

CONVERGENCE

The Christic Institute

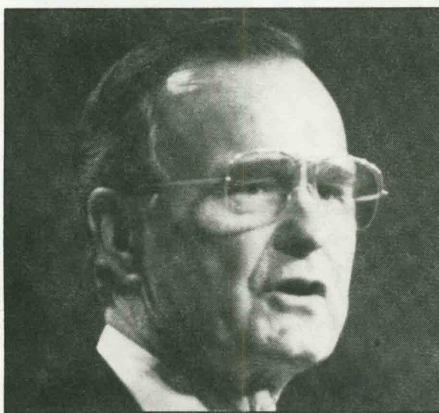
Summer 1991

One Dollar

Washington, D.C.

Will the U.S. extradite John Hull?

INSIDE



*Did George Bush
have a role
in October surprise?
Page 3*

*Teleconference
on causes, cures
of drug crisis
Page 5*

*Special section:
how to counteract
bias in mass media
Page 7*

Costa Rica charges C.I.A. operative with terrorist murder

By RICK EMRICH

The Government of Costa Rica on April 19 asked the United States to extradite U.S.-born rancher John Hull, a naturalized Costa Rican citizen who supported the Nicaraguan *contra* rebels from 1982 through 1986. The Costa Ricans have accused Hull of murder, drug trafficking and "hostile acts" against Nicaragua in violation of Costa Rica's neutrality.

This appears to be the first time a foreign government has asked the United States to turn over a major *contra* supporter for trial on criminal charges stemming directly from the U.S.-supported rebel operation.

The extradition request could become a political nightmare for the Bush Administration. The President has been dogged by charges that he was involved in the illegal *contra* support operation during his term as Vice President under Ronald Reagan.

The Costa Ricans have charged Hull, 70, with engineering a terrorist bombing on May 30, 1984. The attack occurred while moderate *contra* commander Edén Pastora was meeting reporters at his jungle outpost in La Penca, Nicaragua. Pastora survived, but five others—including three journalists—were killed and twenty injured. Hull is also a defendant in *Avirgan v. Hull*, the Christic Institute's lawsuit against the La Penca bombers.

Hull is also accused of violating Costa Rican neutrality when he used his ranch in Costa Rica near the Nicaraguan border as a base and supply depot for the *contras*. The Costa Rican Government further charges that Hull and other *contra* supporters used the rebel arms supply route to smuggle drugs through Costa Rican territory.

Colombian drug kingpin Carlos Lehder told ABC News in May 1990 that Hull "was pumping about 30 tons of cocaine into the United States a year" from his base in Costa Rica.

If Hull is forced to return to Costa Rica, a trial could confirm allegations that United States officials condoned drug trafficking and terrorism by the *contras* and their supporters. A trial may also underscore the American role in pressuring Costa Rica—a traditionally neutral country—

Continued on page 2 ■

HULL

■ Continued from page 1

to allow the rebels to operate freely from their territory.

"The Administration's reaction to this extradition request will test its commitment to the war against drug trafficking and international terrorism," says Christic Institute General Counsel Daniel Sheehan. "We will find out whether President Bush really believes in 'zero tolerance' for drug smugglers."

Sheehan says the Administration may try to bottle up Hull's extradition unless the public demands justice for the La Penca bombing victims. *See ACTION box on page 14.*

The criminal charges against Hull parallel allegations made in *Avirgan v. Hull*, a Federal civil racketeering suit filed in 1986 by the Christic Institute on behalf of American reporters Tony Avirgan and Martha Honey. Avirgan was one of the reporters wounded at La Penca. The suit identified Hull as an arms smuggler, drug trafficker and a key player in the attempt on Pastora's life.

Part of racketeering enterprise

The lawsuit also says Hull and 28 other defendants were part of a criminal racketeering enterprise responsible for the bombing. That enterprise, the Institute charges, organized the illegal shipment of arms to the *contras* and used *contra* bases to smuggle narcotics into the United States. Several of the defendants—including retired American generals Richard Secord and John Singlaub, arms dealer Albert Hakim, and Robert Owen, who served as Oliver North's liaison with the Nicaraguan rebels—later became widely-known when their roles in the Iran-*contra* affair were exposed.

Avirgan v. Hull was dismissed in June 1988, in the midst of a Republican Presidential campaign determined to defuse the Iran-*contra* affair as an election issue. Days before the Avirgan trial was scheduled to begin, Federal Judge James Lawrence King ruled there was insufficient evidence that Hull was involved in the bombing.

Christic attorneys appealed, calling King's ruling a politically motivated attempt to derail the case. The Institute has since told the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals that the criminal charges against Hull are further proof that King was wrong and the dismissal should be overturned. *For more detail on the Christic Institute's appeal, see the story on page 11.*

Throughout the Reagan Administration's war on Nicaragua, Hull was a central figure in the anti-Sandinista campaign. Working for both the C.I.A. and the North network, he served as liaison between the Americans and *contra* groups in Costa Rica and southern Nicaragua.

Hull played an important role in the C.I.A. attempt to unify under agency command several rebel factions fighting on the "Southern Front"—the war zone in southern Nicaragua bordering on Costa Rica. He has described himself as a "coordinator" between the C.I.A.

Continued on page 13 ■

CONVERGENCE

The Christic Institute

Executive Director
Sara Nelson

Editor
Andrew Lang

Department Directors

Mary Cassell, Outreach and Organizing
Stephen Deal, Development
Rick Emrich, Media
Tia Lessin, Public Education
Daniel Sheehan, General Counsel
Sheila Wolfe, Administration

Board of Directors and Officers

James J. Berna
The Rev. William J. Davis, S.J., Chair
Sara Nelson, Vice President
Lewis Pitts, Director, C.I. South
Daniel Sheehan, President

Convergence is published by the Christic Institute, a nonprofit, interfaith center for law and national policy in the public interest. We are supported by churches, Jewish philanthropies, foundations and private citizens. To learn more about us, please mail the form provided below to:

Christic Institute
1324 North Capitol Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20002
(202) 797-8106
La Penca Hotline (202) 667-2634

Or you can contact one of our regional offices:

Christic Institute South
106 West Parrish Street
Durham, NC 27701
(919) 688-0268

Christic Institute West
8773 Venice Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90034
(213) 287-1556

Christic Institute Bay Area
942 Market Street, Room 712
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 788-0475

- ☐ Please send more information about the Christic Institute.
- ☐ Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution of \$25, which entitles me to Christic Institute publications for one year.

Name _____

Street _____

City, State, Zip _____

Playing politics with U.S. hostages?

New evidence suggests Reagan-Bush campaign blocked hostage release

By ANDY LANG

Evidence has surfaced that lends new credibility to reports that the Reagan-Bush campaign secretly negotiated a deal with Iranian representatives to keep American hostages in captivity until the Republicans won the 1980 Presidential election.

The evidence also raises new questions about George Bush's role in the alleged negotiations with Iran. Some sources charge that Bush travelled to Paris between Oct. 18 and 20, 1980, to meet with Iranian representatives. Bush himself has denounced this charge as "vicious," but the White House and the President's sympathizers in the mass media have circulated at least three conflicting alibis for Bush's movements on those dates.

The "October Surprise" could be the mother of all scandals, possibly more shameful than the Watergate and Iran-*contra* affairs rolled into one. Deliberate actions by private citizens to prevent the release of American hostages could expose those responsible to charges of treason and kidnapping.

There is also evidence that Reagan-Bush campaign officials were informed illegally by insiders in the National Security Council and Senate Intelligence Committee about the hostage negotiations. Former President Jimmy Carter told Robert Morris of the *Village Voice* that he believes Donald Gregg, then a senior national security aide and later national security adviser to Vice President Bush, was one of the officials who kept the Reagan-Bush campaign informed about the Administration's moves to free the hostages.

Carter believes that Gregg and a number of former C.I.A. officials may have organized a vendetta against his Administration, which had fired hundreds of C.I.A. agents in an attempt to reform the agency. "We tried to clean up the C.I.A.," the former President told the *Voice*. "It had been shot through with people that were later involved in the Iran-*contra* affair; people like Secord and so forth. . . ." The cashiered C.I.A. agents were loyal to former C.I.A. Director George Bush, Carter said.

