



MUHAMMAD FARAH AIDEED

**'The problem
at the UN
is they talk
tough but
do nothing'**

—AN AID WORKER IN SOMALIA

Challenge to UN mission

By Jonathan Clayton

THE killing by Somali gunmen of at least 28 Pakistani UN blue helmets poses a major challenge to the world body and could wreck a ground-breaking attempt to rebuild the shattered Horn of Africa country.

Independent analysts said the attack could signal the start of a guerrilla war between the 20,000-strong multi-national force and militias of ruthless warlords, desperate to hang on to the power they clawed out from the carcass of the Somali state.

"The United Nations will have to kick back hard, or pack its bags. If it tries to muddle through with resolutions and compromise it is sending its men to the gallows," an analyst said.

At least 28 Pakistanis were killed and dozens wounded on Saturday during what the UN says was a routine inspection of a local militia weapons depot at an old tobacco factory on the western edge of the ruined capital, Mogadishu.

"They were picked off like rabbits. This will be seen as a big victory," said a foreigner working in the capital.

The Pakistanis had to be rescued by Italian troops serving in the 30-nation group. The Italians sent in a column of 12 tanks and six armoured cars to rescue 80 Pakistanis and 10 US soldiers.

Three Americans were wounded in the battle. Hospitals reported more than a dozen Somalis killed and scores injured.

Experts have been waiting for Somali gunmen to test the resolve of the UN since it took over control of the operation from UN forces just over a month ago.

US Admiral Jonathan Howe, the UN's special envoy to Somalia, told newsmen on Sunday the attack "had been pre-arranged and planned".

He said it was one of the worst days in the history of UN intervention, but declined to be drawn on how the world body would respond.

"That's the problem, they talk tough but do nothing," said an aid worker with months of experience of Somalia. "They must hit back hard or go home. It is as simple as that."

General Muhammad Farah Aideded, the country's most powerful warlord, has skillfully exploited a deep distrust and dislike by many Somalis of the United Nations, blamed for propping up the discredited former dictator Muhammad Siad Barre.

THE CLINTON PRESIDENCY has been in something of a political free-fall lately. The president's competence, as well as his judgment, are in serious doubt. Political gnomes and termites seem to be eating away the still new foundations of Clinton's image and credibility.

And it's likely these unflattering images aren't going to totally dissolve as the Clinton team desperately tries to right itself by such manoeuvres as bringing in Republican spinster David Gergen.

True, today's negative images will fade, but they will also linger. Clinton's miserable standing in the public opinion polls will twist and turn as the administration matures, but he may never gain a solid base in public opinion and already many are thinking of Bill Clinton as a lame duck.

Here is the "man from hope" who ran such a precision political campaign; yet he can't make politically astute judgments about haircuts or the White House travel office — that's on the low end.

Here is the man the Democratic Party has anointed to lead them but who can't decide on a policy towards Bosnia that lasts more than a few days and who unthinkingly compromises the FBI — these on the high end.

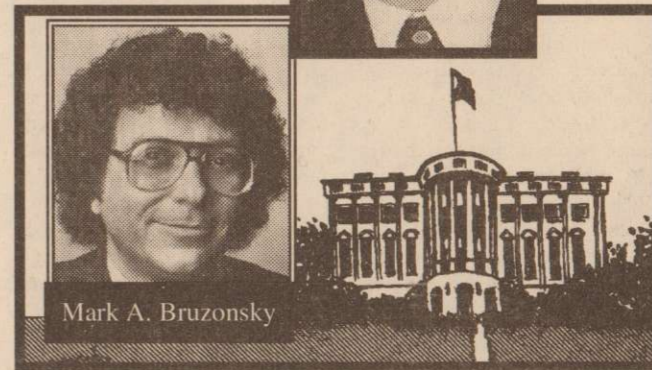
Meanwhile with the stuck in place and rather moribund Middle East "peace talks", the Arab parties have allowed the Clinton administration a very easy time of it on this heretofore important political front.

Just a few years ago the Palestinian Intifada regularly brought images of Israeli brutality into American living rooms. Then the war with Iraq had catapulted events in the Middle East to the forefront of American consciousness.

Yet today the most pro-Israeli American administration of all-time is being given a totally undeserved respite — the "peace talks" have given the Clinton administration a solid excuse not to really have to deal very much with matters relating to Israel.

4 Listening to Christopher Talking to ADC

From



Mark A. Bruzonsky

Washington

the basic issues, that all of them have been the equivalent of political aspirins treating a serious form of political cancer.

Meanwhile, the Clinton administration has been so quickly bombarded with so much on its plate that matters relating to Israel and the Palestinians are hardly considered priorities.

