The Repression Trade

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL Revised Briefing Paper January 1981



Outside the State Research Centre, Kampala, April 1979

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The SGO

After several years of debate and controversy about AI involvement in the field of military, security and police transfers (MSP), the International Council in 1979 laid down principles, which have been interpreted by the IEC.

As the application of these principles will establish important precedents, each publication, statement or action at this stage is crucial in determining AI policy.

It is within this context we have read The Repression Trade, published by the British section in May 1980, which in our opinion, thematically and stylistically, seems to go beyond the mandate decided by the Council in Leuven in 1979.

We would therefore appreciate to know whether this publication has: been approved by the IS/IEC and hence can be regarded as an official AI publication, positioning AI existent policy in the field.

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THE REPRESSION TRADE

ILLUSTRATIONS

In sequence:-

Outside the State Research Centre (a) Front cover

in Kampala, Uganda, shortly after the fall of the Amin regime.

Arrests in El Salvador and the (b) and (c)

Soviet Union.

French riot police in action. (d)

Barbed or "sabre" tape: (e)

Collage of advertisement material

by a British company.

Scenes at Brokdorf in West Germany (f) and (g)

in November 1976.

Paramilitary forces in action -(h)

location unspecified.

Landrovers in South Africa (i) Back cover

(the advertising slogan was provided by Landrovers for the Aldershot

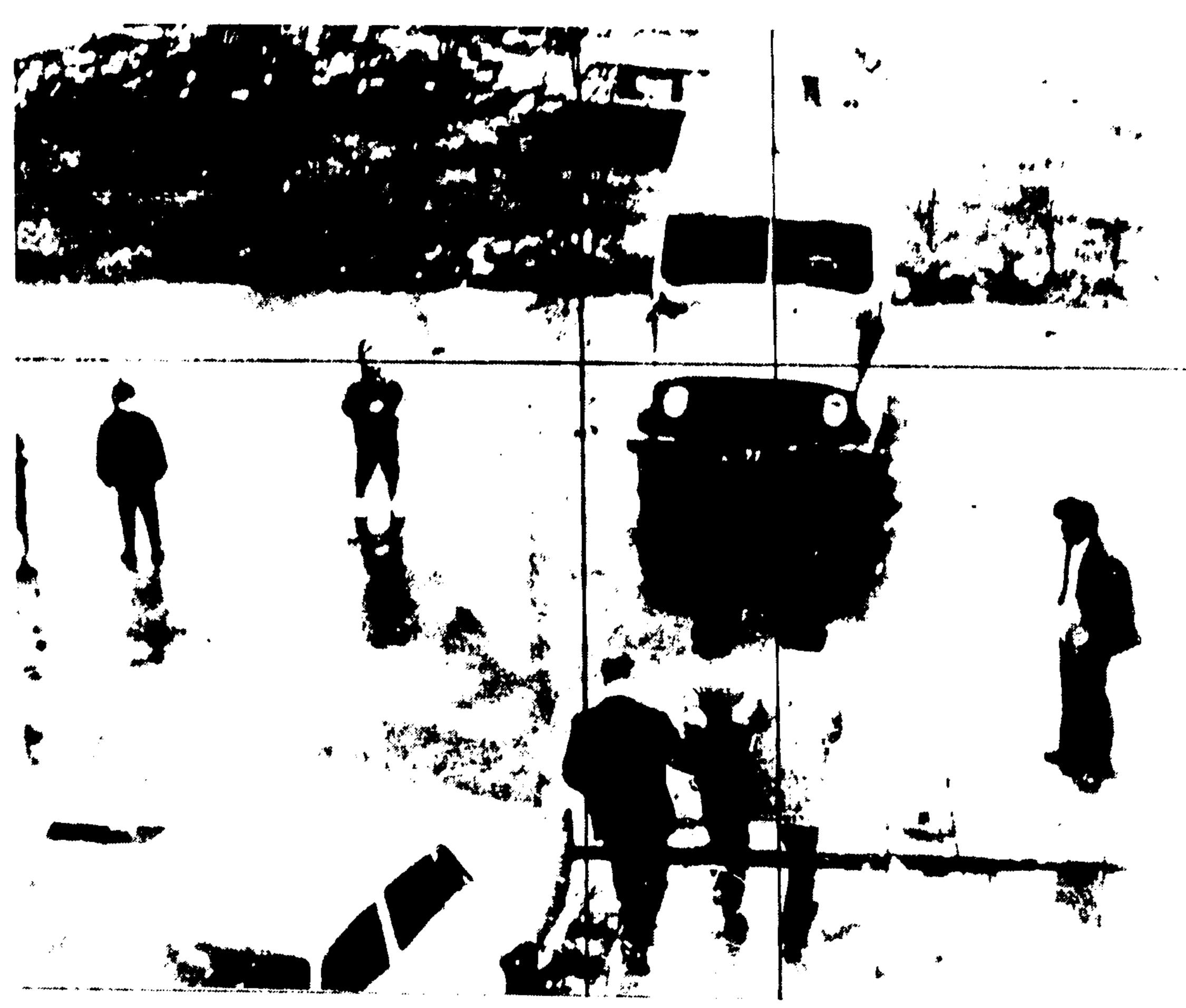
Army Exhibition in 1976).

Photographs at (d), (f) and (g) by Gilnter Zint. Acknowledgments:

Back cover reproduced by kind permission of the International Defense and Aid Fund.

The inclusion of photographs in the document is for Note:

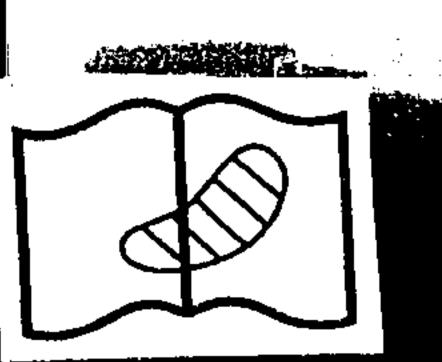
illustrative purposes only.



The arrest of A. Podrabinek in Moscow, April 1977.



El Salvador — armoured car and police with prisoners.



INTRODUCTION

"Dr Edward Kakonge, a British educated lecturer in biochemistry at Makerere University, was at the State Research Centre three days after it was finally taken by Tanzanian and Free Uganda troops. He was present at that sad place to see if he could find the body of his brother who had been arrested two weeks earlier. 'Have you seen the radios?' he asked. 'They are British. How could you have done it?' Several Free Ugandan soldiers there, young men whose fathers were farmers in Northern Uganda where Amin's troops were running amok, asked the same question."

