

Kurds Say CIA Betrayed Them

By Joseph Fitchett

London Observer

BEIRUT—Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger scuttled the revolt of the Kurdish nationalists in Iraq earlier this year, according to one of the aides of the defeated Kurdish leader, Gen. Mulla Mustafa Barzani.

The Kurds believe that Kissinger cut off aid to them—supplied through Iran and the Central Intelligence Agency—to save his larger Middle East game.

Kissinger apparently hoped that Iraq, free of the Kurdish problem he had helped to foment, would renew its rivalry with Syria, weakening opposition in Damascus to the Egyptian-Israeli withdrawal pact he was working out last spring. The plan seems to have worked—at great cost to the Kurdish movement.

The harm to Iraq, the nominal target, was nothing compared to the destruction

wrought on the Kurds, nominally the CIA's ally. An American CIA operative, who was involved in Kurdish affairs, summed up, "The Kurds were diddled; we diddled them."

Talking openly for the first time about the CIA involvement—ordered by Kissinger—in the Kurdish insurgency, a Barzani aide who was privy to the operation told me here that covert American support was central to Kurdish strategy in the Kurds' decision to defy the Baghdad government.

Through CIA channels, Barzani's Kurdistan Democratic Party received tens of millions of dollars' worth of weapons. The best American-supplied material consisted primarily of Soviet-made artillery and Sagger portable anti-tank missiles, plus a powerful American-made radio transmitter that broadcast the Voice of Kur-

distan throughout the Middle East.

Despite his disillusionment, Barzani is said by the Kurds to have forbidden his inner circle to disclose the American connection or to complain publicly until after the CIA involvement had been leaked in Washington.

The Kurds' view of Kissinger's role was reinforced by the disclosures in Washington last week that he ordered the CIA operation in his capacity as National Security Council chairman, answerable only to President Nixon. In Washington, a congressional committee confirmed that the CIA had arranged shipments of "untraceable" Soviet- and Chinese-made weapons to the Kurds via Iran.

Former Treasury Secretary John Connally, who represents several companies in the Middle East, was named in Washington as the contact man with the Shah, who was enthusiastic about the operation. The CIA also funneled financial support to the Kurds.

The military impact of the American commitment was far outweighed in the Kurds' eyes by its political significance, according to the Kurdish official. American influence was viewed as a guarantee against a doublecross by the Shah. "We would never have launched

the revolt trusting the Persians alone," Barzani's aide said. "Barzani believed the U.S. would prevent any turncoat maneuver by the Shah, who ultimately has to worry about his own incipient Kurdish problem."

American support for the Kurds was pledged via the CIA in secret contacts dating back to 1972, the Kurd indicated. The agency said the Kurds were seen as a means of ousting the Iraqi Baath (Arab Socialist) regime, whose shaky new leadership appeared to be turning Iraq into a base of Soviet influence after signing an Iraqi-Soviet friendship treaty.

The CIA contacts occurred primarily in Europe, although the assistance was funneled through Iran, which has a common border with Kurdistan. The agency pleaded the need for secrecy to spare Barzani embarrassment as an "American client." To reinforce this cover story, the CIA reportedly discouraged Kurdish contacts with high-level Americans and arranged elaborate gambits like successive semi-public brushoffs for Kurds attempting to see American officials in Washington or U.S. Ambassador Richard Helms, a former CIA chief, in Tehran.

The Kurds managed to project their case to American opinion through a few journalists, but their collapse

aroused little public concern in the United States. Survivors now face difficulties even in getting visas for the United States.

The CIA also reportedly laid the political groundwork for a Kurdish-sponsored change of regime in Iraq by secret contacts in Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries. But CIA "back-channel" maneuvers were never allowed to compromise the United States publicly, leaving the way clear for the abrupt disavowal that finally materialized, the Kurds say.

In the end, Barzani analysts believe, Washington pushed the Shah, perhaps even against his own judgment, to mend fences with Iraq. Iraq's move away from the Soviet connection in late 1974—when the Soviets were refused the sovereign base facilities in south Iraq they had asked for as the price for increased military support—reduced the American motive for supporting a change in regime.

The final decision was apparently made in early 1974 when Kissinger was attempting to put together the Egyptian-Israeli disengagement pact in the teeth of fierce Syrian suspicion. By letting Egyptian President Anwar Sadat arrange a solution for the Kurdish problem, Kissinger obtained Iraqi support for the Egyptian leader's diplomacy.

Covert Arms Aid Defended

Post 11/3/75

Central Intelligence Agency director William E. Colby yesterday defended covert arms shipments in peacetime as an entirely legal activity for the CIA.

Colby made the remarks at a breakfast session with reporters in response to a question about the reported CIA shipment of millions of dollars in Soviet and Chinese weapons several years ago to Kurdish rebels in Iraq.

The CIA director declined to comment on those reports, but defended covert arms shipments in general and described them as the type of activity that the CIA is "still engaged in."