Former Air Force General Richard Secord is a defendant in *Avirgan v. Hull*, the Christic Institute's Federal lawsuit against a racketeering enterprise that allegedly smuggled arms and narcotics through *contra* bases in Central America. Gregg, although not a defendant, is a target of the Institute's investigation. White House records suggest he was directly involved in illegal operations to arm the *contras* and organized at least one meeting to brief Vice President Bush on the operations.

Despite persistent allegations reported by *In These Times*, *Z Magazine* and other progressive periodicals, the mass media ignored the story until April, when an op-ed article by former national security aide Gary Sick in the *New York Times* and a PBS *Frontline* documentary reported by investigative journalist Robert Parry gave the allegations a new aura of respectability.

Sick, a Navy officer attached to the Carter Administration's National Security Council as a Middle East expert, is now an adjunct professor of Middle East politics at Columbia University. Sick says he dismissed the allegations at first, but thought the timing of the hostage release—30 minutes after Reagan took the oath of office—"was peculiar." "We had reports later on that the people holding the hostages in fact were standing with watches, waiting at the airport, to make sure that the time had passed, that Carter was no longer President, before releasing the hostages," he told *Frontline*.

Fifteen sources claim knowledge

Years later, Sick's research for a book on the hostage crisis led him to conclude that the early reports of a deal between the Reagan campaign and the Iranians were accurate.

Sick says he has interviewed about 15 separate sources who claim to have direct knowledge of the secret negotiations between the Reagan-Bush campaign and the Iranians. A number of the sources are "respectable people," Sick told *Frontline*. Other sources were "money movers, arms dealers, low-level intelligence operatives, people who work undercover and who, for one reason or another, are now dissatisfied with their lot and are prepared to talk about some of what they knew, perhaps with considerable exaggeration." "[F]inally," Sick said, "I . . . passed a point where it was harder to explain away the people who were supposedly all lying to me for reasons that I couldn't understand than it was to believe that something in fact happened."

The hostages were seized in 1989 by Iranian radicals who wanted to disrupt relations between Iran's revolutionary Government, then still in the hands of moderate reformers, and the United States. At first, the nation rallied around Carter's economic and diplomatic measures to pressure Iran to free the Americans, but in April 1990 a secret attempt to stage a military rescue mission ended in failure.

The hostage-taking was exploited by the Reagan-Bush campaign as an example of national humiliation and weakness. But Reagan campaign officials told *Frontline* they were afraid the Carter Administration would engineer the release of the hostages before the election—an "October Surprise" in the words of Vice Presidential candidate George Bush—to deprive the Republicans of their best campaign issues.

Sick's allegations center on William Casey, chair of the

Continued on page 4 ■

BUSH

■ Continued from page 3

Reagan campaign and for six years director of central intelligence in the Reagan-Bush Administration. Casey, who died in 1987, reportedly met with Iranian representatives in Madrid and Paris before the November election.

One important source for this charge is Jamshid Hashemi, an Iranian arms dealer. Hashemi says he and his brother Cyrus organized two meetings in July 1980 between Casey and an important Iranian cleric, Mehdi Karrubi. Karrubi is now speaker of the Iranian parliament. The meetings were held in a Madrid hotel room.

Hashemi says Casey's proposal was "blunt." "Casey said the Iranians should hold the hostages until after the election and the new Reagan Administration would feel favorably towards Iran, releasing military equipment and the frozen Iranian assets," he told *Frontline*.

Karrubi and Casey returned to Madrid for a second meeting in August where the Iranian cleric "expressed acceptance," Hashemi said. "The hostages would be released after Carter's defeat." Hashemi's account of the meetings has been confirmed by two other sources, Sick wrote in the *Times*.

At about the same time as the Casey-Karrubi meetings in Madrid, Sick wrote, "individuals associated with the Reagan campaign made contact with senior Government officials in Israel, which agreed to act as the channel for the arms deliveries to Iran that Mr. Casey had promised." Sick cited two former Israeli intelligence officers as his sources.

Is Hashemi lying about the Casey meetings? If he is, not even the severest critics of the "October Surprise" allegations have been able to explain why the Iranian arms dealer would deliberately mislead Sick. Hashemi is not under indictment or facing trial on any charges.

Moreover, Hashemi is not the only source who has spoken out on the meetings between Casey and Iranian representatives. *Frontline* interviewed Arif Durani, an arms dealer now serving a 10-year sentence in Federal prison for selling arms to Iran. According to Durani, Iranian officials told him Karrubi met in Spain with Casey. Another source, retired Israeli intelligence officer Ari Ben-Menashe, claims to have seen intelligence reports on Casey's trip to Madrid. "The Americans agreed to release money and make promises for the future when Reagan-Bush take over (sic) to make relations better," he told *Frontline*, "and the Americans also promised that they will allow arms shipments to Iran. . . . And this is why Israel was brought in."

Even though the fundamentalist Iranian Government was a sworn enemy of the Jewish state, Israel feared Iraq's growing military power in the region. In the mid-1980s Israel was the source for weapons shipped to Iran during the Iran-*contra* affair. Retired Air Force Gen. Richard Secord secretly used the profits from these sales to finance the *contra* war against Nicaragua. But if the "October Surprise" allegations are true, Israel actually began in late 1980 or early 1981 to supply the Iranians with arms as part of the deal negotiated between Iran and the Reagan-Bush campaign.

In mid-September 1980 Iraq invaded Iran. The Iranians, now desperate for military supplies, sent an emissary to Washington. Sick's sources speculate the Iranians were following two tracks, negotiating simultaneously with the U.S. Government and the Reagan-Bush campaign.

Sadeh Tabatabai, Khomeini's emissary to the United States, told *Frontline* that he and the State Department quickly reached agreement on a *quid pro quo*. The hostages would be returned and the United States would release Iranian assets and arms deliveries frozen by the Carter Administration. "At the end of the talks, I was very optimistic," Tabatabai said. "Carter had accepted the conditions set by the Iranians." The atmosphere seemed favorable for an agreement: The United States wanted the hostages, and Iran needed military supplies.

This arrangement closely resembled the deal Casey allegedly proposed in Madrid. There was one important difference, however: The Administration's formula involved the immediate liberation of the hostages, while Reagan's team wanted to stall the release until *after* the election. Former Iranian President Abolhassan Bani-Sadr told *Frontline* that "[i]f there had not been contacts with the Reagan-Bush group, the hostages would have been let go six months before the U.S. elections."

Despite agreement between Washington and Teheran on the hostage-arms *quid pro quo*, the Iranian Government seemed to put the issue on ice.

Final agreement reached

What happened? In October, according to Sick's reconstruction of events, Casey met in Paris with representatives of the Iranian and Israeli Governments. Final agreement was reached on the proposals first advanced earlier that year in Madrid: Iran would not release the hostages until after the election, and Israel would ship arms and spare parts to Iran.

For years Richard Brenneke, an Oregon businessman who describes himself as a former contract agent for the C.I.A., has been saying the agency ordered him to Paris in October 1980 to launder money for the Reagan-Bush campaign's deal with the Iranians.

The C.I.A. continues to deny the agency ever employed Brenneke. Government records, *Frontline* says, show that Brenneke worked with European arms dealers to supply Iran in the 1980s. One document says Brenneke told a Pentagon intelligence officer about top secret TOW missile sales to Iran three days before President Reagan secretly authorized them.

In Paris, Brenneke told *Frontline*, Casey approved the Iranian Government's shopping list and explained how private funds could be used to buy weapons for Iran:

"There were—and I added this up as I went along—somewhere between \$35 million and \$40 million was going to change hands. That is, it would wind up being used either for the purchase of weapons to be . . . delivered to Iran. . . . Casey at the time told me that I would have the authority to withdraw funds from a Mexican bank and he says, 'There probably will be an American bank or two involved in this whole thing.' He said 'yes' on virtually

Continued on page 16 ■

Drug teleconference in November

Meetings in 100 cities to examine causes, cures of drug crisis

The Bush Administration's failed "war on drugs" will be challenged in a national three-day teleconference in November. The event, organized by more than 20 religious denominations and public-interest groups, will enable citizens to draft an alternative drug policy for national debate.

The conference—*Causes and Cures: National Teleconference on the Narcotics Epidemic*—meets from Nov. 7 to 9 at the Riverside Church in New York City and is open to the public. Satellite and telephone links will connect the main event to regional conferences in 50 states. The Christic Institute and the Riverside Church are providing organizing support.

