rodriguez Gacha.

Colombian popular opinion did not share Washington's enthusiasm for extradition. The U.S.-Colombian extradition agreement, which was signed in 1979, deviated from prevailing international law by allowing deportation from the country of citizenship. It also overrode an existing Colombian law that expressly prohibited such a practice. The traffickers had no trouble finding sympathetic ears for their slogan, "Colombia, Don't Hand Over Your Sons."

President Belisario Betancur, a moderate nationalist who took office in 1982, objected to the treaty as an incursion into Colombian sovereignty, and he let extradition orders remain on his desk unsigned. But the murder of his justice minister, Lara Bonilla, shocked

the president into reconsidering his stand, and he soon signed six deportation orders. The oligarchy fell into line by publicly repudiating the traffickers and coming out in favor of extradition. The traffickers responded by attacking the elites as holier-than-thou hypocrites who had sold out to the gringos. The U.S. then pushed the confrontation to the breaking point by making extradition the axis around which pivoted not only U.S. anti-drug policy in Colombia but U.S.-Colombian relations.

That happened after Jorge Luis Ochoa, a Medellin cocaine magnate, bribed or threatened his way out of a Bogota jail in December 1987 before the Colombian government could deport him to the U.S. The U.S. retaliated by delaying visas to Colombian travelers and by holding up at the border perishable Colombian exports such as shrimp and flowers. Pressured by Washington, Betancur's successor, President Virgilio Barco Vargas, promised to pursue Ochoa and extradite him.

Cornered, the traffickers murdered Attorney General Carlos Mauro Hoyos, a strong advocate of extradition. They then kidnapped Bogota mayoral candidate Andres Pastrana, the son of a former president and thus a symbol of Colombia's traditional political class.

In defense of the kidnapping, the traffickers issued an indignant communique that read like a manifesto for the newly rich drug traffickers. Calling themselves "The Extraditables," they lambasted the elites for betraying patriotic Colombians. The traffickers also declared "total war" on the government. Bloodied and worried about the destabilizing effects of constant attacks on its authority, the Barco government eased up on its extradition efforts.

The matter took a new twist last October, when the U.S. Congress passed an anti-drug law that imposed capital punishment on murderous drug traffickers. Colombia does not have capital punishment, so it cannot

extradite its citizens, traffickers included, on capital charges. Ironically, Congress has made extradition impossible for the major dealers, all of whom have blood on their hands.

Washington's extradition strategy appears to be a complete failure: "The Extraditables" are still in business, huge volumes of illegal drugs continue to flow from Colombia to the U.S., and the rule of law is no stronger in Colombia than before. Instead of destabilizing the drug cartels, extradition helped destabilize Colombia.

No way out: The Bush administration seems to have learned none of these lessons. Now that the traffickers have launched another round of "total war" and once again issued a manifesto that explicitly lambasts "the oligarchy," the U.S. has once again asked Colombia to extradite 12 traffickers, and the U.S. has flown a plane to Bogota to pick up any of those who might be captured. No doubt Washington sees the waiting plane as a symbol of U.S. determination to fight the drug war, but the war has become more symbolic than real.

The waiting U.S. plane won't rescue Colombia from savagery. The traffickers will continue to batter away at the doors of the establishment because they know that bloodshed is the price of admission to the ruling class. In Latin America, economic shifts are usually accompanied by violence.

The introduction of coffee in Colombia at the end of the last century brought on a civil war. Brazil's cacao boom gave rise to the corrupt killers made famous by Jorge Amado in *The Violent Land*. Eventually the captains of coffee and cacao bought and bludgeoned their way into the oligarchy, and the same is almost certain to happen with the new social stratum pushed up by the drug economy. □

Merrill Collett, a frequent contributor to *In These Times*, is the author of *The Cocaine Connection*, which will be published by The Foreign Policy Association this fall.

IN THESE TIMES SEPTEMBER 6-12, 1989 11