From Ed Harriman's account in New Scientist, 10 May 1979.

"One of the saddest myths that I meet in the course of my work is the belief that there is nothing that the British man in the street can do about human rights violations in Chile. When ordinary men and women care strongly enough about this situation and about our own Government's complicity through the sale of the means of repression then we in Britain will fulfill our obligations to the oppressed in Chile."

Dr Sheila Cassidy, speaking to Amnesty on 6 November 1980.

Just a year ago, on 14 January 1980, the Chairman of the British Section of Amnesty International wrote to the Prime Minister requesting that the Government should undertake a review of the present defective system of licensing control over the export of "repressive technology". Mrs Thatcher refused our proposal. In her reply she referred to the difficulty of identifying equipment supplied by British firms that, although it is not manufactured to military specification, nonetheless is used by the security forces of recipient governments. The Prime Minister also wrote that any widening in the scope of the existing controls would "have significant implications for our trade and our relations with other countries."

Notwithstanding the Prime Minister's refusal to contemplate any change, the present situation is morally intolerable. Through our exports of military and security equipment we in Britain are implicated in the violation of human rights by recipient governments. Our responsibility goes far beyond those relatively few instances where a direct connection can be made between an individual case of torture, imprisonment, killing or disappearance and the export of some particular piece of equipment. To comprehend the true significance of security exports it is necessary to consider the overall contribution that they make to repression.

Repressive regimes need certain tools to gain and retain power. Without them, torture, imprisonment and other violations of human rights would be less likely to occur. All security transfers, whether for the benefit of the military or of the police, strengthen the security forces and contribute to their operational capacity. When - as happens so often - these forces are engaged in repression the consequence of the exports is to increase their capacity to imprison, torture and kill people. This is true whether the assistance from abroad is provided in the form of military technology, arms supply or training. There is nothing new in this observation: it has been made by, amongst others, those American legislators who, four years ago, decided to prohibit all forms of military aid, education, training, credits, sales or export licences "to any country the government of which engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognised human rights."

Given the contemporary development of military and security technology, much of it with internal application, it is hardly surprising that regimes that use repression in order to contain and defeat dissent should look to Britain and to other world leaders in this technology to provide them with what they need. The range of these technologies is a wide one (some sense of just how wide is provided in the Addendum to this Briefing Paper). The consequence is that the suppression of dissent in far distant countries frequently becomes operationally dependent upon sources of supply in the advanced industrial countries. This may happen without even the suppliers knowing what is happening (eg. the reported use of Western computer technology by the KGB). However, in a high proportion of cases the supplying firms do know the purposes for which equipment is being supplied.

Exports of repressive technology may be engaged in primarily for commercial reasons and, indeed, such an explanation commonly is advanced by our own Government as a rationale for the present policy of permitting, and even facilitating, these transactions. Yet, very frequently, the supply of equipment does not take place in a political vacuum. It is promoted through means of a partnership between governments in which the exporting firms provide a dynamic element, constantly trying to promote the sale of their equipment and exploiting the political links that exist between countries to their own benefit. One common result of these transactions is to make national policy makers in supplying countries highly sensitive to the security requipments of regimes that feel themselves to be threatened and that demand the re-supply of security technology in order to maintain control.

The consequences can be frightful. Thus the supply by the United States government in November 1979 of training and material for crowd control to the government in El Salvador was followed by scores of deaths when demonstrations were dispersed. In the conditions prevailing in El Salvador the supply of aid for the police and public order operations of the El Salvadorean military could be expected to lead to further violations of human rights. Indeed, several thousand people have been killed in El Salvador over the past year, as the result of these military operations combined with the activities of the officially sanctioned ORDEN death squads.

Other examples of the supply of the means of repression are not hard to come by: some are cited in this Briefing Paper. Thus, Britain supplied the Shah of I ran with equipment specifically designed for internal repression, and did so even in the final unstable stage of his rule; the Saudi Arabian secret police is equipped with computers supplied by a British firm; and the South African police are assisted in the administration of the iniquitous pass laws by British computer technology.

There is a good deal of evidence that the supply of military technology — whether by Britain or by the USA, the USSR, France or other international arms suppliers — encourages the militarisation of the political system in Third World countries. This process of militarisation helps to create a political atmosphere that is insensitive to internationally recognised human rights.

The supply of military and security equipment to a government that is using or that is preparing to use repression against some part of its own population represents a deliberate intervention in the internal politics of that country, on the side of the repressive government against those that it conceives to be its enemies.

The point about the responsibilities that are acquired was made by President Julius Nyerere a few years ago:

"For the selling of arms is something a country does only when it wants to support and strengthen the regime or the group to whom the sale is made. Whatever restrictions or limits are placed on that sale, the sale of any arms is a declaration of support - an implied alliance of a kind. You can trade with people you dislike; you can have diplomatic relations with governments you disapprove of; you can sit in conference with those nations whose policies you abhor. But you do not sell arms without saying, in effect: in the light of the receiving country's known policies, friends and enemies, we anticipate that, in the last resort, we will be on their side in the case of conflict. We shall want them to defeat their enemies."

It would be naive to assume that those governments that promote repressive technology exports are ignorant of the political implications of what they do. Thus Lord Carrington explicitly defended the decision to ban arms sales to the government of Grenada (of which he disapproves) on the grounds cited by President Nyerere. Speaking in Barbados in August last year, he made this point crystal clear:

"... our policy is to sell arms to our friends and those whom we wish to encourage to defend themselves."

Coincidentally, Lord Carrington and his Cabinet colleagues had decided, only the previous month, to resume the sale of arms to the Chilean government, one which they presumably regarded as a "friend". This controversial decision may have been welcomed by those who shared Ministers' favourable assessment of the Chilean junta, and certainly was denounced by those who disliked President Pinochet's government on broad political grounds. However, the human rights argument is of

quite a different character. It is founded neither on liking for, nor aversion to, a particular regime or ideology. Rather, it is directed against our collusion in repression. The question of whether or not a particular government, that is the recipient of British military and security exports, is engaged in repression is one that is susceptible to inquiry and to objective tests. By such tests the Chilean government stands condemmed. It is for this reason that the Cabinet's decision was so shocking.

The fundamental moral issue was well expressed by Cardinal Basil Hume in the letter that he wrote on 7th August to the Honorable Nicholas Ridley, who is the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister with responsibility for Latin America.