More than a dozen religious denominations are supporting the campaign. "One of the unusual features of this project," says Christic Institute Organizing Director Mary Cassell, "is that in addition to the Jewish community, churches of virtually every Christian tradition are active, including Roman Catholics, mainline protestants, Anglicans, Eastern Orthodox, evangelicals and pentecostals." Historic black churches are also involved. The goal is to organize 1,000 congregations to sponsor regional conferences in 100 cities.

The conferences are designed to discuss issues that have been disregarded by the Administration's "war on drugs," including the United States Government's complicity in international narcotics trafficking, a major catalyst for the growth of narcotics cartels during the past forty years.

One conference supporter, Rabbi Allen Bennett of San Francisco, says the event may "reach far more people in more effective ways than almost anything else has done."

"While I know the symposium will not bring an end to the epidemic by itself, I also know that the efforts up to now to combat the problem have been not only too little, too late, but also more punitive than positive," adds

Bennett, who serves as a regional executive director of the American Jewish Congress.

Local committees are already at work in over 90 communities nationwide. Sites for the local conferences will include colleges, high schools, churches, hotels and hospitals. They will feature a direct satellite feed from the anchor meeting in New York. Cable TV customers will be able to watch highlights of the conference at home over "VISN," the Vision Interfaith Satellite Network.

Several task forces of drug experts are already at work on proposals for alternative policies, concentrating on prevention and treatment and stricter laws against Government connivance with drug smuggling operations.

Organized by and for national religious institutions, drug-treatment professionals and activists in the social justice and labor movements, the teleconference will draw on the practical experience of experts who deal with the epidemic every day in their communities. The project will also facilitate ongoing coalition work among these constituencies at the grassroots. As the largest project of its



A neighborhood vigil in East Harlem, New York, for a 13-year old crack courier slain by police.

Andrew Lichtenstein/Impact Visuals

kind, the teleconference and the subsequent organizing campaign have the potential to reach tens of thousands of citizens and to mobilize them on behalf of an entirely new approach to the problem.

"In order to formulate an effective policy, the drug problem must be viewed from a number of perspectives," says Cassell. "For example, it is certainly an issue of social justice, as well as an issue of public health and of international politics. It is also most definitely an issue of peace, since international drug trafficking contributes significantly to the financing of covert operations and so-called 'low-intensity' wars around the world."

The conference organizers say a genuinely comprehensive national policy must address several key issues:

- The root causes of drug abuse and dealing in the United States.
- The dynamics of international trafficking, including the relationship between covert operations and the flow of narcotics into this country.
- The political economy of source countries in Latin

Continued on page 6 ■

CONFERENCE

■ *Continued from page 5*

America and Asia.

■ The role of multinational institutions—banks and corporations—and the economic forces that drive the crisis.

■ Interdiction and criminal justice.

■ The Administration's response: the "war on drugs."

■ The community response: model programs of prevention and treatment.

Policy task forces—composed of health and law-enforcement professionals, academics, recovering addicts and religious leaders—have already begun work in these areas. One member of the task force on international trafficking, former D.E.A. agent Dennis Dayle, told a recent meeting of the group that "in my 30 years experience in the D.E.A. and its precursor organizations, the major targets of my investigations almost invariably turned out to be working for the C.I.A."

Another member of the trafficking task force, Prof. Alfred McCoy of the University of Wisconsin, is recognized as the preeminent scholarly authority on international heroin traffic. In May he published a complete revision and update of his ground-breaking book, *The Politics of Heroin*, which the C.I.A. tried unsuccessfully to suppress in 1971. Prof. McCoy writes: "If we review the history of postwar drug traffic, we can see repeated coincidence between C.I.A. covert action assets and major drug dealers. . . . Over the past forty years American and allied intelligence agencies have played a significant role in protecting and expanding global drug traffic. . . . C.I.A. covert operations in key drug-producing areas have repeatedly restrained or blocked D.E.A. efforts to deal with the problem. . . . American drug policy has been crippled by a contradiction between D.E.A. attempts to arrest major traffickers and C.I.A. protection for many of the world's drug lords." *The Politics of Heroin* can be purchased from the Christic Institute.

"This connection between United States covert operations and drug trafficking is analogous to the 'dirty family secret' in a chemically dependent family system: everyone knows it, but there is a tacit pact not to talk about it," says conference organizer Bill Teska, an Episcopal priest and the Christic Institute's religious liaison director. "Until this pattern of denial is broken, the family cannot begin the process of recovery. Likewise, as long as covert operations are permitted to cooperate with drug traffickers, we will always have a domestic drug problem in the United States."

Since the beginning of the Reagan-Bush Administration's war on Nicaragua in 1981, the domestic cocaine supply has increased 1,000 percent. During their covert support of the Afghan *mujaheddin*, the U.S. market share of Afghan heroin grew from negligible to 70 percent. At the same time, heroin consumption in the United States rose dramatically. Nevertheless, the Congress and the mainstream media have been reluctant to face the issue: the

C.I.A.'s habit of cooperating with drug smugglers in covert operations is a major cause of our domestic epidemics.

"I am sick to death of the truths that cannot be spoken," says Jack Blum, former counsel for the Senate Foreign Relations narcotics subcommittee. The nation as a whole is literally "sick to death" because of our unwillingness to deal with one factor indispensable to a successful international drug-trafficking operation: official help. Throughout its history, the C.I.A. has provided this help, and the American people have paid the price. Our devastated lives and communities, crack babies and violent urban crime are a direct result of our Government's willingness to tolerate alliances with drug syndicates so as to achieve the objectives of its covert operations. We will continue to pay this price until we are willing to do something about this "unspeakable" truth.

In their "Call to Action" announcing the event, the religious leaders summarize the policy they will elaborate in November: "Prevention and treatment, rather than punishment, are the proper focus of an effective approach to the problem. One aspect of prevention is individual inoculation in the form of effective programs of education. Another aspect of prevention is eradication of the domestic conditions that lead to addiction, such as poverty and unemployment. A third aspect is interdicting drug traffic, including a reordering of national foreign policy priorities, which have in the past permitted U.S. agencies to adopt a policy of leniency and even complicity with traffickers, when it suits some other purpose (as in the cases of Manuel Noriega's Panama, the Bahamas, and the Nicaraguan *contras*)."

The teleconference sponsors hope to begin a movement to rearrange national priorities, shifting the focus of drug policy from foreign intervention and domestic punishment to prevention and treatment at home and an uncompromising official policy of "just say no" to cooperation with drug-smugglers abroad. □

ACTION

Drug conference

■ **Help organize a teleconference in your community.** Call or write for your local contact.

■ **Attend the Riverside conference in New York.** Contact us for registration information. Our phone numbers: (202) 797-8106 in Washington, (415) 788-0475 in San Francisco and (213) 287-1556 in Los Angeles.

■ **Involve your church, synagogue or organization.** Publicize the conference and recruit 10 others to attend the teleconference nearest you. □

SPECIAL SECTION: MEDIA ALTERNATIVES

Gulf war reveals media bias

The following four-page special section is designed to give our readers information on censorship and bias in the mass media. There are a number of organizations, publications and services that will help you keep informed about issues ignored by the establishment press. Some of these resources—including Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR), PeaceNet and the Christic Institute's Media Watch—are described in the enclosed action insert. Use the forms printed on the back to contact these organizations.

The following article is from the new preface to Unreliable Sources: A Guide to Detecting Bias in the Media. Copies of the first edition of this book are available from the Christic Institute. For information on books and videotapes available from the Institute, please call our public education department at (202) 797-8106.

**By MARTIN A. LEE and
NORMAN SOLOMON**

The patterns of bias that characterize reporting in "peacetime" were amplified during the war in the Gulf, as separation between press and state dwindled to the vanishing point.

The most powerful news media—key TV and radio networks, newsweeklies, the *New York Times*, *Washington Post* and major wire services—were solidly behind the war as soon as it began in mid-January 1991. They went to great lengths to coat the news frame with red-white-and-blue varnish. "If I were the government, I'd be paying the press for the kind of coverage it is getting right now," former Assistant Secretary of State Hodding Carter remarked during the war. No less an expert than Michael Deaver, President Reagan's PR whiz, agreed: "If you were going to hire a public relations firm to do the media relations for an international event, it couldn't be done any better than this is being done."