Colby said the practice could be traced all the way back to Benjamin Franklin, who, the CIA director said, operated what might be called a "proprietary" in Paris through which French arms could be shipped here during the American Revolution.

Hurriedly fired this month and then asked by President Ford to stay on the job until current Congressional investigations wane, Colby said he has long recognized that "a new face" would be needed at the CIA when the inquiries are over.

The CIA director acknowledged that he and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger had occasionally disagreed over how much to disclose to congressional investigators. But Colby, whom Kissinger apparently considered too open, said he doubted a harder line would have saved his job.

Colby said he turned down President Ford's offer of the NATO ambassadorship primarily because of all the hullabaloo about the CIA. He said he felt this would have invited demonstrations and adverse reactions from people in other countries.

The Washington Merry-Go-Round

Falcons, a CIA Gift Fit for a Sheikh

3-9-76
By Jack Anderson and Les Whitten

The Central Intelligence Agency has trapped rare falcons in Alaska and has presented them to Arab sheikhs. A prize falcon is one of the most valuable gifts the CIA can offer an Arab potentate who has everything.

In some sheikhdoms, an agreement is cemented with the gift of a falcon. It is more binding than a handshake or a signature.

Middle East monarchs reportedly will pay up to \$25,000 for a fine falcon. The most magnificent are peregrine falcons and gyrfalcons. But because they are an endangered species, it is against U.S. law to export them without a permit.

Arab falcon fanciers routinely are denied permits. But for a favored sheikh, the CIA can arrange an occasional falcon. Inside sources tell us that the CIA has wangled secret permits to export both peregrine falcons and gyrfalcons to the Middle East for bargaining purposes.

For someone without the right CIA connections, however, trafficking in falcons can be risky. A wealthy Chicago businessman, Anthony G. Angelos, hoped to entice Sheikh Zayid of Abu Dhabi into a business deal by presenting him a pair of falcons. Unable to get a permit, Angelos sought ways to get falcons out of the United States.

The sheikh, a washbuckling desert chieftan who heads the oil-saturated United Arab Emirates, is an avid hunter. His proudest possession is a flock of 50 prize falcons. When he gets bored with the affairs of state, he takes off for Pakistan with his falcons for several weeks of hunting.

The enterprising Angelos recently began making discreet inquiries about obtaining a couple of contraband falcons. But the word got back to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which assigned agent Larry Hood to the case.

Posing as a falcon trafficker, he agreed to sell two peregrines to Angelos for \$500. The businessman explained that friends at the United Arab Emirates embassy would help him get the rare birds out of the country.

Agent Hood delivered the two carefully packaged peregrines to the Baltimore airport. Angelos' courier was supposed to drive them to New York City where another courier would fly them to the waiting Angelos in Athens.

But once the money changed hands, the courier was arrested. The United Arab Emirates embassy immediately pulled strings with the State Department, which tried to hush up the falcon scandal. Last week, Angelos

quietly pleaded guilty to violating the migratory bird treaty.

An embassy spokesman, with a straight face, said the hunting falcons were intended merely as a gift for the Abu Dhabi zoo. The embassy had no idea, he said, that it was illegal to export the birds. At the State Department, a spokesman denied trying to suppress the story of the falcon thievery. In fact, he said, the department had refused, in writing, to intervene on Angelos' behalf.

Free Loans—James E. Smith, the feisty comptroller of the currency, has used official comptroller's funds to grant interest-free loans to his subordinates. They regulate national banks, which have never been known to grant interest-free loans to anyone.

Last fall, Smith gave his deputy director, William Suman, a \$14,000 interest-free loan. Smith has also approved interest-free loans for at least four other officials who work for him.

A spokesman explained that the comptroller authorized the interest-free loans to subordinates who had large relocation expenses when they moved to Washington.

The spokesman pointed out that the officials are prohibited from accepting loans from the national banks they regulate. Official funds were made available, therefore, to avoid a conflict of interest, he said.

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INTELLIGENCE WORK

A new book, "Arab Intelligence Services," by Ya'acov Caroz, is causing a stir in the diplomatic and intelligence circles of the Mideast.

Caroz, a former senior Israeli intelligence agent, asserts that the CIA has had a man in Cairo with the blessings of the Egyptian authorities for the past 10 years. He alleges, too, that the Americans have been training the Egyptians in intelligence work.

Caroz says the Soviets provided similar instruction when they gained a hold in the Mideast. He maintains that the Soviets supplied the Arabs with intelligence on Israel "in a selective way when it suited Soviet interests." He alleges that the French are now helping Egyptian intelligence by providing sophisticated electronics.

"The standard of Arab intelligence," he writes, "is not very high. It is directed primarily to keep the ruling junta in power rather than to gather information about Israel."

Caroz's book was published in Israel, and one of its most interesting chapters deals with a young American woman who obtained information about a new Soviet naval base and was arrested in Cairo only to be released by Kermit "Kim" Roosevelt, a former CIA agent, who pulled the proper Egyptian strings.