" ... I feel it is important for us in Britain to understand that, whatever may be the benefits of trade between our two countries, we should not close our eyes to the repression which so many Chileans are now suffering. In view of the deterioration in the situation of human rights in Chile I must seriously question the wisdom of lifting the embargo on arms sales imposed by the British Government in 1974 ... I understand that in July 1980 alone, over 1,000 people have been arrested and detained for varying periods of time. The security forces have assumed new draconian powers and the period of incommunicado arrest has been extended from five to twenty days. I am also told that prolonged and sophisticated methods of torture have been introduced once again and that several persons have been killed. This is most distressing. It is important surely, that political and economic decisions should always be taken and judged within the wider context of social morality. I question whether this has been the case with regard to the renewal of arms sales to Chile."

The decision to resume arms sales to Chile was a bitterly controversial one, largely because of the regime's record of human rights violations. The Government must have known that its decision would be challenged on human rights grounds, and yet it neglected to provide Parliament and the press with information that was at its disposal and that was highly relevant to this public controversy, concerning the torture by the junta's secret police of the Anglo-Chilean student, Claire Frances Wilson. When Amnesty International, having learned that Miss Wilson had been tortured, made this fact known to the media in early September, Mr Ridley failed to provide an adequate explanation for what the Foreign and Commonwealth Office had neglected to do in July. It would seem that the soliciting of contracts for military and security equipment was deemed to be incompatible with the energetic and open pursuance of human rights concerns with the Chilean junta.

This episode gives further point to the observation by President Nyerere that is cited above. To supply arms entails friendship. Such friendships may be compromised, or made to seem shameful, if too much embarrassing publicity is given to human rights abuses. Fortunately, once the facts were known, the British media did recognise the human rights significance of the Claire Wilson case, and as a result the prevalence of torture in Chile was widely publicised. However, the decision to sell arms to the regime has not been reversed; and the British official arms salesmen who travelled to Chile a fortnight after Claire Wilson had been tortured are soon to be succeeded by a full-time Second Secretary Commercial, who is

to specialise in "Defence Sales", in the British Embassy in Santiago.

As is brought out in this Briefing Paper, much of the dynamic of Britain's exports of military and security equipment derives from the operations of the Defence Sales Organisation, which has its headquarters in the Ministry of Defence, and arms salesmen "in the field", operating in British embassies throughout the world. The attitude of these official arms salesmen to the human rights implications of their work may be gauged from the reported remark of their chief, who is the head of Defence Sales. On 30 August 1977 Sir Ronald Ellis told the Daily Express: "I have no scruples about selling to any country with which the Government says I can deal ... I lose no sleep whatever on the moral issue. The morality lies with the user." More recently, the Minister who is responsible for arms sales, Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal, himself has emphasised the primacy of the commercial as against the moral factor in decision making.

"'We have an instinctive feeling that we would wish to sell unless there was a compelling reason not to. I think the Labour Government had an instinctive feeling that we should not sell unless there was a compelling reason.' Had Britain, in the past, lost lucrative arms contracts because she took a more high-minded attitude than some other countries such as France? 'We did lose out to France because we took a more moral point of view,' he said. 'But we think we are less venal than the French. But now,' he said, 'I hope we give the French more of a run for their money.'"

Financial Weekly, 14 March 1980

Military and security exports are big business and many jobs are involved. As we in Amnesty and some Church leaders have found to our cost, even the mildest questioning of the human rights implications of the trade can produce an intolerant response. Thus an editorial in the Birmingham Evening Mail on 24th June last year.

"The Church is on a delicate tightrope when it seeks to impose restrictions on anything. Freedom of worship exists by courtesy of society. It is arguable how far the Church, while enjoying freedom and privilege without restriction, may argue in favour of the imposition of controls."

Amnesty International recognises that there is a genuine dilemma and that many jobs are dependent upon military and security exports. However, the prime responsibility for this state of affairs rests with decision makers, whether in Government or in business, and not with blue and white collar workers who may be compelled to choose between unemployment or continuing with work that has harmful consequences. An authentic trade union response to this dilemma was expressed in a resolution, that received the support of many National Executive delegates, that was adopted by the Amnesty labour movement conference on 21 September 1980.

"This Conference deplores the cynicism and inhumanity of recent Ministerial decisions concerning the sale of arms to Third World countries, and specifically to the Pinochet dictatorship, and condemns a Government industrial policy that compels so many British working people to choose between unemployment and participation in the repression trade ... "

Unhappily, the argument still rests on a slender basis of fact. The Government declines to reveal what is being sold to which governments, with the result that it is usually impossible for the workers themselves, or for the general public, to enumerate those jobs that actually are at risk.

It is indeed no easy business to discover the human rights implications of military and security exports. The difficulty in tracing connections between human rights violations and such exports is vastly increased by the secretiveness with which both the Government and some of the firms habitually conduct themselves. Reasons both of commercial advantage and national security are advanced in order to justify this secrecy.

The uncertainties and ambiguities that surround the export of repressive technology are compounded by the existence of a large category of what is called "grey area" equipment: material that has both "civilian" and "military" applications. As the revelations that followed upon the fall of the Amin regime have shown, such equipment may be highly useful to security forces that engage in systematic repression. Yet the Government declines even to consider extending the existing licensing control system into this area and, in any case, refuses to discuss individual sales even when these are subject to licensing control. As this briefing document makes clear, some defence salesmen are ready enough to exploit these confusions. The controls that do exist suffer discredit and humane intentions are set at nought.

Attempts at inquiry are circumvented. Thus, in the House of Lords on 1st May 1980, Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal refused to provide Lord Avebury with a list of the foreign governments that had been invited by the Ministry of Defence to send representatives to the British Army Equipment Exhibition at Aldershot. Lord Strathcona justified this refusal by referring to a criterion that is frequently mentioned: "deference to the wishes of many potential customers". When, in June, Amnesty International and a number of leading Churchmen asked the Secretary of State for Defence, Mr Francis Pym, for this information, he also refused, although he did say that there might be a more open attitude some time in the future. Amnesty's request for information was endorsed by no fewer than 158 Members of Parliament and editorially endorsed by The Guardian and The Observer. This too seems to have made no impression. As for Amnesty's request to Mr Ridley for identification of the particular items of military and security equipment that are to be sold to the Chilean junta, this has gone unanswered.

