

Cape Town Death-Squad Inquiry Opens

John F. Burns

New York Times

6 March 1990

CAPE TOWN, South Africa, 5 March — A secret South African military unit suspected of killing opponents of apartheid planned at one time to replace the heart pills of Nelson Mandela's lawyer with tablets designed to induce a heart attack, judicial investigators were told today.

As the inquiry officially opened, officials also were told that the military unit known as the Civil Cooperation Bureau also once planned to send a baboon fetus to Archbishop Desmond M. Tutu, the 58-year-old Nobel Peace Prize winner and Anglican Primate of southern Africa. Evidence submitted in the inquiry showed that the plan was code-named Operation Apie. Apie is the Afrikaans word for ape.

The chief lawyer for the inquiry, Timothy McNally, said the odd assortment of plans were revealed in confessions to police investigators. The confessions were reportedly made by former officers arrested on suspicion of killings linked to the Civil Cooperation Bureau. Thorough details of the plans were not provided, but from Mr. McNally's remarks, it appeared that none of the proposals were carried out.

Under questioning by Mr. McNally, Lieut. Gen. Rudolph Badenhorst, chief of intelligence for the South African military, said an internal inquiry had established that the bureau was responsible for two bomb explosions in recent years. There apparently were no deaths in the two explosions, which occurred at an early-learning center in Athlone, a mixed-race area outside Cape Town, and at a store in Pretoria, the administrative capital, operated by a man identified only as Marius.

The disclosures at the inquiry, which follow weeks of newspaper allegations about killings of apartheid foes by the Civil Cooperation Bureau, appeared likely to intensify the problems facing President F. W. de Klerk. Mr. de Klerk said last week that he had not known of the bureau's existence until he was briefed by the Defense Minister, Magnus A. Malan, in January.

Lawyers for the inquiry presented a list today of 71 politically linked killings that have not been solved, some of them going back to 1977.

A PASSENGER FERRY IS HIT OFF LEBANON

Ihsan Hijazi

New York Times

25 February 1990

BEIRUT, Lebanon, 24 February — A Greek passenger ferry that operates between the Mediterranean island of Cyprus and the Lebanese Christian region was hit by shellfire today from a gunboat 30 miles off the Lebanese coast. Security officials said 1 passenger was killed and 18 were wounded, some of them seriously.

All the casualties were believed to be Lebanese. They were flown to Cyprus by Royal Air Force helicopters taking off from British bases on the Greek side of the island. The ferry later returned to Larnaca, the main Cypriot port, with at least 20 holes in its side.

The Baroness M, was on a journey from Larnaca to Junieh, a port 13 miles north of Beirut controlled by the Christian militia known as the Lebanese Forces. For nearly four weeks, the militia, led by Samir Geagea, has been locked in bitter fighting with rival Christian army troops loyal to Gen. Michel Aoun.

The identity of the gunboat that carried out the dawn attack was uncertain. The Cypriot captain of the ferry reportedly told Lloyd's of London that it was a

Syrian naval vessel. But a port official in Cyprus would not identify it. One passenger said the gunboat had no identification marks.

Syrian, Lebanese and Israeli naval vessels use the Mediterranean waters. Syrian troops based in Lebanon last summer imposed a blockade assisted by cannon fire on Christian-held sea outlets after General Aoun had declared a so-called war of liberation to evict them. That struggle ended with an Arab-brokered cease-fire in September. The Syrians have not been involved in the gun battles between Christian factions that erupted on Jan. 30.

During a flare-up of artillery duels between rival Christian forces on Friday, shells slammed into the militia-controlled Beirut harbor, and a radio station opposed to General Aoun, the Voice of Lebanon, accused his army of enforcing an embargo against the harbor.

But 30 miles would have put the Baroness M well outside the range of any Lebanese land-based artillery batteries or rocket launchers.

Gunboats controlled by General Aoun have been operating in Lebanese waters through a makeshift base at a seaside resort just north of Beirut. These

craft had fled from Junieh when that port fell to the militia at the start of the Christian clashes.

But the Voice of Lebanon and another militia-run station, Radio Free Lebanon, have been reporting the version reportedly given by the captain of the ferry blaming a Syrian warship for the assault.

Security officials here said the Baroness M may have been mistaken for a freighter carrying arms and ammunition for one of the rival Christian factions.

A Panamanian-registered ship, the Atlantic 3, was stranded off the coast of Malta last week, but was reported later to be on her way to the Lebanese Christian region.

At the beginning, it was thought that the freighter was carrying military hardware from Iraq to General Aoun's army, but the Pakistani captain said the shipment was destined for Mr. Geagea's militia. Syria is opposed to General Aoun and Mr. Geagea.

There has yet been no comment from Damascus about the Baroness M incident.

There were 64 passengers as well as 52 crew members on the ferry, which is capable of carrying about 1,000 people.

Israel Postpones Peace-Plan Vote

Joel Brinkley

New York Times

8 March 1990

JERUSALEM, Israel, 7 March — The Israeli Cabinet failed to complete a long and serious debate on the peace process and on the Israeli Government today.

