

Message from a Small Town in West Germany to the Readers of THE NATION

This is a message from the citizens of Vlotho. Vlotho is a town in Nordrhein-Westfalen, West Germany, with 20,000 inhabitants.

Since we are concerned about peace in the world, we herewith address ourselves to the population of the United States and the Soviet Union. We are glad to live in a free democratic country like the Americans, and for that reason we have ties with them. In the same way we sympathize with all Russians who wish for a peaceful future just as we do.

But is there any chance for our children to survive? A total nuclear war is possible at any time. Even if this war starts in Europe and is intended to be limited to Europe, it is likely to spread to the Soviet Union and America. Do you want to run the risk of the destruction of your country? *It's not the sacrifice of your own life, which you might be willing to make, that is at stake: it's mass murder, if not the destruction of civilization altogether. No political system is worth this price.*

There's only one way to avoid this terrible end: *The aspiration to predominance in East and West must be abandoned. Furthermore, the contrast between the systems must be dissolved by developing a common humane and progressive system. For if the contrast remains, it will sooner or later provoke a world war.*

A first step to peace in military terms is to prevent the development and installation of new weapons. That means that no more cruise missiles, neutron bombs, space weapons and binary chemical weapons must be produced. Imbalances in levels of armaments should be corrected by the disarmament of the stronger side or if necessary by having the weaker side equalize with old kinds of weapons.

This development must be insured politically, which means that we should gradually try to form a federal world government and a world peace troop by strengthening the international institutions that already exist.

At the same time, and as a second step, the number of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons must be reduced to zero in all countries. Finally, national armies should be dissolved and a small world peace troop should be formed instead.

In this way mankind could ban the danger of further world wars and nuclear self-destruction.

Undersigned: P. Ausländer, pedagogue; W. Bahn, precentor; C. Bartels, student, H. Bartels, bank officer; R. Berg, shopkeeper; H. Berges, painter; H. Bröer, teacher; S. Fabry, deacon; D. May, teacher; G. Schöll, pedagogue, L. Stöpel, journalist; H. Urbschat, teacher.

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emblems on their jackets showing swords beaten into plowshares. They were punished, and so have begun to wear holes in their jackets instead. No one can tell where this movement will end, but it will have the net effect of strengthening the peace movement in West Germany by raising at least the prospect of an all-German coalition against the superpowers.

In any case, there is very little chance that either Pershing 2 or cruise missiles will ever be installed in West Germany. If the present coalition remains in power, it will find in the new START negotiations a convenient reason for repeated delaying tactics. If there is a change of government, many restraints on the Social Democrats would fall and the party would be able in effect to merge with large parts of the peace movement, forming a powerful opposition capable of threatening widespread civil disturbances against deployment. And a new government of the right is unlikely to risk such civil disturbances over an issue on which so much of the populace agrees with the peace movement. The recent stirrings in East Germany make the case for a very different approach to the entire German problem more pressing. In this respect, however, nearly everyone in Washington obdurately refuses to think ahead. □

■ FOLLOW-UP ON THE LETELIER CASE

The C.I.A.'s Link To Chile's Plot

JOHN DINGES AND SAUL LANDAU

Almost six years after the assassination of Chilean exile leader Orlando Letelier in Washington, D.C., information continues to surface indicating that the Central Intelligence Agency concealed facts about its relations with DINA, the Chilean secret police, that might have helped solve the murder quickly.

In our earlier report [see "The Chilean Connection," *The Nation*, November 28, 1981], we showed that DINA's head, then-Col. Manuel Contreras, visited Washington secretly only days after he gave his agents orders to begin the assassination operation. Contreras made the trip to purchase weapons illegally from a company run by former C.I.A. officers Edwin Wilson and Frank Terpil.

New information from a year-old Congressional hearing—unnoticed at the time—reveals that Contreras had another meeting, this one with the second-ranking officer of the C.I.A., Deputy Director Vernon Walters. Walters told a March 10, 1981, hearing of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Inter-American Affairs that he had two

John Dinges, a Washington, D.C., writer, and Saul Landau, a Fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies, are the authors of Assassination on Embassy Row (Pantheon), an account of the Letelier case.

meetings with Contreras in Washington: one, previously publicized, in August 1975, the second "a year" later. An aide to Walters says that "every meeting" with Contreras involved "agency-to-agency business" and none took place after Walters's retirement from the C.I.A. on July 2, 1976.

We don't know the nature of the business, nor is there any evidence that Contreras told Walters of the Letelier assassination plot. But it is noteworthy that, according to F.B.I. investigators, Walters never told them about the second meeting with Contreras, even though its proximity to the assassination on September 21, 1976, made it particularly relevant to the investigation.

Walters's name has arisen several times in connection with Contreras and the DINA agents plotting the murder, according to the evidence compiled by the F.B.I. That evidence shows that Walters traveled to Asunción, Paraguay, in June 1976 on agency business. A month later, two DINA agents assigned to kill Letelier arrived in Paraguay to obtain false passports, using Walters's name and alleging that Walters and the C.I.A. knew about the DINA mission to Washington. Walters has denied he had anything to do with the DINA agents or the false passports.