In these circumstances, we in the British Section of Amnesty International have come to realise that an essential aim of our campaign must be to promote the goal of freedom of information in the sphere of arms sales to foreign governments. We do not think that we shall stand alone. Freedom of information is a goal that is shared by many people, and not least by Members of Parliament whose rights as representatives of the public are curtailed by an unreasonable official secrecy. The "right to know" has become a vital necessity if the public conscience in this country is to be alerted to the significance for human rights of transactions that are officially sanctioned and promoted by our own Government.

This is why we welcome the initiative that is now being taken by a number of Members of Parliament to once again raise with the Government the question of what exactly is being supplied by British firms to the Chilean security forces. If public opinion is to have any impact, whether on sales to the Chilean or to other repressive governments, the Government will have to make the relevant information available. Even as it is, with inquiry so frustrated, it is all too clear that Britain is deeply implicated in some of the most horrific episodes of our time.

Cosmas Desmond
Director.

AMNESTY CONCERNS

In the present phase of the British Section's campaign there are seven of these.

- 1. That the Government prohibit the sale of militarycum-police equipment to regimes in circumstances
 where this will enhance their capacity to engage
 in repression, and, also, that British firms should
 refrain from such sales.
- That the Government should extend the existing licensing system to cover licences to manufacture, the export of information, and exports via third countries.
- 3. That the Government should extend the licensing system to cover sales of equipment in the "grey area", ie. items that have both civilian and military applications.
- 4. That the Government should include within the scope of the existing licensing control system certain countries that, for historical reasons, are at present partially excluded from its operation (South Africa is a notable beneficiary of this exemption).
- 5. That the Government, and exporting companies, should refrain from providing training for police and military personnel from countries that engage in systematic violations of human rights. Furthermore, that the Government and companies should refrain from the provision of on-the-spot assistance to repressive regimes on matters that are to do with the specific practices and agencies of repression.
- 6. That the Government should make available to Parliament full information about sales, training, and technical and operational assistance so that MPs and the public may make their own informed judgments.
- 7. That the Government should refrain from promoting sales of military-cum-police equipment to repressive regimes through, for instance, the medium of the biennial British Army Equipment Exhibition.

January 1981

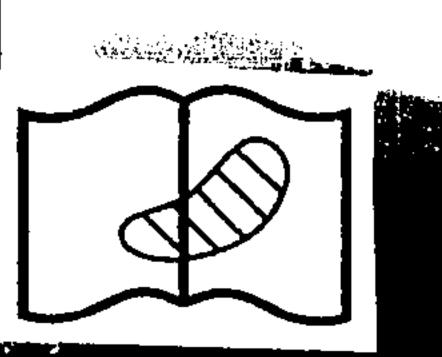
The process of investigation into the international repression trade, as it is called, cannot be reduced to an exercise in seeking connections between individual exports and individual violations of human rights. Consequently, any serious analysis must come to terms with the key processes that are at work. This briefing paper is intended to provide a modest contribution to the effort of enlightenment that is being made by a number of individuals and organisations in this complex and morally charged terrain. It draws attention to some of the lines of responsibility and indicates the repressive potential of certain transfers of equipment and of associated operational assistance and training programmes. However, it should not be assumed that any part of the analysis, or the accompanying illustrations, imply some specific commitment by Amnesty International, whether to challenge this or that particular transaction or category of export, or to take up a position about some particular situation of repression or confrontation in which exported equipment is being used. We cannot prejudge situations in this way, let alone propose a precisely delimited schedule of prohibited exports.

This is the second, revised, edition of the Briefing Paper that was first issued by the British Section of Amnesty International in May 1980.

The numbered Sections (1-8) and the Addendum have not been revised. There is a new Introduction as well as Appendices (A on the foreign governments invited to the Aldershot Exhibition in 1978; B on Amnesty's campaign in the summer of 1980; C consists of the text of a relevant resolution of the General Synod of the Church of England).

Dick Barbor-Might
Convenor
Repressive Technology Working
Party
January 1981.





- 1. THE PRIME MINISTER SAYS NO
- 1.1 In July 1979, the British Section of Ammesty International wrote to Government Ministers suggesting that they should undertake a review of the system for licensing the export of military equipment. The decision to make this approach was based on two considerations. First, the Amnesty movement was then involved in an internal debate on the human rights implications of such exports: the conclusion reached was that the organisation should challenge those exports, whether made by Britain or by other countries, that contribute to the violation of human rights within AI's mandate. Secondly, in May and June 1979 journalists revealed that a number of British companies, notably Pye Telecommunications Ltd., had supplied Amin's secret police in Uganda with telecommunications and other equipment that improved their operational capacity.
- 1.2 The "State Research Centre" was the principal recipient of these British exports. Together with other Ugandan organisations that were engaged in systematic repression, the SRC killed between 100,000 and 500,000 people in the eight years of Amin's rule. Many of these killings were conducted in a brutal and protracted fashion. At the time when the bulk of the equipment was being suppli ed, international public opinion was already alerted to the nature of Amin's rule. The British exporting firms could not have been in ignorance either of the nature of the regime or, specifically, of the role of the State Research Centre (to which the equipment was sold and consigned) in conducting this repression. Nonetheless, the official licensing system that was then in operation, purportedly to control overseas military sales, was so loosely designed and administered that it failed totally to prevent these transactions from taking place. For their part, the companies tended to argue that anything was permissible that was not expressly forbidden and that the moral questions should be left to the British government.
- 1.3 During the latter part of Amin's rule, it was suspected that repressive technology was being sold to Uganda, and on two occasions (one in 1976 and one in 1977), there was a parliament-ary challenge by MPs such as David Steel, Greville Janner and Max Madden. However, if much was suspected, little was known for certain. The firms persisted in their competitive sales efforts, although Amin's regime was often in default of payment, and despite even the fact that one salesman, Mr Scanlon, was hammered to death by State Research Centre agents, apparently on account of deficiencies in the supply of equipment by his Leicester-based company. On the government side, British Ministers simply relayed the assurances of civil servants to those few MPs who expressed anxiety about what they feared was going on.

1.4 When Ammesty International wrote to Ministers in July 1979 the revelations about what had been found in the State Research Centre Headquarters in Kampala were still fresh in people's minds. There was no longer any doubt concerning Britain's share in the responsibility for the repression in Uganda. There seemed to be an irrefutable case for reforming a licensing system that had so manifestly failed to prevent Pye and the other firms from selling their equipment to the State Research Centre. Hopeful of reform, Amnesty drew the attention of Ministers to loopholes in the system, on the assumption that they would wish to close them at the first opportunity. Ammesty also pointed out that certain items of equipment were being supplied to South Africa that, while not formally in breach of the arms embargo, nonetheless materially assisted in the most vicious aspects of the apartheid policy (notably in the supply by ICL of computers for police purposes).

