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New Revelations:

New York Times Covers and Aids 1953 C.I.A. Coup in Iran

Iranians of different socio-economic strata and backgrounds vary in their grievances against the U.S. government but agree on the event of greatest disdain: the CIA-masterminded coup of August 1953. The coup replaced the constitutional government of Mohammed Mossadegh with that of a pro-Nazi named Zahedi and marked the onset of 25 years of Shah-led dictatorial rule. An event of such historic importance was bound to generate controversies and consequences even three decades later. Indeed, Iranians' fears that the October 1979 admission of the Shah to the U.S. for "medical reasons" signalled another CIA-masterminded coup served as a catalyst for the embassy seizure.

Following the embassy takeover, several U.S. government statements on the coup grabbed media headlines. President Carter, scoffing at the idea of apologizing to the Iranians, dismissed the 1953 coup as "ancient history". State Department spokesperson, Hodding Carter, repeatedly refused comment. The CIA officer who ran the 1953 coup, Kermit Roosevelt, disclosed his version of events in his book, Counter-coup: The Struggle for Control of Iran issued by McGraw-Hill in October 1979 and withdrawn in November 1979 (three days after the embassy takeover) following strenuous objections by the British Petroleum Company.

After all the official versions, a number of questions remain unan-

(cont. on pg.2)

New C.I.A. Bill:

Death to the First Amendment

CounterSpy magazine is issuing the following special report because it poignantly illustrates the devastating damage resulting from collaboration between the press and the CIA, and because it addresses the present threat to freedom of the press and the U.S. Constitution posed by HR5615 and S2216 pending in Congress. These two bills make it a crime to name undercover CIA and FBI officers, agents, and informers or to publish information that could lead to the disclosure of a CIA or FBI name, even if all the information is obtained from public sources.

This report is about Kennett Love whose personal role in the CIA's 1953 coup in Iran was described as follows by Paul Nitze, a former Secretary of the Navy and an active member of the Committee on the Present Danger.

"There was a tank battle, and it wasn't going well, and the four pro-Shah tanks were in the main square, stalled, and Love went to the tank commander, knocked on the tank and asked him why he didn't attack Mossadegh's place. Love, who was only a reporter, had just come out of there, and he had noticed it was undefended. So the tanks went rumbling towards Mossadegh's and Mossadegh went over the back wall with something like six people, one of whom was a prominent professor at Teheran University."

Love's tide-turning involvement in the tank battle and other as-

(cont. on pg.6)

swered. Roosevelt still claims that the cost of the operation was in the thousands of dollars; former CIA officer, Andrew Tully claims the cost was more than \$10 million. In addition to the cost, the CIA personalities involved, with the exception of Roosevelt and Allen Dulles, remain shrouded in mystery, and very little is known of the precise strategy and tactics employed.

New evidence, however, has emerged from the Allen W. Dulles papers, recently opened to a carefully screened audience at Princeton University, which answers some of the questions. Dulles was CIA Director at the time of the August 1953 coup. A 1966 file in the section of his papers containing correspondence includes a letter to Dulles from Kennett Love, a New York Times correspondent in Iran in 1953 and one of only two American reporters in Teheran during the coup. Along with the letter, Love sent Dulles a 41-page paper entitled: "The American Role in the Pahlevi Restoration: On 19 August 1953" which he wrote in 1960 while attending Princeton as a Carnegie Press Fellow of the Council on Foreign Relations. Appropriately enough, he wrote the paper for T. Cuyler Young, a Princeton professor covertly consulting for the CIA.

The partially secret committee which oversees the Dulles papers forbids publication of any material from the collection without its prior approval. The committee is chaired by Dulles' long-time colleague and friend, Lawrence Houston, who served as CIA General Counsel from 1947 to 1973. We have not received permission to publish our report based on the Love materials, but we are proceeding with disclosure on the principle that the American public has a right and a need to know the details of their government's foreign policy operations. The U.S. Declaration of Independence requires that the government operate with the "consent of the governed".