During the two-hour session this morning, individual Cabinet ministers from Labor and Likud offered their strongly held views on a plan by Secretary of State James A. Baker for initiating Israeli-Palestinian peace talks. The plan was supposed to be put to a formal vote. But the session ended before everyone had been given a chance to speak. There was no evidence that the differences between the two parties had narrowed.

Trying to get the deadlocked peace process moving last month, Mr. Baker proposed a simple formula intended to allow Israel and the Palestinians to compromise a bit while still holding to their basic principles.

But on Tuesday morning, Mr. Shamir and the Likud officials rejected those ideas by saying the Israeli delegation would walk out of any meeting in which the P.L.O. seemed to be taking part, even in the background. Mr. Shamir asked Labor to agree to that, but Labor leaders said that was completely unacceptable. Likud said it was simply trying to protect the sovereignty of Jerusalem.

Peace Talks on Cambodia Break Down

Steven Erlanger

New York Times

1 March 1990

JAKARTA, Indonesia, 1 March — The latest peace talks on Cambodia broke down early this morning, with the rival Cambodian factions unable to agree on even a carefully worded communique on the central issue: a role for the United Nations in the administration of the country before new elections.

The disagreements at the talks were so strong that even a last-minute effort to issue the text with asterisks next to disputed phrases and issues, indicating that they were not agreed to, was vetoed by the Khmer Rouge on the ground that the conference rules called for unanimity.

The draft communique did say a United Nations "presence" in Cambodia before elections was "essential," but left the issue of United Nations involvement in civil administration for "further discussion and negotiation."

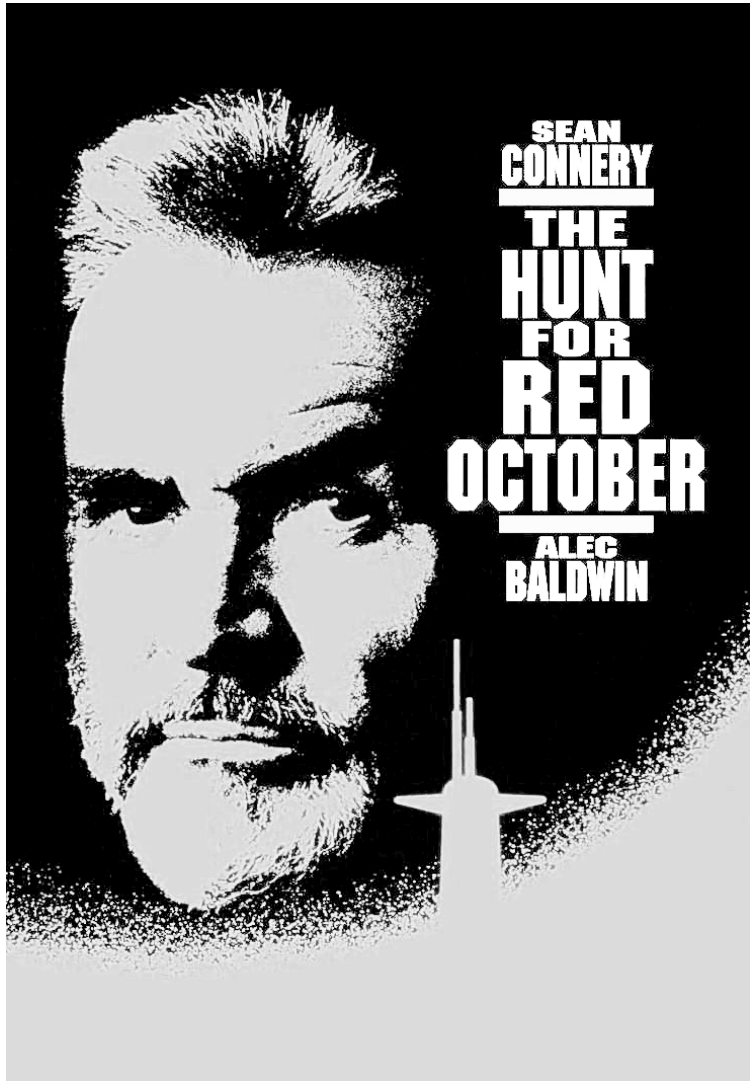


That was then.



This is now.

The New Civic **HONDA**



ETHIOPIA STUDENTS HAIL PLEDGE TO LIBERALIZE

Reuters

7 March 1990

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia, 7 March— Several hundred thousand students marched through Addis Ababa today in a huge display of support for President Mengistu Haile Mariam’s pledge to liberalize his Marxist regime. It was unclear whether the demonstration was spontaneous or organized by the Government.

President Mengistu, who has headed a single-party Marxist state for 13 years, said on Monday that the ruling Ethiopian Workers Party should be broadened and changed in “content, character and name” to the Democratic Unity Party of Ethiopia. He appealed to opposition groups to join.

Diplomats said the appeal might be aimed at the two rebel groups - the Eritrean People’s Liberation Front and the Tigre People’s Liberation Front - and to ordinary Ethiopians disillusioned with the revolution. But one diplomat noted that the rebel groups would be unlikely to rush into an alliance with him.