- The replies that Amnesty received from Ministers in the three departments concerned (Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Department of Trade and Ministry of Defence) were uniformly unhelpful. They indicated that the Government saw no reason to change the existing licensing system, partly on the ground that they could not assume responsibility for, or monitor, the 'end use' of equipment that has both military and civilian applications.
- In January 1980, Amnesty International once again wrote to the Government - this time in the form of an open letter to the Prime Minister from the British Section Chairman, Professor Jacques Berthoud. Jacques Berthoud reiterated Amnesty's concerns: "We challenge what seems to be the readiness of Ministers to permit the export of sensitive equipment to the security agencies of governments that, while they pose no threat to us in this country, destroy the rights of their own citizens. Commercial considerations should not be allowed to inhibit a full appreciation of the moral and human consequences of such indifference or inertia". In her reply, Mrs Thatcher resisted Amnesty's conclusions about the human rights implications of the trade in repressive technology, and ignored the proposal that there should be a review of the existing system. She stated her view that any widening in "the scope of the existing controls would present us with very considerable practical difficulties and have significant implications for our trade and our relations with other countries".
- 1.7 Following this refusal, the British Section of Amnesty International has started to examine more closely the commercial trade in repression and to try and understand the reasons why the British Government should actively promote these exports.

2. THE REPRESSION TRADE

That the Government loes promote the trade in armaments is not in dispute. That it loes so without overmuch concern about the consequences for human rights is also, sadly, not in doubt. The explanation for the vigorous promotion of arms sales lies partly in the existence of a relatively large industrial capacity for armaments production that cannot be fully absorbed by the requirements of the UK armed forces. Both Labour and Conservative administrations have strongly supported the efforts that have been made over the years to find markets overseas, and have been prepared to discount concerns about both human rights and the level of world armaments in the attempt to secure a lange share of the world market. Since 1966, when a Labour administration set up the Defence Sales Organisation as an integral part of the Ministry of Defence, with the mission to promote these sales, Britain has become one of the world's four largest arms exporting countries.* In the course of a House of Commons debate on 25 January 1966 Mr Denis Healey (the then Secretary of State for Defence) made an authoritative statement of what was to be official policy.

"This is an international market which is worth about £1000m a year, and British industry has the same right to a share of that market as the industry of any other country...While the Government attaches the highest importance to making progress in the field of arms control and disarmament, we must also take what practical steps we can to ensure that this country does not fail to secure its rightful share of this valuable commercial market."

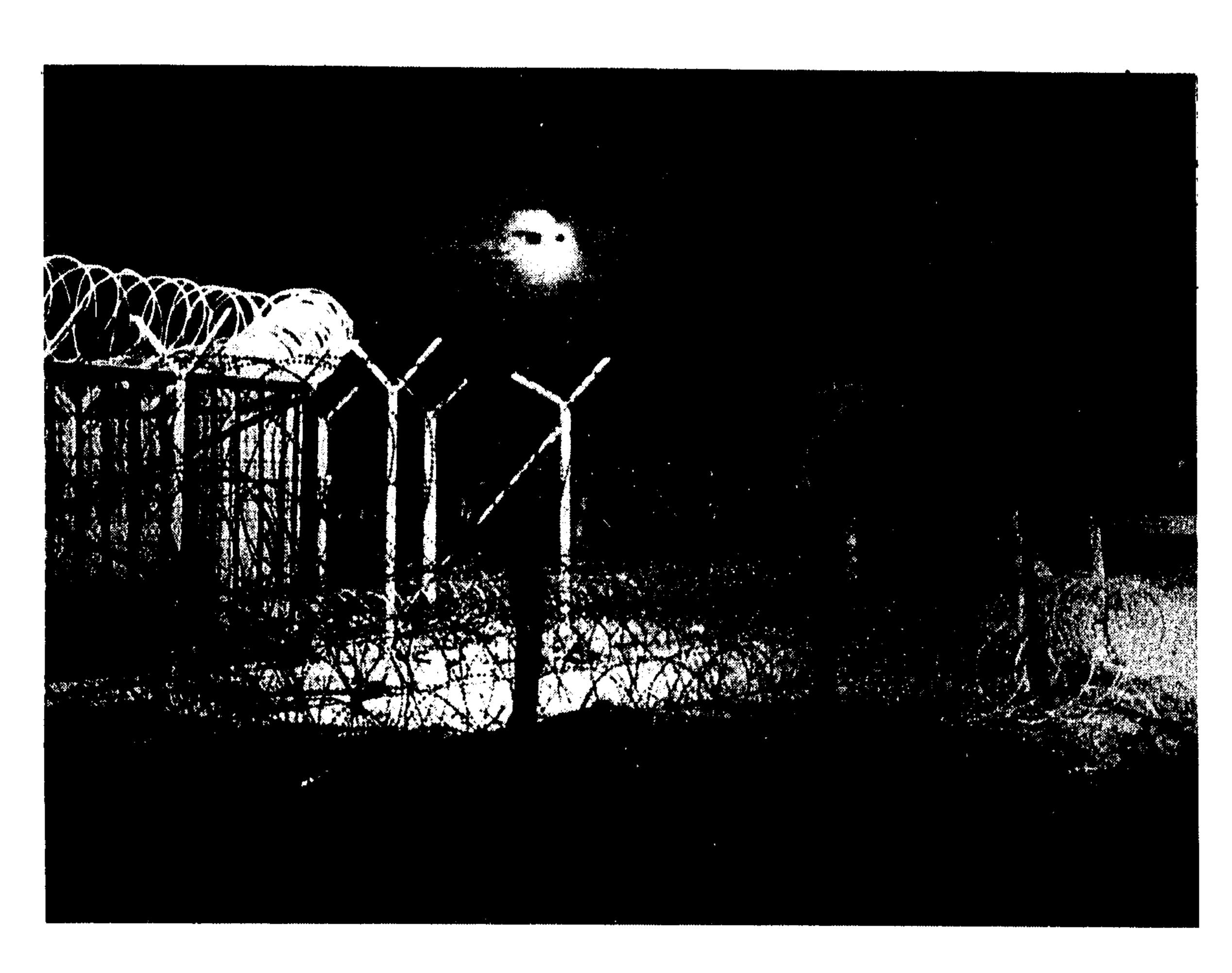
Fourteen years later this policy remains in force.