Consent is meaningless without

knowledge. In consenting or disapproving of present and future U.S. policies towards Iran, Americans need to understand the motivations behind Iranian feelings and actions. As essential component of this understanding is knowledge of the 1953 coup since it continues to motivate in part the actions of millions of Iranians. As Love himself stated: "The relevance of information on the American rescue of the Iranian throne to an understanding of American-Iranian relations would appear to be unarguable." Thus, we are presenting the following information and analysis which we also feel is in the interest of world peace since an adequately informed American people cannot be misled into war.

We also feel justified in publishing parts of Love's account as it was written for an university course at an institution which claims that the free and open exchange of ideas and research should govern academic scholarship. So, let us begin.

First of all, according to Love, the U.S. government initially became involved in Iran for economic self-interests which, in turn, stimulated an unconstitutional, violent coup and subsequent CIA repression.

"It was the dispute between Iran and the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company which drew the United States toward its major involvement in the Iranian scene... The experience prodded the United States toward its cloak-and-dagger Persian adventure... Iranian leaders were aware that the United States was doing more for their economy than Washington would admit... It can be concluded that Washington wanted to joggle the Iranian premier with a blunt assertion that he would have to settle his economic difficulties himself if he remained intransigent in the oil dispute... It (Mossadegh's constitutional government) had eliminated all constitutional or peaceable methods of removing

him from office..."

"It is probable that the American role was decisive, that the Iranians who participated in the royalist coup could not have succeeded without American help. It is doubtful that the coup would have been attempted without American cooperation ... it was a consciously planned accomplishment creditable to American Federal employees... Washington reacted, not by helping Mossadegh, but by kicking him out."

"At the same time, the CIA agents who blue-printed the coup against Dr. Mossadegh continued to furnish technical assistance in quelling dissident movements that threatened the stability of the new regime. A year after the coup, American cryptographic and police experts and a CIA agent played an important part in rooting out an extensive conspiracy of Army officers that was closely linked to the Communist Tudeh party."

In short, the U.S. government, using methods that were not "constitutional or peaceable", consciously intervened to install an undemocratic, royalist regime. The raw cynicism and callous indifference of this operation is seen in the CIA's reason for choosing Major General Fazlollah Zahedi to lead the coup and the new government.

"General Zahedi had all the requisites. He had been Minister of Interior in Dr. Mossadegh's first cabinet in 1951. He had been interned by the British in Palestine during World War II because of pro-Nazi activities under Reza Shah. He had been twice accused of plotting against the Mossadegh regime, the first time in October 1952, when he escaped his arrest because of his parliamentary immunity as a senator, and the second time in April 1953 in connection with the murder of General Afshartoos by a group of retired officers... Thus, he possessed adequate credentials as a nationalist, useful contacts

with army officers including many who faced forced retirement, and a reputation for decisive action without too many scruples." (This is the same Zahedi whom Allen Dulles would call "distinguished".)

The CIA's brutality was also seen in its assignment of George Carroll, hot on the heels of plotting violence in South Korea. Love related the following.

"The organization of gangs, armed with clubs, knives and stones, and occasionally a pistol or rifle... was candidly claimed by a CIA agent named George Carroll, a six-foot-four-inch 200 pounder who had arrived in Teheran from Korea, where, he said, the CIA had been standing by while the United States was organizing a popular uprising to oust Syngman Rhee."

Love also said that a colleague of his described Carroll as "too unrestrained" but as the type the CIA uses "where they really don't give a damn...". Love's colleague also told him of the following post-coup involvement of Carroll.

"In the days immediately following the overthrow of Mossadegh, Ardeshir Zahedi came to see Carroll daily..."

"Carroll was also a buddy of Gen. Farhat Dadsetan, Zahedi's first military governor of Teheran. I believe Carroll worked with Dadsetan on preparations for the very efficient smothering of a potential dissident movement emanating from the bazaar area and the Tudeh in the first two weeks of November, 1953."