Journalists, who had to sign papers agreeing to abide by press regulations before they received a visa for Saudi Arabia, found American military activities throughout the

region to be largely off-limits. All photographs, video and battlefield dispatches had to be cleared by military censors. Reporters were only allowed to travel in predesignated "pools" with U.S. military escorts always at their side. Pool requirements made it much easier for U.S. officials to steer

journalists clear of certain operations. Feisty reporters were frequently excluded.

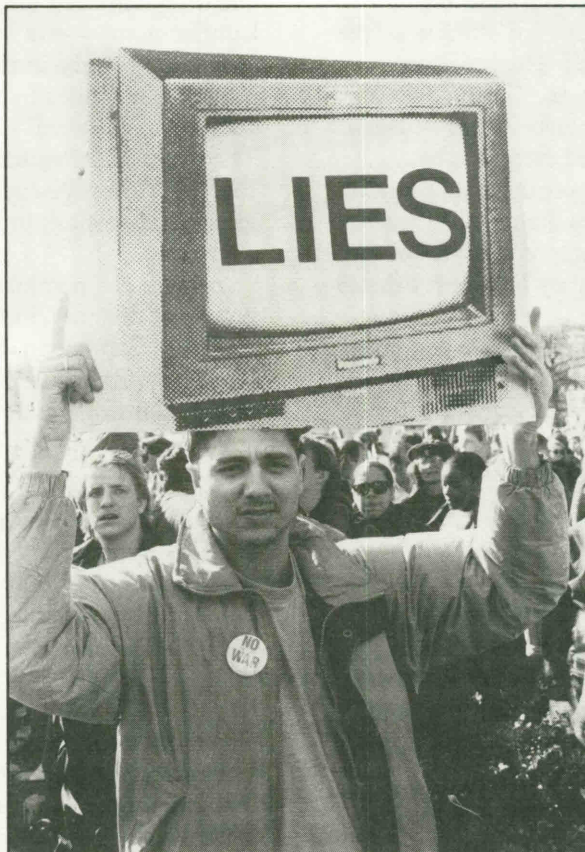
Press censorship had much less to do with protecting U.S. troops than with projecting the right kind of image so that Americans back home would support the war. Details deleted by U.S. censors, but reported in the British press, included the fact that American pilots were shown pornographic films before taking off on Stealth bombing missions.

With U.S. military brass doling out information in measured doses, the networks filled their expanded news holes with a parade of "experts"—usually current or past officials of the C.I.A., Defense Department and National Security Council (including at least three convicted felons: Oliver North, Richard Secord and John Poindexter). Plus there was the predictable array of think tank specialists, hawkish members of Congress and patriarchs of the military-

industrial complex who scarcely disagreed with each other. For a while it seemed that one shrill note of pro-war punditry blared from the tube.

In the overwhelming majority of cases, the expounded views were the outlooks preferred by the White House and Pentagon. Occasional stories with dissenting viewpoints were aired and printed in mainstream media, but the essence of propaganda is not the exceptional story: It is the steady repetition of code-words, catch-phrases and skewed versions of events.

A survey of nightly network news programs during the first two weeks of the war by the media watch group FAIR (Fairness and Accuracy In Reporting) underscored the virtual shut-out of opposition viewpoints. Only 1.5 percent of news sources were identified as American antiwar protesters, about the same percentage of people



J. K. Condyles/Impact Visuals

Continued on page 8 ■

Project tracks 'censored' stories

Top ten censored stories show mass media bias, featured by Moyers

There is no official mechanism of state censorship in the United States, but "every year, there are dozens of important stories that the mass media ignore," says journalist Bill Moyers. "They expose shady conduct by high officials, by the military, by the C.I.A., by the press itself. They uncover hidden dangers and warn of crisis to come. Knowing about these stories could change our lives or maybe even save them."

These are the "censored" stories listed every year by "Project Censored," a media watchdog organization founded in 1976 by Prof. Carl Jensen at Sonoma State University in California. The project's "Top Ten Censored Stories" of 1990 were featured by Moyers in a documentary broadcast Feb. 25 on the Public Broadcasting Service.

Readers of *Convergence* will be familiar with some of these stories. Six entries in the "Top Ten" lists published by Project Censored since 1987 either originated with Christic Institute

investigations or were reported by the Institute and other public-interest groups.

Overt censorship is "rare in America," Moyers says, "but a subtle form of censorship takes over when significant stories are buried or ignored by the mainstream press."

"There are many reasons for this neglect. Editors think some issues are just too dull to sustain public interest or will offend the high and mighty or require too much money, time and space to explain."

The third-ranking story—suspicions that *contra* supporters and drug traffickers used savings and loan institutions to launder money—was investigated by the Christic Institute in 1989 and reported in the Fall 1990 issue of *Convergence*. Two other stories ranked by Project Censored in the 1990 list of 15 additional "censored" stories were pioneered by the Institute: The Costa Rican murder indictment against *contra* backer John Hull (see page 1 of this issue) and passage of a bill that gave President Bush broader powers to conduct covert operations.

Anyone can nominate a "censored" story for the 1991 list. A copy of the story, including source and date, should be mailed to Carl Jensen, Project Censored, Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park, California 94928. The deadline for nominations is Nov. 1, 1991. □

BIAS

■ Continued from page 7

who were asked to comment on how the war affected their travel plans. Only one leader of a peace organization was quoted in the news broadcasts, out of 878 sources cited. Most often, strong opponents of U.S. actions featured on the networks were Iraqis—"the enemy."

The narrow roster of TV experts fostered a one-sided view of the war. Not surprisingly, polls showed that a large majority of Americans supported Bush's Gulf policy once the fighting began. But when a research team from the communications department of the University of Massachusetts surveyed public opinion and correlated it with knowledge of basic facts about U.S. policy in the region, they drew some sobering conclusions: The more television people watched, the fewer facts they knew; and the less people knew in terms of basic facts, the more likely they were to back the Bush administration.

Throughout the war, journalists fawned over the military's techno-prowess. Censored news accounts hyped the success of U.S. weaponry. Charles Osgood described the bombing of Iraq as "a marvel." His CBS colleague Jim Stewart extolled "two days of almost picture-perfect assaults."

Amidst all the high-tech hoopla, a significant conflict of interest went unnoticed: American news media are sponsored, underwritten and in some cases directly owned by major military contractors. Moreover, the boards of

directors of nearly every major U.S. media corporation include representatives from "defense" contractors, forming a powerful military-industrial media complex which compromises the integrity of American journalism.

NBC, for example, is owned by General Electric, one of America's biggest military contractors. GE, it turns out, designed, manufactured or supplied parts or maintenance for nearly every major weapon system employed by the U.S. during the Gulf war—including the Patriot and Tomahawk Cruise missiles, the Stealth bomber, the B-52 bomber, the AWACS plane and the NAVSTAR spy satellite system. In other words, when correspondents and paid consultants on NBC television praised the performance of U.S. weapons, they were extolling equipment made by GE, the corporation that pays their salary.

Few journalists were impolite enough to mention the Reagan and Bush administrations' role in arming, equipping and financing America's erstwhile ally, Saddam Hussein. Major news media gave short shrift to key stories about cozy U.S.-Iraqi relations before the Gulf crisis, including evidence dug up by Congressional investigators which indicated that American companies, with the approval of the U.S. Commerce Department, had sold bacteria to a major Iraqi military research center working on germ warfare.

"We lie by not telling you things," a Pentagon official confessed to *Newsday*. Honing news management techniques developed during the Grenada and Panama invasions, the U.S. military provided the networks with high-

Continued on page 10 ■

Computer networks for activists

PeaceNet: powerful tool connects progressives in 80 countries

Commercial computer networks like CompuServe and Prodigy link the home or office personal computer with a growing array of information services. With a few simple commands, your computer can reach electronic newspapers, wire services, stock quotations and weather reports. But one of the best-kept secrets of the information age is that the peace and environmental movements now have their own computer networks. Activists throughout the world are using these networks to discuss strategy, share information and debate issues.

One of these progressive networks is PeaceNet. This article will introduce you to PeaceNet and explain how you can connect your computer to electronic networks at very little cost.