- Although the high level of Britain's arms exports is primarily due to economic considerations, other factors are also at work. Both exporting and importing countries are involved in global and regional arms races. However, the demand for armaments is also generated by conflicts that are internal to societies. "There are more riots and upheavals than ever before, and thus we are doing more and more business every year."+ Many governments, especially in Third World countries, maintain a capacity for internal war even in quiet times. They rely upon the armed forces and the police to guarantee a stability that is the
 - * The other three are the USA, the USSR and France. Other countries, such as West Germany, are also now coming to the fore.
 - to Telephone interview with the President of the American Jonas Aircraft and Arms Company, cited by Michael Klare in Social Control in the Developing Areas (monograph, 1979)

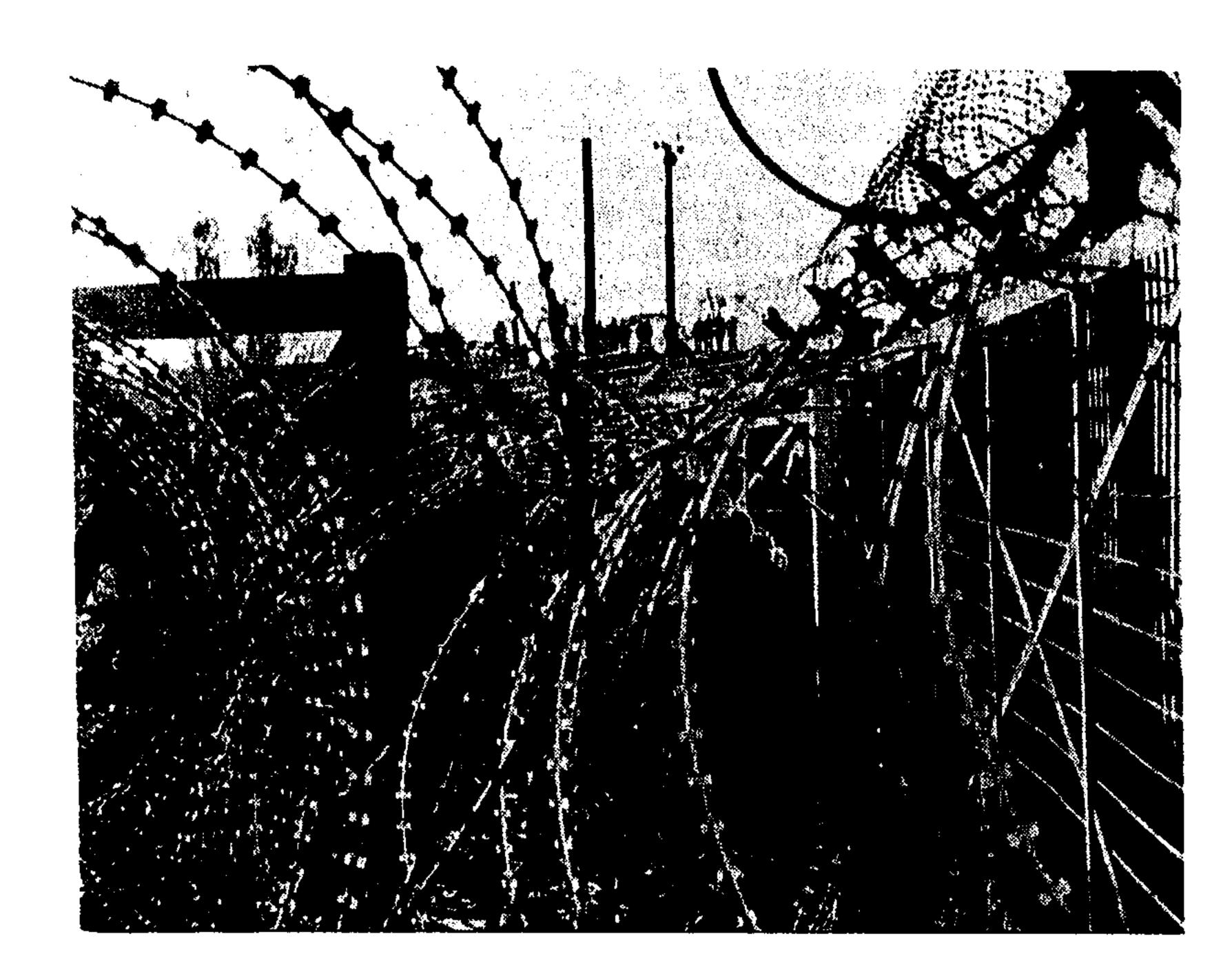
product of intimidation and the deterrence of opposition. In order to secure stability authoritarian regimes are driven to create a security apparatus that profoundly alienates the population, or sectors of the population, and that needs to be sustained by increasing expenditure upon armaments.

3. THE TOOLS OF REPRESSION

- 3.1 To avoid losing control regimes feel bound to use overwhelming force against even peaceful demonstrations, fearing lest these escalate out of control. Resistance becomes clandestine and a vicious circle of kidnappings, terrorism and armed struggle ensues in which torture becomes a standard device of the security forces, designed to intimidate and deter opposition as much as to extract information. The lack of legitimate channels for protest contributes to the escalating process of terror. In some instances regimes extend their counter- insurgency activities to neighbouring countries, as Iran did to Oman under the Shah, Indonesia to East Timor, Brazil to the "southern cone" countries in Latin America, and South Africa to Namibia. As events in Nicaragua and Iran have demonstrated, the stability that is so desparately sought may prove to be fragile and is liable to be destroyed by popular uprisings that few have predicted. Nonetheless, the regimes tend to secure significant international support, in many cases doing so on the grounds that they guarantee policies highly favourable to foreign trading and investment interests, that permit the massive repatriation of profits to the "home countries" of business corporations.
- The militarised regimes that have emerged in the Third World require both conventional military supplies and specialised equipment for anti-dissident operations. Over the years this "arsenal of repression" has become ever more sophisticated, lethal and extensive, with regimes making their selection from the technological systems that are available to them (at a price) from the arms exporting countries. (To an increasing degree area denial, riot control and surveillance technologies that are developed and manufactured in the arms exporting countries are being deployed "at home" (see the section on TECHNOLOGIES below)).
- 3.3 Equipped with these armouries military regimes are enabled to seek "technological solutions" to situations that they cannot, and dare not, resolve by more normal political means. A sinister and incoherent statement that Idi Amin made to his security chiefs in February 1978 gives some sense of the fascination of "technological solutions" for dictatorships (in this instance the equipment in question is a security-printed national identity card system for the entire Ugandan



Brokdorf, Federal Republic of Germany, November 1976. Photographs by: Günter Zint



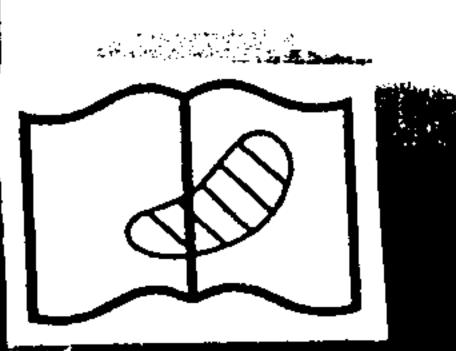
population, supplied by a Swiss entrepreneur, at a cost of \$7million).