Worse yet, this administration seems to believe, regardless of what some officials sometimes say, that when it comes to Israel and the Palestinians that this is an issue that can be finessed for a long time without ever having to grasp the nettle.

For the post-Coalition War "Mid-east peace talks" provide the perfect excuse for this Democratic administration not to rock the boat, not to take any serious initiatives, not to change any of the basic policies that have been in place for so long now.

And since these are precisely the policies the Clinton team and their Israeli lobby advisers want to pursue, this perfect excuse will of course be played for all it is worth.

There's no use pretending or hoping or wishing otherwise.

This historically stalemated situation will only change when there is a crisis of one kind or another — and in that sense a crisis is long overdue.

Meanwhile, the rhetoric from Clinton's Washington is apparently meant as a substitute for actual policies — that's the basic conundrum these "peace talks" have created.

to the ADC, "President Clinton has made clear his commitment to making peace in the Mid-east

"We've been working hard on getting the Arabs and the Israelis back to the negotiating table so we can reach out and grab this opportunity for peace which seems so inviting at the moment.

"Too much time has already been lost," Secretary Christopher insisted, though not very convincingly.

"Now is the time for real progress. Now is the time to help the peacemakers, not to help those who destroy any possibility of making peace in this region. Together we must seize the chance to negotiate a comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace settlement based upon United Nations Security Council resolutions 242 and 338.

"A negotiated settlement would be built on a number of principles including land for peace, the realisation of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, security for all parties, and the normalisation of relations for all the parties in the area.

"The Middle East does not have to stand in the world as a cauldron of hostilities. Instead it can stand as a cradle of hope. I've always been a diplomat and not a dreamer. And I believe that diplomacy can play concrete results. The United States is playing an active role not only as a co-sponsor of the process, but as a full partner in the search for

pressure and we must work with them and the Israelis to demonstrate that negotiations can lead to tangible results. I want to commend the Palestinian leaders who have made the difficult decision to return to the negotiating table. One of my goals is to make that tough and courageous decision worthwhile and meaningful.

"I believe that self-government is possible as an interim stage to a negotiated settlement. Indeed the objective of this process is a real peace that will see occupation give way to interim self-government and a new relationship between the Israelis and the Palestinians. The outcome is to provide a peaceful and orderly transfer of power to the Palestinians who must then be free to elect their own representatives....

"With the peace process the United States stands ready to work with our friends in the region for the important goals of peace, stability, and social justice. In the end, of course, it will be up to the people and the governments in the Middle East to shape their own future. If they are successful, the benefits of true peace and prosperity will fall to future generations of

The historically stalemated situation will only change when there is a crisis of one kind or another — and in that sense a crisis is long-overdue

— will result in the willingness of the Arabs to stay at the negotiating table and conclude some kind of interim agreement in the spirit of the long ongoing 'step-by-step' diplomacy that was initiated during the Nixon administration by Henry Kissinger.

"Now we in Washington in this Clinton administration will do what we can to provide political reasons, even excuses and justifications if need be, to help the Arab parties explain things to public opinion in their own countries. We will do this by encouraging the Israelis to offer a variety of gestures, though of course it's well understood that we can't actually get them to change any of their basic policies. Consequently what we are expecting, for the good of all concerned, is some kind of Camp David II agreement that we can all claim to be a major political achievement. I've always been a diplomat, not a dreamer, and only some kind of interim arrangement adjusting the occupation is feasible.

"Now just as the Arabs came through for Jimmy Carter when he needed a big political boost we now expect our Arab friends, for whom the US has done so much in recent years, need I remind everyone, to make it possible for the Clinton administration to achieve a major political success, preferably during the pre-1996 election period.

"Furthermore, if the Arab parties cooperate as they really should in the coming year or two, then they certainly can expect a second term Clinton administration to do even more to facilitate further Israeli gestures in the years ahead. There is reason to be hopeful, so let's not miss today's opportunity which may not come again.

"Thank you so much for wel-

peace.
"I am sorry I cannot stay for dinner with you tonight. I do want to thank you very much for your invitation here. And I want to assure you that as long as I am secretary of state you will always have access to me. I will always try to be attentive to your wishes and needs.... I hope that you will take that message away and pass it on to others because I so strongly believe that that's the only way we can make progress, that's the only way we can fulfil our goal as a full partner and try to help the parties achieve peace that I think is available if we all work together starting together in 1993."
So these were Secretary Christopher's actual words a few weeks ago speaking for the first time before a major Arab American audience. But what's the real meaning of all these rhetorical phrases?
Here's how an astute historically-aware observer might translate Christopher's diplomatese into plain English:
"This administration has no particularly new policies when it comes to Israel and the Arabs but we sure are glad this 'peace process' is taking place and that you Arab Americans are hopeful like

originally to police famine relief supplies, but has always been hostile towards the UN role in the operation.