By ANDY LANG

The Christic Institute uses PeaceNet and other telecommunication networks to send electronic mail, contact supporters and organize online "conferences" linking together field offices and local chapters with the national staff.

PeaceNet is the largest computer network serving the peace movement in the United States. More than 8,000 activists, local peace centers and national organizations use PeaceNet's growing library of news and information.

Anyone who uses a personal computer at home or the office can get involved. You will need

■ **A modem**—an inexpensive device that allows computers to exchange data over ordinary phone lines. A new modem can cost less than \$80.

■ **A communications program.** Modems usually come equipped with a program that enables you to dial other computers, transfer files and send electronic mail.

■ **A PeaceNet account.** PeaceNet charges an initial fee of \$15, plus a \$10 monthly fee billed either directly to your address or your credit card. An additional fee is charged for the number of minutes you spend on the system. Access to PeaceNet is less expensive during "offpeak" hours in the evening and on weekends.

Hundreds of "conferences" available on PeaceNet will keep you informed on developments censored by the mass media. A "conference" can either be an alternative news service or an electronic discussion in which anyone can

participate. A conference title usually consists of two or three words separated by periods. When you type *christic.news*, for example, the system will connect you to the Christic Institute's news service.

As you continue to explore PeaceNet, you will find serious news and background articles on disarmament, ethnic strife in the USSR, threats to the environment, the Federal budget, social policy, economics and human rights, plus organizing alerts and information needed for action campaigns.

PeaceNet proved its value during the Gulf crisis. Antiwar activists used the network as a clearinghouse for news and bulletins, including detailed reports on the destruction of Iraq's civilian infrastructure and analyses of the war by progressive commentators. PeaceNet helped organize demonstrations, kept activists informed about actions happening in every corner of the country and around the world—including protests and campaigns in European cities.

PeaceNet does not replace more traditional means of communication, including the progressive magazines or newsletters you may already receive in the mail. You should continue to subscribe to *The Nation*, *Z Magazine*, *In These Times* and other alternative periodicals.

But a subscription to PeaceNet does provide the following advantages:

■ **PeaceNet is immediate.** A bulletin or news story posted on PeaceNet is available within seconds. You don't have to wait two or three days to read the information.

■ **PeaceNet is an active medium.** On many conferences you are not simply a passive reader of information: You can respond simply by typing a comment on your computer screen. Many conferences are not only electronic "news services" but provide for reader reaction and response. Other conferences are designed to help users to discuss strategy and plan demonstrations.

■ **PeaceNet connects you with hundreds of organizations and thousands of activists.** You can browse through PeaceNet's catalogue of more than 800 conferences and visit the organizations or news service that interest you the most.

■ **PeaceNet allows you to send and receive "electronic mail."** PeaceNet's electronic mailroom also be used to post messages to fellow PeaceNet subscribers and to electronic addresses on other computer networks around the world. You can also use PeaceNet for telexes, faxes and telegrams. PeaceNet provides a special service to send faxes

'For the information we need to organize, we must turn to PeaceNet. If you don't have a computer and modem, find someone who does.'

Tony Avirgan, Investigative Journalist in Costa Rica

Continued on page 10 ■

BIAS

■ *Continued from page 8*

tech bombing videos that were tailored to avoid images of mutilated victims. With few lapses, the American public was shown an antiseptic, bloodless conflict.

Significant stories which might have created public relations problems for the Pentagon stayed under wraps. Few Americans learned that the U.S. military used a deadly new armament, the fuel-air bomb, which the *Los Angeles Times* had previously described as a "terrorist" weapon when reporting rumors that Iraq possessed such a device. What mustard gas was to World War I and the atomic bomb was to World War II, fuel-air explosives were to the Gulf War. Western European press reports described the horrible aftermath of a U.S. fuel-air attack during the final days of the war, in which oxygen and blood were literally sucked from the lungs of thousands of mutilated Iraqi soldiers.

The use against Iraqi soldiers of white phosphorous—a chemical weapon that burns deep into skin and bone—was also hushed up by the American media, which frequently warned that Iraq might unleash chemical warfare against U.S. soldiers. But actual atrocities inflicted by American fuel-air bombs and chemical attacks merited scant attention in the U.S. press, as it celebrated the victorious outcome of a "just war."

Human rights violations by what TV pundit Morton Kondracke patronizingly referred to as "our Arabs" didn't provoke much alarm in the U.S. press. "It's too bad these countries aren't democratic," Kondracke shrugged, "but in this instance it's a good thing."

A turning point in the crisis occurred in November 1990, when Bush upped the number of U.S. soldiers in the Gulf to nearly half a million, admitting they were there explicitly for offensive purposes. This sparked a flurry of debate among members of Congress who disagreed on tactical matters: how long to let the sanctions work, when to attack, etc. But mass media usually just went through the motions of dissent—providing more pantomime than substance—in effect, legitimizing official opinions while marginalizing critics inclined to challenge basic policy approaches. The air was full of controversies and quibbles, but they centered on how and when—not whether—to go to war.

The U.S. press consistently failed to point out blatant double standards on the part of the Bush Administration, which often invoked international law and United Nations resolutions as justifications for its actions. On Nov. 29 the U.N. Security Council voted to give the U.S. a green light to use military means to expel Iraqi troops from Kuwait. This resolution got enormous media coverage in the United States. But American reporters displayed little interest in a U.N. General Assembly resolution, passed the next day by a vote of 144 to 2, which called for an international peace conference on the Middle East.

So went the media war dances, choreographed with differing styles but equivalent intent: Get with the military program. The savants of Capitol Hill were thin reeds against the dogs of war, mingling with journalistic lapdogs on a short leash along Pennsylvania Avenue. Once Con-

gress voted to go to war on Jan. 12, the range of debate narrowed dramatically. All but a few in Congress opted to close ranks behind the Bush Administration. So did mass media, which reinforced the assumption that the spectrum of reasonable opinion spanned a mere sixteen blocks from the White House to Capitol Hill.

Such a peace conference was said to be one of the face-saving devices that Saddam Hussein sought before withdrawing peacefully from Kuwait. Had President Bush chosen to respect both U.N. resolutions, the Gulf war may well have been avoided and hundreds of thousands of lives saved. But U.S. news media failed to raise this issue in any meaningful way. Not coincidentally, the U.S. government opposed the idea of a peace conference. The selective emphasis of U.N. actions was typical of how U.S. journalists aided and abetted Bush's war plans by stressing certain facts that were favored by the U.S. government while downplaying other facts that the government preferred to ignore.

On the eve of the war, a poll disclosed that 56 percent of Americans supported an international peace conference on the Middle East as a way of avoiding a war with Iraq. This is but one example of how the range of opinion around the country was far wider than the debate presented by U.S. news media.

Analysts often wonder whether mass media shape public opinion or merely reflect it. Coverage of the Gulf crisis showed that U.S. news media primarily reflect the opinions of official Washington, thereby shaping public opinion. The collapse of American journalism, which preceded Iraq's surrender on the battlefield, may prove to be one of most enduring legacies of the Gulf war. □

PEACENET

■ *Continued from page 9*

to Senators and Members of Congress.

■ **PeaceNet is international.** PeaceNet will let you discuss issues and plan strategies with activists in more than 90 countries. PeaceNet is part of a wider family of progressive networks in Nicaragua, Brazil, Australia, the United Kingdom, Canada, Sweden, the Soviet Union and Germany.

Supporters of the Christic Institute can also read news from our investigations and participate in electronic discussions on "Christic DataBank," a computer "bulletin board system" (BBS) in Washington, D.C. The BBS is available from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Eastern time at (202) 529-0140 and accepts calls from 1200 to 9600 bits per second.

Initial access to Christic DataBank is free. All you need is a computer and a modem. For a modest charge you can spend more time on the system and transfer files directly from our computer to yours.

For more information on Christic DataBank, call Andy Lang at the Institute's Washington office, (202) 797-8106. To learn more about PeaceNet, use the form on the enclosed media action insert or write PeaceNet at 18 De Boom Street, San Francisco, California 94107, phone (415) 442-0220. □



Faye Schenkman

Appeals court hears oral argument

Christic Institute asks court to reinstate La Penca lawsuit

On Feb. 25 in a crowded Miami courtroom, a three-judge panel of the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals heard oral argument on *Avirgan v. Hull*, a Federal civil lawsuit alleging the existence of a criminal racketeering enterprise involved in terrorism, arms smuggling, drug trafficking and other serious Federal crimes over a 30-year period.