"Gentlemen, I am soon going to introduce a new chapter about the movement of all people...for the time being there is a new system which is under a process in the Government-printer (sic) once it is ready I will show it to the entire population...It should be good to mount a National general check up within all the borders of Uganda to check each and everybody seriously in order to trap all these elements. Arrangements are already under way...People will be required to produce tax tickets of at least 4 or 5 years back. Then we shall get them."

The British expatriate Robert Astles and the "SSS Amin squad" were to take part in this scheme.

4. CONNECTIONS

- Through the promotion and sale of repressive technology overseas the British Government, and British firms, become deeply involved in situations of repression abroad. Some of the transactions may well have no more than commercial motivations and the suppliers may not know, or perhaps not very much care, what their exports entail for the victims of the security forces to which the equipment is consigned. Reported remarks by representatives both of the Defence Sales Organisation and some of the companies reveal how little thought is given to the human rights consequences of the repression trade. Thus, the then head of Defence Sales, Mr Ronald Ellis, was reported in the Daily Express on 30 August 1977 as saying: "I have no scruples about selling to any country with which the Government says I can deal... I lose no sleep whatever on the moral issue. The morality lies with the user." More recently, a Pye Telecommunications executive, commenting upon his company's sales to the Amin regime, observed: "Take Bokassa in the Central African Empire, or the guy in Zaire, or Ghadaffi, I wouldn't say they are great shakes...if you start looking at them...then I'd do it with all of them. Not just Uganda. Pye, of course, sells to most." Of course, firms do not welcome adverse publicity and they are presumably sensitive to the prospect of public revulsion at their sales strategies. The director of one firm that supplied security equipment to Amin showed in his comment to New Scientist that he was aware of this dimension: "When we started getting press reports coming through - about the killings it was a difficult situation. We had to play it closer to the chest." *
- 4.2 Such statements fail to hide a disagreeable truth. The supply of equipment to repressive regimes cannot properly be seen as being purely commercial, politically neutral, transactions. British firms and the Government itself by means of its vigorous promotion of these categories of exports become involved by proxy in the
 - * Ed Harriman, article in New Scientist, May 1979.



violation of human rights abroad, an effect that is enhanced by the programmes for police and military training that are sponsored by official agencies and companies alike, and further stimulated by the on-the-spot assistance that is frequently given to other governments in the development of their own facilities. All this activity requires intensive co-operation between governments and firms. In Britain the Defence Sales Organisation is closely linked with commercial organisations such as Racal, International Military Services Ltd (IMS) and a host of other enterprises. Much of what is sold abroad is transferred through the agency of officially sponsored programmes in which technical and operational support and training is provided alongside the actual equipment. The firms themselves become involved in helping to define the requirements of their clients, and thus become intimately involved in the situations with which the technologies are designed to cope.

"A sales brochure of Lucas Defence Systems Ltd. described the services by saying that, 'We can offer not only hardware but a total systems design and management capability.' The Plessey Radar Division has set up an organisation at Addlestone, near Weybridge, to provide 'Procurement Packages' as a service to governmental organisations concerned with equipping military, police or other types of security force. The organisation offers to solve the often complex problems of defining its requirements, financing the project, surveying the available and relevant equipment and handling the varied and complicated transactions with suppliers. On the government side a publicity leaflet of the DSO offers to help '... the customer to identify his requirements, operationally as well as technically.'"*

- 4.3 Often enough the supply of costly high technology military equipment (e.g. air defence systems) is associated with the provision of security technology. The commercial and political affinities that are developed in the course of provisioning conventional military forces serve also to facilitate contracts for security purposes. Thus it is no accident that it is a British firm that has provided the Saudi Arabian secret police (the General Intelligence Department) with a computer network between their 27 branch offices this in a country that has absorbed a high proportion of Britain's conventional overseas military sales. This computer system will contain files on potentially a million people, will include "surveillance lists" and "black lists", and will assist agents of the General Intelligence Department in taking appropriate "executive action". At the time of signing, Project S (as the Saudi deal was called) was the British computer industry's largest ever contract.+
 - * Frank Gregory, Arms sales involve more than the trade in weapons, AIDU Report (Science Policy Unit, University of Sussex), March 1980.
 - + Duncan Campbell, article in New Statesman, May 1979.

4.4 More often than not the supply of equipment does not take place in a political vacuum but through the medium of a partnership between governments in which the exporting firms provide a dynamic element, constantly trying to promote the sale of their equipment and exploiting the political links that exist between countries to their own benefit. One common result of these transactions is to make national policy makers in supplying countries highly sensitive to the security requirements of regimes that feel themselves to be threatened, perhaps by popular uprisings, and that demand the re-supply of security technology in order to maintain control. In the view of Amnesty International those who export security equipment to regimes with a pattern of rising repression must bear a heavy share of the responsibility for what follows.

4.5 The Shah's regime in Iran provides a good example of this connection. As Robin Cook put the matter in a New Statesman article: "The internal function of the military is betrayed by their lavish purchase of surveillance equipment.... As one British executive crowed: 'surveillance is one of the hig growth areas in Iran!". Thus the export of repressive technology, especially when this takes place through programmes of military/ police collaboration, entails responsibilities for the extreme forms of coercion that are then employed. In some cases it would seem that the supplying governments fully intend that the exported equipment should be used in repression. In other words, the supply of repressive technology represents a deliberate intervention in the internal politics of the country, on the side of the repressive government and against those that it conceives to be its enemies. The point about the responsibilities that are acquired was made, succinctly, by President Julius Nyerere a few years ago.