Contreras's two meetings in Washington give new importance to hitherto ignored statements to the F.B.I. by the head of the Paraguayan secret police, Col. Benito Guanes. Guanes was the person who arranged the false passports for the two DINA agents, and it was his understanding that the agents were traveling to Washington "to contact the Central Intelligence Agency and also purchase Colt silencers for small arms." (Interestingly, Contreras's deal with Wilson and Terpil was for 1,059 Colt Cobra revolvers, a small handgun widely used by plainclothes police.) Guanes also said the two agents "had the cooperation of the C.I.A. / U.S.A.," which "suggested that they travel with documents with another nationality since, as Chileans, it would be difficult to take such material out of the U.S.A." (Congress had prohibited arms sales to Chile earlier in 1976 because of human rights violations.)

Guanes portrayed Walters, whom he had met in Paraguay, as helping arrange the DINA agents' trip. He said he met U.S. Ambassador George Landau on August 6, 1976, at a Chinese Embassy reception. "[He] took us aside and said, 'I received a call from General Walters stating that problems had arisen with the passports given to the Chileans and that the State Department had cancelled the visas. It is possible for the same two to enter [the United States] directly using Chilean passports, for which they would make direct contact.' This information should be sent to my friend Colonel Contreras . . ."

Because this account differs from Walters's denial and Landau's testimony about the reception, F.B.I. agents at first discounted it. They also assumed that because Guanes was a friend of Contreras he might have concocted the C.I.A. story to embarrass the United States. But in light of Walters's admission of a second meeting with Contreras, Guanes's testimony takes on new weight.

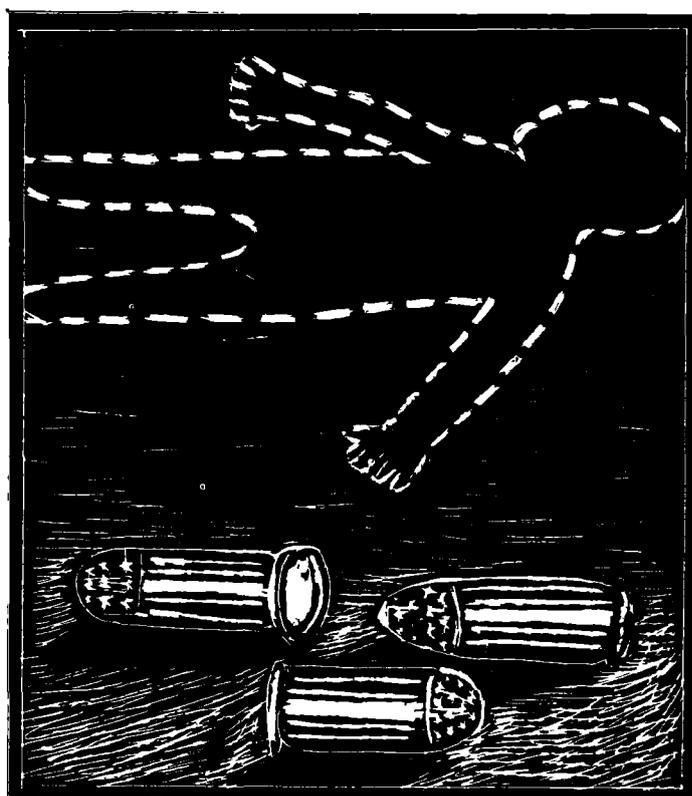
The Chilean government of Gen. Augusto Pinochet has stonewalled on the Letelier case, denying the U.S. request

for Contreras's extradition, terminating the military and judicial investigations it had begun, and expelling from the country the attorney for the Letelier family, former Justice Minister Jaime Castillo.

Our new information indicates that the C.I.A., which had pledged to cooperate with F.B.I. investigators, has joined in that stonewalling. The C.I.A. and General Walters had full information about the incidents in Paraguay, including photographs of the two DINA agents, within days of their occurrence. The information was never turned over to the F.B.I. Its importance is indicated by the fact that when the photographs and cable traffic about the incidents were unearthed by Federal investigators more than a year later, they led to the arrest of DINA agent Michael Townley, who confessed to having been involved in the plot, and to the indictments of Contreras and two other DINA officials.

Townley, in an intercepted letter to a DINA colleague written from a U.S. prison on June 29, 1979, mentioned further unreported C.I.A.-DINA connections. "Speaking of checking accounts," Townley wrote to Gustavo Etchepare, "Mamo [Contreras] has at least one, if not more, joint checking accounts with the CIA, accounts that are used to re-imburse the service [DINA] for jobs done for the CIA or with them. This is one of the things that Mamo tried to use against the Gringos at first. . ."

The biggest question left unanswered concerns the relationship of the C.I.A. to DINA and to Townley at the time of the assassination. Why were DINA agents able to come and go freely in the United States? Were C.I.A. officials involved in circumventing the Congressional arms embargo against Chile, and so obliged to keep silent about DINA activity in Washington at the time of Letelier's assassination for fear of revealing another C.I.A. covert action scandal? □



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