The Christic Institute, which represents journalists Martha Honey and Tony Avirgan in the case, is asking the appeals court to reinstate *Avirgan* and remove Federal Judge James Lawrence King from the case. King blocked the trial in June 1988 by granting motions for "summary judgment" filed by the defendants. Several months later he ordered the Institute and its clients to pay more than \$1 million in punitive sanctions to the defendants because, he ruled, the lawsuit was "frivolous."

Enforcement of the sanctions order has been halted while the appeals court considers the Institute's appeal.

The Institute wants the appeals court to throw out the sanctions and reinstate "discovery"—the pretrial investigation during which both sides have the power to subpoena

witnesses and evidence. The Institute says Judge King refused to compel several defendants and key witnesses to appear for depositions or produce subpoenaed evidence.

Avirgan v. Hull centers on a May 1984 bombing during a press conference in La Penca, Nicaragua. The Institute charges the bombing was a failed attempt by right-wing *contras* to assassinate moderate *contra* leader Eden Pastora. Three journalists were killed in the attack, including an American reporter. Avirgan was one of a dozen reporters wounded by the bomb.

The case charges that a racketeering enterprise engineered the bombing. The case also charges the same enterprise with a long criminal history, including arms smuggling and drug trafficking through *contra* bases in Central America.

Most of the charges have since been independently confirmed by congressional investigations and criminal prosecutions in the United States and Costa Rica. None of the 29 Avirgan defendants has been jailed, however. One of the principal figures in the alleged enterprise, former C.I.A. contract agent John Hull, is wanted by Costa Rican authorities who have charged him with murder for his role in the La Penca bombing. *See story on page 1.*

King's surprise ruling in favor of the defendants was handed down two days before the trial was scheduled to begin. The ruling did not mention most of the crimes charged by the plaintiffs. Instead, the judge centered on a

Continued on page 12 ■

ORAL

■ Continued from page 11

single issue: the La Penca bombing. According to King, the Institute possessed no "competent evidence" to prove either the identity of the alleged bomber or his relationship with John Hull and other defendants.

During oral argument, plaintiffs' counsel Eugene Scheiman argued:

■ **Judge King ruled on factual issues never disputed by the defendants.** During pretrial proceedings, no defendant challenged the Institute's charge that a professional terrorist, posing as Danish reporter "Per Anker Hansen," detonated the La Penca bomb. King raised this issue of fact for the first time when he threw the case out of court.

Ignoring the rules of the court, King never gave the Institute an opportunity to present evidence on this issue. "Had he done so," says Christic Institute General Counsel Daniel Sheehan, "we could have driven a truckload of evidence to the front door of the courthouse." The evidence available to the Institute at the time included eyewitness testimony describing the bomber's actions, photographs showing the bomber at the scene of the explosion, Costa Rican police reports concluding that "Hansen" had detonated the bomb and videotape footage shot by a Costa Rican news cameraman minutes before he died in the La Penca explosion. The footage shows the bomber leaving the room minutes before the bomb was detonated.

"Most of this evidence was not in the hands of the court because it had nothing to do with the issues raised by the defendants in their motions for summary judgment," says Sheehan. "It would have been presented at the proper time to the jury. But Judge King never allowed a jury to hear this case."

■ **Judge King improperly ruled that evidence on the bomber was "inadmissible."** Although the defendants never disputed the identity or actions of the alleged bomber, some evidence concerning the bomber had coincidentally been submitted by the Institute in connection with other issues before the court. King assembled a part of this evidence as if it were a systematic presentation of the Institute's case on the bombing—it was not—and ruled that all of it was "inadmissible."

"It is true that some of the evidence dismissed by King was not yet in admissible form," says Sheehan. "But King's ruling simply failed to mention other evidence—clearly admissible evidence that was also before the court—that also proved the bomber's identity and his relationship with the enterprise. Moreover, there is no rule that evidence must be submitted in admissible form during pretrial proceedings when parties to a lawsuit are arguing motions for summary judgment."

Opposing attorneys Thomas Hylden and Jack McKay attempted to convince the three judges that the Institute's lawyers had been "dilatatory" during "discovery"—the pretrial investigation period. That argument was the heart of the defendants' attempt to show that *Avirgan v. Hull* was merely a "political" lawsuit never intended to be supported by evidence.

Scheiman told the court that the Institute followed all proper procedures during discovery but was blocked by Judge King's refusal to order the defendants to comply with subpoenas.

Scheiman argued that depositions were scheduled at the appropriate time following submission of interrogatories and document requests. Defendants, on the other hand, consistently obstructed orderly discovery. Answers to written interrogatories were delayed and documents subpoenaed by the plaintiffs were not produced.

"Judge King allowed Hull and the other defendants to ignore subpoenas and ultimately rewarded the defendants' obstruction of discovery by simply granting their motions for summary judgment," Sheehan says.

Citizens can sue racketeers

The charge that *Avirgan v. Hull* was filed for improper political reasons was addressed by Sheehan, who stressed that RICO, the Federal racketeering law used as the basis for the lawsuit, was enacted by Congress expressly to encourage private citizens to prosecute racketeering actions when the Government has not stepped in.

The three-judge panel also asked plaintiffs' counsel to discuss the significance of the first-degree murder indictments that have been lodged by Costa Rican prosecutors against defendants John Hull and Felipe Vidal for their role in the La Penca bombing.

The judges are Bush appointee Judge Stanley Birch, Carter appointee Judge Joseph Hatchett and Nixon appointee Judge Paul Roney.

The court is also considering "friend-of-the-court" briefs filed by churches, religious organizations and public-interest groups to support *Avirgan*. They include: Trial Lawyers for Public Justice, a nationwide association of progressive attorneys; the Alliance for Justice, a coalition of 30 public-interest groups; the Public Citizen Litigation Group, a nonprofit law firm founded by Ralph Nader; ten churches and religious organizations; and three legal scholars.

It is not certain when the appeals court will rule. □

DEVELOPERS

■ Continued from page 15

Amelia White Cemetery. As a result, the cemetery preservation society is recovering lands wrongfully taken from the grave site, and the town, which is purchasing land surrounding the cemetery, has made a commitment to safeguard the area from development.

For more information write to Christic Institute South, 106 West Parrish Street, 3rd floor, Durham, North Carolina 27701. C.I. South publishes an informative newsletter, People's Advocate. Urge 60 Minutes to reair an update of the struggle. Send your comments to Melissa Cornick-Horvyn, Associate Producer, 60 Minutes, 524 West 57th Street, New York, New York 10019. □

HULL

■ Continued from page 2

and *contras*. In that capacity, he aligned himself with *contra* groups—such as Adolfo Calero's Nicaraguan Democratic Force (F.D.N.)—intent on removing Edén Pastora as commander of the rival Democratic Revolutionary Alliance (ARDE). Hull believed that Pastora, who had fought on the side of the Sandinista rebels during the war against Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza, was a leftist who was blocking efforts to bring the *contra* armies together.

The La Penca bomb was detonated while Pastora was meeting with reporters to denounce C.I.A. attempts to force him out of the *contra* war.

After the attack, United States officials said the bombing was probably the work of a Basque terrorist working for the Sandinistas. Pastora blamed the C.I.A.

Journalists Martha Honey and Tony Avirgan, however, discovered that the Basque terrorist was under house arrest in France when the bomb exploded. Instead, they found substantial evidence that Hull, the C.I.A. and a group of right-wing Americans were behind the attempt to kill Pastora. The two journalists also concluded that the bombing was intended to kill reporters at the press conference—both to eliminate witnesses and to give the bomber a chance to escape.

Their findings were published in a 1985 study, *La Penca: Report of an Investigation*.

Hull sued the two reporters for libel in a Costa Rican court. In Costa Rica, libel is a criminal offense and in libel cases the burden of proof is on the defendant accused of publishing false or defamatory information. In a May 1986 trial, Honey and Avirgan were able to prove to the court they had the evidence to support their charges, and Hull's case was dismissed.