In January, violent demonstrations by his supporters forced Secretary General Boutros Ghali to cut short a visit to Mogadishu.

Since Washington handed over control of the UN operation in Somalia (Unosom II) to Turkish General Cevik Bir on May 4, Aideed and his closest ally, Ahmad Omar Jess who holds sway in the southern port of Kismayu, have launched a propaganda campaign against the UN presence.

In recent weeks, UN troops have been accused to torturing and beating up Somali prisoners and raping Somali women. There has been no evidence such claims are true.

After the battle, Aideed told UN troops to leave areas "captured today".

Pro-Aideed radio quoted him as advising Unosom to "remove its forces from the places they captured today and other sensitive places where people live. This includes the police command and the second battalion, and the centre of the city".

Pakistan immediately demanded a closed-door session of the UN Security Council and urged the world body to take punitive action against their assailants.

On Sunday, Mogadishu was calm, but aid agencies scrubbed flights to the capital and the airport was closed to non-military flights.—REUTER

This is the overall context in which Secretary of State Warren Christopher has been charged with making an occasional gesture — mostly rhetorical — that can be offered up as a substitute for real policy initiatives.

One day it's a few prisoners being released or someone exiled being allowed to return. The next day there's a newspaper story, often planted and always hyped about some supposedly hopeful gesture made by the Rabin government.

One day there's an interview with some Israeli official that gives the impression that something important might be afoot. The next day some Clinton official is telling all who will listen how significant the really insignificant actually is.

What all of these gestures, initiatives, and leaks have in common is that none of them have gone anywhere near the heart of

Here, for instance, are highlights from Secretary Christopher's recent talk before the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) a few weeks ago. The old adage "all talk and no action" certainly pertains, but it's more than just that for the talk really diverges quite significantly from what the actual policies are!

"The end of the cold war has created an unusual opportunity for making peace in the Middle East. Such opportunities are unlikely to last very long and the cost of lost opportunities is very high. It is precisely because of the recognition of those high costs that every administration over the last four decades — Republican and Democrat alike — has played an active role in the search for peace in the Middle East.

"From the outset of this administration," Secretary Christopher continued in his address

solutions. We're doing our part, and we're looking to the parties to do theirs so that we can take advantage of this genuinely historic moment in the region.

"In helping the parties work through the issues we realise each of the countries faces at home. The Palestinians are under great

Arab Americans are hopeful like we are. Furthermore we certainly desire — and, make no mistake about it, clearly expect — that the weaknesses of the various Arab parties, and the divisions within the Arab World — coupled of course with the need of many of the Arab governments for ongoing support and protection from the United States

"I thank you so much for welcoming me today to speak before you. I'm so sorry I don't have time for any questions and can't stay for dinner. Do stay in touch.... We will always be available to you and you can contact my key aides — Sam Lewis at the State Department or Martin Indyk at the White House — anytime you like."

San Francisco spy ring: the tip of Israeli iceberg

SBy Greg Noakes

SOME four months after it began to unravel, the true extent of the private intelligence network linking former San Francisco police inspector Tom Gerard, art dealer and paid informant Roy Bullock and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith is becoming clearer.

The case involves intelligence files kept on tens of thousands of individuals and organisations and questions about exactly how the information in those files was obtained. Material in the files was culled from confidential police records not only in the San Francisco Bay area but from law enforcement agencies across the country, prompting allegations of a covert nationwide intelligence-gathering system run by the ADL in conjunction with individual police officials.

The San Francisco operation collapsed as a result of a Federal Bureau of Investigation probe into the activities of Tom Gerard and his associates. The former police inspector compiled secret intelligence files on both Arab Americans and individuals and organisations involved in anti-apartheid activities, and allegedly peddled the information to the Israeli and

South African governments for more than \$20,000. Some of Gerard's private files were later discovered in a sweep of the San Francisco and Los Angeles offices of the Anti-Defamation League.

Gerard, who was employed in the early 1980s by the CIA in Central America and who worked part-time as a security official for Philippine Airlines, fled to a remote island in the Philippines after being questioned by the FBI last November. He later resigned in a letter to the San Francisco police department and, despite his covert activities, was awarded his pension by the city.

One of Gerard's associates was Roy Bullock, a 58-year-old undercover informant who compiled information on Arab Americans, Irish Americans, supporters of the African National Congress, the Nation of Islam, White supremacist groups and a variety of Leftwing organisations on the West Coast.