As Love summarized: "There can be no dispute over the fact that Mr. Carroll made an important contribution to the royalist success before, during and after the coup." We should mention here the following statement by Love, viz., "It was the prospect of Soviet-controlled communism becoming dominant in Iran that prompted the United States to intervene." However, the credibility of this assertion was undermined by these observations of Love himself.

"The communist threat was definitely secondary..."

"He (Mossadegh) had been an anti-communist throughout his career."

"In the July 1952 crisis... the Nationalists (Mossadegh's group) rebuffed the Tudeh and balked Red plans in the streets, displaying a degree of organization and tactical ability."

"The Mossadeghists, then firmly allied with Ayatollah Abolghassan Kashani's religious factions of the National Front, such as Dr. Mozaffar Baghai's Toilers Party, occasionally ordered attacks on communists at public gatherings. Groups far to the right such as the Pan-Iranists and the fascist Sumka, followed a policy of constant attacks on the Tudeh. This policy met with only occasional government (Mossadegh's) interference."

"There was no real abatement of Dr. Mossadegh's anti-communism until after his appeal to President Eisenhower." (Only 2½ months before the coup.)

"It is conceivable that the Tudeh could have turned the fortunes of the day against the royalists. But for some reason they remained aloof from the conflict."

"My own conjecture is that the Tudeh were restrained by the Soviet Embassy because the Kremlin, in the first post-Stalin year, was not willing to take on such consequences as might have resulted from the establishment of a communist-controlled regime in Teheran."

Given these observations, it is all but impossible to accept that the coup was motivated by genuine fears of a Soviet-controlled communist takeover. Not surprisingly, the Shah did hold up the spectre of communism. But, even Love, who recounted that "My life was saved by the driver, a card-carrying Tudeh member...", claimed that the Shah's threat was used as "bait" to solicit U.S. support. One final point here was Love's reporting that the U.S. Embassy

in Teheran believed that there were only 15,000 to 20,000 Tudeh members in Iran in 1953. In a country of 25 million, this was hardly a serious threat.

Love's doublethink, if you will, which shadowed his public reporting at the time, stemmed from his personal participation with the CIA in the coup. Love admitted his participation as a propagandist and as a militarist in the following passages.

"My first observation of the association of the United States with the royalist cause began with a telephone call to me at the Park Hotel from Joe Goodwin, a CIA man attached to the embassy as a political officer. Mr. Goodwin called shortly after the 7 A.M. news broadcast and asked if I wanted to meet General Zahedi to get the real version of what happened."

Love was taken in tow by Goodwin to see Zahedi on August 17, two days before the coup. At the rendezvous, Love met instead of General Zahedi, his son, Ardeshir, who knew Goodwin. Ardeshir told Love that the Shah had issued two decrees. One appointed Zahedi as prime minister, and one dismissed Mossadegh.

After witnessing the photocopying of the decrees, Love took a "handful" of the one declaring Zahedi prime minister and distributed them at the Park Hotel in Teheran. In distributing these decrees, Love, a New York Times reporter, consciously served as a propagandist for an on-going, undemocratic CIA coup. We say undemocratic because the Shah by royal fiat was appointing Zahedi and dismissing Mossadegh.

Love's dual role as a propagandist was as unacceptable in 1953 as it is today. The incompatibility of the two roles was highlighted by the fact that Love was the main source of information to the American people at the time. How could the American people get independent news coverage from a reporter acting at the direction of the CIA? Indeed,

a reading of Love's articles of August 1953 presents the "real version" à la Zahedi and the CIA. Love never mentioned any CIA involvement; glossed over Zahedi's undemocratic appointment and did not mention his unscrupulous, pro-Nazi nature; and portrayed Mossadegh as increasingly susceptible to a Soviet takeover.

Love himself was apparently aware of his compromising as he lied about his involvement 25 years later. According to the New York Times: "... Mr. Love said that shortly after the overthrow of Premier Mohammed Mossadegh in Iran in 1953, he helped the CIA distribute copies of a declaration declaring Ardeshir Zahedi as Mr. Mossadegh's successor." But Kennett Love said he had not known at the time that the man who had asked him for help, "had been a CIA man and that he had never knowingly done anything else for the CIA."