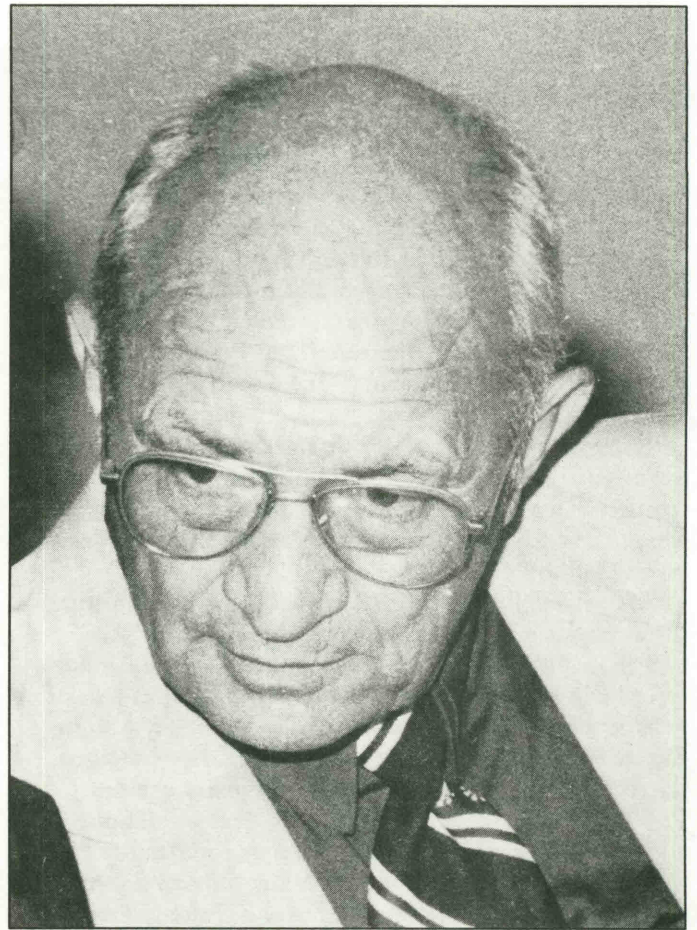
Immediately afterwards, the Christic Institute filed *Avirgan v. Hull* in Miami Federal court. The lawsuit alleged that a racketeering enterprise was smuggling arms and drugs through *contra* bases. Six months later, the Iran-*contra* scandal made headlines in the United States and abroad.

Investigations corroborate charges

Since then, Hull's activities on behalf of the *contras* have exposed him to continuing international scrutiny, though his role in the operation was never fully investigated by the United States Government. But dozens of official inquiries, independent investigations and news reports in the United States and Costa Rica have corroborated charges made by Avirgan, Honey and the Christic Institute.

In January 1989 Costa Rica arrested Hull on charges of drug trafficking and using Costa Rican territory to supply the *contras*. The rancher spent two months in jail under a law that allows the government to detain accused narcotics dealers until their trial, then was released on \$37,000 bail.

In July 1989 Hull skipped bail and fled Costa Rica. Returning to the United States, he claimed he had left the country on his doctor's advice because of a heart condition. Days after his flight, Costa Rica's Special Legislative



Julio Laniez/Tico Times

North American rancher John Hull is wanted by Costa Rica on murder charges. But the Bush Administration may try to protect Hull, who played a key role in the war against Nicaragua.

Commission on Narcotics Trafficking concluded its investigation of *contra* involvement in the drug trade. In its report the commission said Hull had used *contra* supply planes to smuggle narcotics through Costa Rica. Acting on the commission's advice, the Costa Rican Government later banned Oliver North, Robert Owen, Richard Secord, former United States Ambassador Lewis Tambs and former National Security Adviser John Poindexter from Costa Rica for their role in the *contra* guns-for-drugs operation.

Evidence of Hull's drug trafficking also surfaced in a report published in April 1989 by the Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee on terrorism, narcotics and international operations, chaired by Massachusetts Senator John Kerry. The report, titled *Drugs, Law Enforcement and Foreign Policy*, devoted an entire section to Hull's role in the *contra* supply operation and described the testimony of five witnesses who said Hull used his ranch to smuggle drugs and weapons for the rebels.

Costa Rica has charged Hull as a fugitive. In June 1990 the rancher's name was added to the "most-wanted" list circulated by Interpol, the international police organization.

Continued on page 14 ■

HULL

■ *Continued from page 13*

In December 1989 Costa Rica indicted Hull and another *Avirgan* defendant, Cuban-American Felipe Vidal, for murder as architects of the La Penca bombing. The 54-page indictment said that Robert Owen probably knew about the bombing in advance, and recommended indictments for "hostile acts" against Owen and four other *Avirgan* defendants—Americans Tom Posey and Bruce Jones, and Cuban-Americans René Corvo and Moises "Dagoberto" Nuñez.

The indictment also described attempts to undermine the original investigation of the bombing, including the creation of a secret C.I.A. unit known as "the Babies" which bribed Costa Rican officials and fed false leads to investigators.

Since his flight from Costa Rica, Hull has lived primarily at his farm in Indiana. Despite his claims of poor health, he has made at least two trips to Central America.

In early 1990, Hull travelled to El Salvador as part of what he described as a "humanitarian" mission. And in December 1990 Hull turned up in Juigalpa, Nicaragua, the seat of an extreme right-wing movement against President Violeta Chamorro. Within days of his appearance there, Costa Rica asked Nicaragua to extradite Hull, but the farmer had disappeared by the time an arrest warrant was issued. He returned to the United States shortly thereafter.

The Bush Administration may have motives to derail the extradition. A criminal trial of Hull could uncover important evidence on United States backing for an operation that committed terrorist acts and smuggled drugs to support the *contras*.

Critics of the American role in the *contra* war say this makes it all the more unlikely that the Administration—unless pressured—would turn Hull over to the Costa Ricans. They point to earlier criminal investigations of *contras* and their supporters that were undermined by the Reagan-Bush Administration:

■ In May 1986 Jeffrey Feldman, an assistant United States Attorney in Florida, recommended formation of a Grand Jury to investigate the *contra* resupply operation. Within days, Attorney General Edwin Meese was able to block the inquiry and ordered the Feldman memorandum rewritten to reverse the original recommendation.

■ The Kerry subcommittee report described several instances in which Administration officials and national security agencies interfered with criminal investigations of *contra* supporters. The committee also found evidence that Justice Department officials may have interfered with its investigation in order to protect the *contra* network or the Reagan Administration.

■ In the name of "national security," the executive branch has refused to release evidence needed for criminal trials of defendants accused of Iran-*contra* crimes. This posture has forced the dismissal of charges against several prominent Iran-*contra* figures.

■ Costa Rican prosecutors found that the C.I.A. was involved in an elaborate operation to undermine their investigation of the La Penca bombing.

"In order to protect themselves, the Reagan and Bush Administrations have stymied any detailed investigation of the *contra*-drug connection," says Sheehan. "Unless the public demands Hull's extradition, he will be allowed to slip away." □

ACTION

Bring John Hull to justice!

■ **Call or write your Senators and Representatives**, especially those on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the House Foreign Affairs Committee and the Senate and House Judiciary Committees. Ask them to write a letter to Secretary of State Jim Baker demanding prompt action on Hull's case. Any Senator or Member of Congress can be reached through the Capitol Hill switchboard, (202) 224-3121, or at the following addresses:

The Hon. *Name*
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

Senator *Name*
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20515

■ **In addition to your own representatives, please contact all of the following Congressional leaders:**

Tom Foley, speaker of the House of Representatives, (202) 225-5604; Richard Gephardt, House majority leader, (202) 225-0100; Dante Fascell, chair, House Foreign Affairs Committee, (202) 225-5021; Jack Brooks, chair, House Judiciary Committee, (202) 225-3951; George Mitchell, Senate majority leader, (202) 224-5556; Claiborne Pell, chair, Senate Foreign Relations Committee, (202) 224-4651; John Kerry, chair, Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee on narcotics and terrorism, (202) 224-2742; Joe Biden, chair, Senate Judiciary Committee, (202) 224-5042.

■ **Write letters to the editor** with the following theme: If our government is truly fighting international terrorism and drug trafficking, it will work overtime to bring John Hull to justice. If the Administration drags its feet, perhaps it has something to hide. Use the article in this issue of *Convergence* for the facts you need to make this point.