Bullock was a member of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee's San Francisco chapter in the mid-1980s and collected information on ADC's members

and activities. He allegedly funnelled information to representatives of the ADL and the South African government. Bullock worked closely with Tom Gerard while the latter was involved in police intelligence, and when the San Francisco police department cut back on its intelligence-gathering operations Gerard helped arrange for Bullock to work as a paid informant for the FBI. It was the bureau's discovery in 1991 that Bullock was also an agent of the South African government that first prompted the present investigation.

The third leg of the intelligence triangle was the Anti-Defamation League, and in particular its California offices. The ADL admits it maintains files on White supremacist, neo-Nazi and other organisations and individuals it considers anti-semitic, uses a network of paid informants to gather intelligence and routinely exchanges information with police departments around the country. The executive director of the ADL's central Pacific region, Richard Hirschaut, denies widespread reports that the San Francisco police found confidential police files on Arab Americans

in a sweep of the organisation's San Francisco and Los Angeles offices, including some of the same files that Gerard allegedly sold to Israeli agents. Hirschaut told *The Northern California Jewish Bulletin* that allegations the ADL spies on Arab Americans and collaborates with Israeli intelligence were "phantasmagoria".

The San Francisco district attorney's office, which is conducting an investigation into the ADL's intelligence activities, believes the network extends beyond the Bay Area, however, and that a number of police officers around the nation have been illegally channelling information to the Anti-Defamation League. Confidential material from the police departments in Portland, Oregon, and at least one other city outside of California was found in the possession of the ADL, while *The San Francisco Examiner* reports that files have been discovered from up to 20 police departments and other law enforcement agencies within the state, including the Los Angeles police department and the California Department of Corrections.

Material also reportedly has

been found in ADL files from at least one federal agency. One source close to the district attorney's investigation told *The Los Angeles Times*, "the ADL is running this all over the country"; while another law enforcement official said, "this Gerard-Bullock thing is the tip of the iceberg — this is going on nationwide".

The magnitude of the files uncovered by the FBI, the San Francisco police and the district attorney's office is staggering. Between Gerard, Bullock and the ADL, authorities seized 12,000 computer files and thousands of hard files kept on individuals throughout the US. Approximately one-fourth of the names belong to Arab Americans, and most of those listed in the files reportedly live outside of California.

Information collected by the network includes such material as criminal records or "rap sheets", intelligence files on political activists, fingerprint charts, car registration documents, driver's license photographs and other Department of Motor Vehicles records which include home addresses. This information could be used locally to stake out individuals'

homes and businesses and facilitate the surveillance of political activities, while the Israeli and South African governments could use the material to monitor and take action against American visitors opposed to their policies.

The ADL's crucial role in the 1987 arrest in Los Angeles of seven Palestinians and one Kenyan for the distribution of literature produced by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, coupled with the fact that information was found in the ADL's computer files on one of the two Palestinian Americans recently arrested in the West Bank for their alleged pro-Hamas activities, suggest that such suspicions go beyond idle speculation.

The maintenance of covert intelligence files and "enemies lists" has had a chilling effect on the exercise of First Amendment rights of Arab Americans and others. The manner in which the information in the files was obtained and how it was dispersed may be grounds for criminal prosecution or other legal action.

In a February 26 meeting with ADC president Albert Mokhiber and director of legal

services Greg Nojeim, special agent Richard Held and assistant special agent Edward Apple of the FBI's San Francisco field office said the bureau is investigating whether the persons involved in activities of the Gerard-Bullock-ADL network should be charged criminally. Though the FBI admits it worked with Gerard, employed Bullock and exchanged information on hate crimes with the ADL, the agents expressed concern that confidential information may have been used outside the scope of official law enforcement activities.

During their visit to San Francisco, Mokhiber and Nojeim also met with San Francisco chief of police Anthony Ribera and assistant district attorney John Dwyer. Ribera assured the ADC officials that he was working to end any covert collection and dissemination of intelligence and misuse of official documents by individuals within his department, while Dwyer assured them that a complete investigation would be conducted.

Despite the continuing revelations about the Gerard-Bullock-ADL network, a number of questions remain. The

extent of the spy ring's contacts with various police departments, the activities of a number of other paid ADL informants like Roy Bullock, the degree of cooperation between the network and the governments of Israel and South Africa, and the use made of the illegally obtained information kept on thousands of individual Americans are all matters for further investigation.

What is certain is that a vast number of confidential government records have been given or sold to individuals, organisations and foreign governments because of private citizens' political beliefs and activities, and that these transactions extend far beyond Northern California.

"You don't think about the DMV giving your driver's license to some police officer who gives it to an organisation that doesn't like you," assistant district attorney Dwyer told *The Los Angeles Times*. "This practice has to stop. You can't let the government collect all this information and give it to whomever they choose."

Courtesy: Washington Report on Middle East Affairs