As we saw, Love referred to "Joe Goodwin, a CIA man". It seems highly unlikely that Love did not know at the time that Goodwin was a CIA officer. This is particularly so since the CIA made Love privy to intimate details of the coup including the identification of "dirty tricksters", George Carroll and Howard Stone. Love was even told that Ayatollah Behbehani, one of the most influential religious leaders, "was the key figure in enlisting and organizing the bands of 'chaqu kashan' or 'knife drawers' who carried out Carroll's dirty work.

Love's denial is further undermined because he did do something else for the CIA in addition to his propagandizing.

"Incidentally, I, myself, was responsible, in an impromptu sort of way, for speeding the final victory of the royalists... I told the tank commanders (one of whom Love said was named Ehteshamee or Ekhteshamee) that a lot of people were being getting killed trying to storm Dr. Mossadegh's house and that they, the tank cc

down there where they would be of some use instead of sitting idle at the radio station. They declared my suggestion to be a splendid idea. They took their machines in a body to Kokh Avenue and put the three tanks at Dr. Mossadegh's house out of action after a lively duel with armor-piercing 75 millimeter shells."

Thus, it was through Kennett Love (and Associated Press correspondent, Don Schwind who worked with Love and Goodwin) that the American people were kept in the dark about a CIA operation - carried out in their name and through their taxes - which resulted in what Love himself called a "police state". Little surprise then "that Iranians are well aware of the American role although the American public is not", as Love later cynically observed.

The message is that the people in the U.S. should demand that the media sever its ties with the U.S. government, particularly the CIA in order that America will have the knowledge to function as a democracy, i.e. with the "consent of



Israel's Pentagon Papers . . . Israel's Sacred Terrorism

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—From Noam Chomsky's Introduction

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the governed". This is especially needed at the present time with President Carter reportedly planning other military action against Iran in the near future. This time if the American people are kept in the dark while covert operations and military actions are carried out by presidential fiat and in their name, there just may be a World War III.

(cont. from pg.1)

pects of the 1953 CIA coup are detailed in CounterSpy's special report. At the same time that Love was participating in the CIA-directed coup, his articles were receiving front-page coverage in the New York Times and most major U.S. newspapers. Not one of the stories mentioned the CIA's involvement in the coup. Indeed, before Mossadegh was overthrown, Love reported that Mossadegh had been toppled and his story was transmitted through the U.S. Embassy and was broadcast over Radio Teheran.

If Kennett Love had exposed the 1953 CIA operation; or if he had, at least, not fed CIA propaganda about an imminent Soviet takeover of Iran to the U.S. public, the coup and the subsequent Shah-led "police state" (as even Love called it) might have been prevented. Likewise, the present CIA precipitated tensions between the U.S. government and Iran may also have been averted.

CounterSpy is publishing the Kennett Love story at the present time because Congress is preparing to enact what Representative Robert Drinan has called on Official Secrets Act. If this CIA written law (HR5615 and S2216) were in effect now, it would be a crime punishable by three years in prison to write or talk about Kennett Love and his role as an agent for the CIA. This is the future for press coverage of CIA operations if HR5615 and S2216 are made into law.

The Kennett Love story shows that the pending Official Secrets Act is against the national inter-

ests and a threat to national security. This is because it will not allow the exposure of present and past CIA operations, such as the 1953 coup in Iran, which, in the long run, did not enhance U.S. security as exemplified in the present tensions between the U.S. and Iran.

CounterSpy is thus issuing this special report in order to alert the American people to organize actions to prevent the passage of HR5615 and S2216. We are also issuing the report at this time, because in our opinion, it will be next to impossible to publish CounterSpy under the pending law even though all the information in CounterSpy has been obtained from public sources; and CounterSpy's stories have been in the interest of national security and world peace.

In conclusion, we urge our readers to disseminate this report to activate people into stopping the CIA's rape of the U.S. Constitution. The CIA must not be allowed again to carry out its actions against peoples of other countries without any scrutiny from the U.S. media at all.

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