■ **Urge the State Department to act quickly.** Write to Secretary of State James Baker, Department of State, 2201 C Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20520 □

Living in a millionaire's paradise

Developers desecrate black cemetery on Daufuskie Island

Developers have failed to dismiss a lawsuit challenging the desecration of an African American burial ground on Daufuskie Island, S.C. The suit, filed by Christic Institute South on behalf of the island's historic black community, aims to protect the sanctity of the cemetery and the community's ancient burial traditions.

Washington Post writer Lynne Duke describes the dispute between developers and islanders: "Some residents say the divisions are in part racial. Before development, Daufuskie was and had been for generations mostly black. Others say the island's problems are the natural result of the old clashing with the new. Still others say years of neglect by Beaufort County left the island culture ill suited to easily absorb the sudden shock of development that county planners say could push the population from 160 today to 10,000 in three decades."

Christic Institute South Director Lewis Pitts says that destruction of graveyards is one result of the "New Plantation" economy now emerging in the low county area of South Carolina. Exclusive resorts rely on the exploitation of black labor, appropriation of black land, and destruction of black communities and culture. "It used to be indigo, rice or cotton plantations," says Pitts. "Now it's golf, tennis and equestrian plantations."

Filed in September 1990, the Institute's suit charges developers with trespass and desecration of a cemetery. The goal of the suit is to obtain a court order to move the reception building for a private golf club off the cemetery grounds.

While the lawsuit withstood motions for dismissal, Beaufort County Judge Thomas Kemmerlin agreed with developers that pretrial discovery should be limited and ruled that "riparian rights"—rights to the Cooper River adjacent to the cemetery—were out of bounds.

Securing riparian rights is vital to the islanders. Their ancestors, slaves brought to the United States from the Congo and Angola, buried their dead near waterways to help spirits return to their African homelands across the

sea. The plaintiffs charge that the commercial marina constructed across the riverfront constitutes a theft of public lands for private profit.

After Judge Thomas Kemmerlin called the African American traditional burial customs "a bunch of junk" in open court, C.I. South filed papers seeking his removal from the case and a reversal of his earlier actions limiting the scope of the lawsuit. With or without Kemmerlin, the trial is expected to take place next fall.

Since the lawsuit was filed in September, plaintiffs have been subjected to threats and harassment. In October developers attempted to seize control of the Daufuskie Island Community Improvement Club, the group spearheading organizing efforts for the island's historic residents. White landowners who had never before attended meetings packed the meeting house, introduced new bylaws and tried to stage elections for new officers.

In November Pitts and Christic Institute South attorney Gayle Korotkin were refused passage on the only public boat available for travel to Daufuskie Island. The boat is owned by a resort. Korotkin and Pitts were on their way to the November meeting of the Improvement Club.

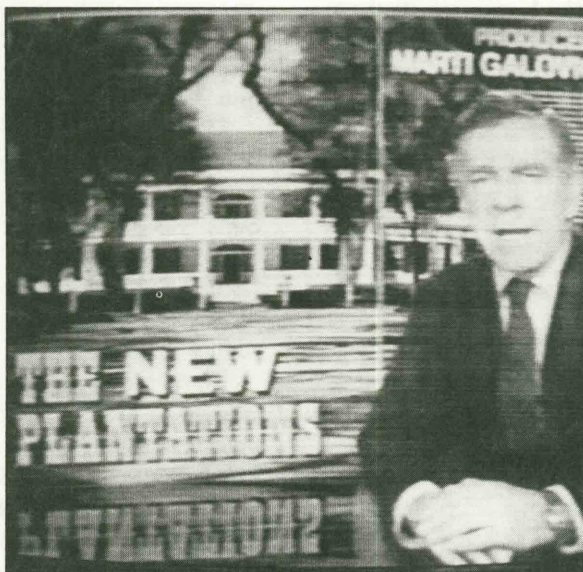
Recently, developers rerouted tour buses away from the areas where native islanders congregate to sell crafts and food. Many islanders, including several of the plaintiffs, survive on income from the sale of deviled crab cakes and other local specialties.

The plight of the islanders has received national attention.

During the last six months, stories have appeared on the front page of the *Washington Post*, in *Newsweek*, on NBC's morning program *Trial Watch* and, most recently, on CBS *60 Minutes*.

Narrated by Morley Safer, the story on *60 Minutes* focused on the exorbitant tax increases due to resort development causing many blacks to lose land that had been in their families for generations. The show also documented the loss of cemeteries due to irregular and, in some cases, illegal land sales.

As word about the Daufuskie struggle has spread, C.I. South has been asked to help protect other black graveyards on the Sea Islands, including Hilton Head Island and North Charleston. To avoid costly and time-consuming litigation, the town of Hilton Head and the Hilton Head Church of God voluntarily initiated discussions with C.I. South and Hilton Head islanders on the centuries-old



The struggle of Daufuskie Islanders was featured by CBS 60 Minutes on Easter Sunday.

Continued on page 12 ■

BUSH

■ Continued from page 4

every hand-held weapon that was asked for. He limited the number of TOW missiles in the initial shipments. . . . Tires were a big item."

The Reagan Administration attempted unsuccessfully to destroy Brenneke's credibility after he testified in a 1988 Federal trial about the Paris meeting. The Justice Department quickly indicted the Oregon businessman on charges of lying to a Federal judge about Paris and about his relationship with the C.I.A. A Federal jury in Portland, however, found Brenneke not guilty of the charge.

One of the Government's witnesses against Brenneke was Donald Gregg, at the time national security adviser to Vice President Bush and, according to Brenneke and other sources, a participant in the Paris meetings. Gregg claimed he spent the October weekend at a Delaware beach and offered as proof a photo of himself and his family wearing bathing suits. But the photo showed the Gregg family on a sunny day. Brenneke's defense lawyer introduced weather records showing that conditions on the Delaware shore that weekend were cold and cloudy.

Did George Bush accompany his future national security adviser to Paris? "At least five of the sources who say they were in Paris in connection with these meetings insist that George Bush was present for at least one meeting," Sick wrote in the *Times*. "Three of the sources say they saw him there." Sick is undecided about this allegation, however.

Brenneke says he did not see Bush in Paris but was told by a friend, pilot Heinrich Rupp, that the Vice Presidential candidate was there. Ari Ben-Menashe, the former Israeli intelligence officer, also claims he saw Bush in Paris that weekend.

If Bush did not travel to Paris it should be a simple matter for the White House to prove where he was on the weekend of Oct. 18 to 19. Bush, then a candidate for Vice President,

was under 24-hour Secret Service guard. Records should be readily available to document his activities every day of the campaign. Bush himself has described the allegations as "grossly untrue, actually incorrect, bald-faced lies" and insists he can "categorically deny any contact with the Iranians or anything having to do with it." But, astonishingly, the White House and its sympathizers in the press have circulated a number of contradictory alibis for the dates Bush allegedly met with the Iranians.

During the Brenneke trial, for example, the prosecution put two Secret Service witnesses on the stand to testify that they were protecting Bush in the United States when the Paris meetings reportedly took place. But under cross-examination the agents said they could not recall seeing Bush at all that weekend, nor could they recall whether or not they were on duty. The Government also failed to produce any records proving the agents were with Bush or that Bush was in the country.

Other conflicting accounts have surfaced:

■ *Frontline* obtained "heavily-censored Secret Service documents" that showed Bush's secret service detail spent the weekend at a suburban country club outside Washington, D.C. The records do not specify who was in the party, however, and do not mention George Bush.

■ On May 8 the right-wing *Washington Times* reported that "Reagan-Bush campaign records, independently confirmed" by the newspaper, proved that Bush spent Sunday, Oct. 19, at home. "The Secret Service says he awoke about 6:30 a.m., had lunch at his Washington home and spent the day there preparing [a] speech. He returned home from the speech about 9 p.m." the *Washington Times* reported.

■ Also on May 8 conservative columnist L. Gordon Crovitz, a member of the *Wall Street Journal* editorial board, wrote in the *Journal* that on Oct. 19 Bush had lunch at the Supreme Court with Justice Potter Stewart and his wife. Stewart is now dead, his wife reportedly suffers from chronic memory loss and no office records or diaries have been produced to support this alibi. □



Christic Institute

1324 North Capitol Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20002

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

NON PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 3573
WASHINGTON, D.C.