LEBANESE GENERAL SEEKS PEACE TALKS

Ihsan A. Hijazi

New York Times

10 March 1990

BEIRUT, Lebanon, 9 March— Gen. Michel Aoun, the leader of the Christian faction of the Lebanese Army, offered to negotiate with Syria and its Lebanese Muslim allies for an end to the country’s 15-year civil war.

General Aoun had previously insisted that Syria pledge to withdraw its forces from Lebanon before any negotiations could begin. He also has refused to recognize the reorganized Lebanese Government that took office in October. But after a year of fighting in which he has failed to defeat either the Muslims outside Lebanon’s Christian enclave or a rival Christian militia within it, he seemed to be conceding today that further offensives were fruitless.

In the 17 months since he was appointed head of a Christian administration to rival a Muslim-dominated Cabinet, General Aoun and his 15,000-man army have fought two devastating wars.

Nearly 900 people were killed in the “war of liberation” he declared last March to evict the 40,000 Syrian soldiers who control two-thirds of Lebanese territory. The battles continued for six months before an uneasy truce was reached. Then, at the end of January, fighting broke out in the Christian zone when General Aoun’s troops tried to disarm the Lebanese Forces, a Christian militia headed by Samir Geagea. Only last week, General Aoun ordered his army to dislodge Lebanese Forces militiamen from East Beirut. He called off the attack 24 hours later because his forces were making no headway.

U.S. PROPOSES UN ROLE IN NICARAGUA’S TRANSITION

Andrew Rosenthal

New York Times

10 March 1990

MACUTO, Venezuela, 10 March— The United States proposed today to use United Nations troops to separate the Sandinista and rebel armies in Nicaragua.

United States officials said the Bush Administration is not con-

vinced that President Daniel Ortega Saavedra of Nicaragua is prepared to hand over control of the Nicaraguan military, police and militia. The United States is therefore seeking a way to neutralize the Sandinista army, while Mr. Ortega is primarily concerned with disbanding the contras.

One way to meet such concerns, a senior State Department

official said, would be to expand the size and powers of the current United Nations peacekeeping force in Central America.

The United Nations force currently in Nicaragua was approved by the Security Council in November 1989. The force was scheduled to total 260 soldiers from Canada, Spain and West Germany.



CUBA SAYS IT IS ENDING MILITARY AID TO NICARAGUA

Associated Press

8 March 1990

MEXICO CITY, Mexico, 8 March— President Fidel Castro of Cuba said today that he is cutting off all military aid to Nicaragua before the new government takes office there next month, according to Cuba’s official press agency.

Mr. Castro had close relations

with Nicaragua’s leftist Sandinista government, which governed Nicaragua for a decade. Violeta Barrios de Chamorro and her 14-party opposition coalition easily defeated President Daniel Ortega Saavedra in Feb. 25 general elections. Mrs. Chamorro, who was strongly backed by Washington, is to take office as president on April 25.

Exact figures on Cuban military aid have never been announced by the Havana or Managua governments. However, the State Department said in a report last year that Moscow provided about \$500 million in military aid to Nicaragua in 1988. The Soviet Union has since said it would stop military aid to Nicaragua.

BBC: OBSERVER ‘SPY’ SENTENCED TO DIE

BBC

A court in the Iraqi capital, Baghdad, has imposed the death sentence on The Observer journalist Farzad Bazoft.

He has been convicted of spying for Israel while working on a story about an explosion at a weapons complex 30 miles (48km) south of the capital. The British nurse, Daphne Parish, who is said to have driven him to the site has been jailed for 15 years. The pair were arrested last September. He was picked up at Baghdad airport, waiting for a flight back to London.

The Observer newspaper commissioned Mr Bazoft to write a report about an explosion at the Al-Iskandrai plant, said to be at the centre of Iraq’s development of medium-range missiles, where hundreds were reported to have been killed.

The so-called spies were tried behind closed doors. Mr Bazoft had earlier been filmed making a confession - his colleagues say it was false. Foreign Office Minister William Waldegrave met the Iraqi Deputy Foreign Minister, Nizar Hamdoun, before today’s hearing to demand a full and fair trial. Now he says he will be pressing for clemency.

POLAND RESUMES FULL DIPLOMATIC TIES WITH ISRAEL

Associated Press

28 February 1990

WARSAW, Poland, 27 February— Israel and Poland resumed full diplomatic relations today after a 23-year break. Poland was the third Warsaw Pact country to renew relations with Israel in the last six months. The Poles ended relations in 1967 to support the Arabs in the Middle East war that year. Poland has had low-level ties with Israel since 1987, and the new Solidarity-led Government is hoping that the restoration of embassy-level relations will lead to closer economic and cultural cooperation. Nevertheless, the state radio in Libya expressed “deep regret” over the resumption of relations. The Polish Ambassador to Tripoli was summoned to the Libyan Foreign Ministry and told that the action would harm Libyan-Polish relations and Arab-Polish relations generally, the Libyan report said.