"For the selling of arms is something a country does only when it wants to support and strengthen the regime or the group to whom the sale is made. Whatever restrictions or limits are placed on that sale, the sale of any arms is a declaration of support - an implied alliance of a kind. You can trade with people you dislike; you can have diplomatic relations with governments you disapprove of; you can sit in conference with those nations whose policies you abhor. But you do not sell arms without saying, in effect: in the light of the receiving country's known policies, friends and enemies, we anticipate that, in the last resort, we will be on their side in the case of conflict. We shall want them to defeat their enemies."

5. TECHNOLOGIES

- 5.1 The equipment that is used to suppress dissident sectors of a population includes not only conventional military weaponry but also a spectrum of technologies that range from surveillance devices to counter-insurgency gear. A disturbing development in recent years has been that much of this equipment is held in common between the police forces of industrial societies such as our own and the police and military agencies of repressive Third World countries. Quite what this portends for industrial societies is still only imperfectly understood. However, it is known that the "arsenal of repression" that is in use in militarised societies often includes items that also feature in the police armouries of countries such as Britain and West Germany and that are intended for deployment "at home" at times of "civil disturbance" (for instance, in protests outside nuclear power stations - see some of the illustrations contained in this document).
- 5.2 The conflict in Northern Ireland has helped to make Britain a world leader in the field of "police technology". British firms have developed a whole series of innovations in internal security equipment, as it is called, that have helped to bring about changes in domestic police methods e.g., the extensive use by the police of computers and of surveillance technology. These innovations have also facilitated British exports to the Third World. Britain is not alone in the field. Thus American arms sales to Third World police forces have included apart from weaponry that is designed to kill and mutilate people supplies of CN and CS gas grenades, canisters of MACE and riot control guns. This "less lethal technology" enables a repressive government to make graduated increases in the application of violence.
 - "This escalation often proceeds in stages, as isolated incidents of resistance give way to organised opposition and government forces respond with intensified surveillance and harassment of the civilian population thereby producing still more dissidents and thence justifying still greater levels of repression."*
- 5.3 Through the process of supply and re-supply the governments and firms that provision repressive governments enter into the calculations that are being made to try and contain enraged populations at an "acceptable" level of violence.+
 - * Klare, op cit
 - + Consider, for instance, the British supplies that were made to the Shah's government of items of riot control technology towards the end of 1978.

It is doubtful whether these "less lethal" technologies are particularly humane. For, not only do they tend to trigger off intense anger amongst their victims - and thus stimulate further and even more violent exchanges - but they are also far from harmless. Frightful injuries can be caused; on occasion, people have even been killed. The medical dangers of, for instance, CN, CS, and CR gases are so serious that the mildest of these was condemned for use by the League of Nations in 1925 and Basle police, who employed CS gas outside the Gösgen nuclear power plant in July 1977, had felt constrained to warn their men of this and other gases: "If we use them we must bear in mind that those affected may be fatally poisoned." Most of the impact missiles that are used in riot control are liable to cause serious injury and even death.

"Hard evidence of the type of hazard associated with rubber bullets, for example, came to light in 1972, when four surgeons working at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Belfast produced a report on information they had gathered about 90 patients who had sought hospital treatment after being hit by rubber bullets. It showed that 41 of them needed in-patient treatment. Their injuries included three fractured skulls, 32 fractures of facial bones (nose, jaw, cheek, etc.), 8 ruptured eye globes (all resulting in blindness). 3 cases of severe brain damage, 7 cases of lung injury and one case each of damage to liver, spleen and intestine. Overall roll-call included one death (more since), 2 people blinded in both eyes, 5 with severe loss of vision in one eye, and 4 with severe disfigurement of the face. Rubber bullets are not meant to be fired at distances of less than 25 metres, but the surgeons found that half of those brought into hospital had been shot at less than 15 metres and one-third at less than 5 metres."*

- lethal" weapons is the drastic increase in surveillance activities by state organisations that is apparent in societies like our own, as well as in police states. Computers have a complex and all embracing function. They play an increasingly important part in policing and military control. It is now normal practice for police communications to be integrated through a computer in a central control room: it monitors both vehicle and personal movement and can create the most effective web on control. Such systems are known as computerised "communications, command and control" (C3 for short). C3 systems can give security agencies detailed
 - * Steve Wright, New police technologies, Journal of Police Research, No.4, Vol.XV, 1978.

background information about an individual in a matter of minutes. It is significant that a modern police operations room is becoming almost indistinguishable from its military counterpart. Even in countries such as Britain, where it is possible to vigorously defend civil liberties, these developments are causing some serious alarm. In countries that suffer under military and other forms of dictatorial rule the use by the police of computer facilities and of modern telecommunication equipment is of proven danger to human rights. In Latin America there is evidence that the secret police - especially in Chile, Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay use computer facilities in order to maintain information exchange upon and surveillance of individuals who are of interest to one or other of the agencies. This capacity to maintain an almost Orwellian surveillance depends upon a technological capacity that is supplied by American computer firms. The results of placing these facilities in the hands of secret policemen of such proven ferocity are dreadful to contemplate.

In South Africa the British company ICL has been moving into the market in a major way. Amongst its customers have been the Department of Bantu Affairs and the South African police. Before one recent purchase of an ICL computer the South African police are reported to have said that they required it for the administration of the pass laws. ICL itself has referred to the establishment of "inquiry terminals" at frontier posts. The managing director of ICL (South Africa) is reported as having said: "Our computers are quite extensively used by Bantu boards in administrative jobs.... we also have a computer which stores information about the skills of Blacks." The Johannesburg Financial Mail described the system: "Computers flashing out reference numbers; photocopies relayed by telephone; perhaps even instant transmission of finger prints - all to keep track of members of the population. Sounds like George Orwell's 1984, doesn't it? Well, it's South Africa's way of modernising its pass and influx control systems." As matters stand at the moment these exports are all perfectly legal, even though ICL has taken up these contracts largely because its American rivals have been prevented from doing so by stringent legislation under the terms of United Nations sanctions. Both the British Government and the company seem to be well content with this situation.

BARBED TAPE: APPLICATIONS



Barbed tape system

Barbed tape is a ribbon of high tensile strength steel, zinc plated for maximum corrosion resistance and durability. Razor sharp barbs which are closely spaced along both sides of the tape provide snag, catch, and cutting characteristics far superior to that of standard barbed wire. Extensive tests by both government and industry have shown that barbed tape is more practical than barbed wire and is superior in deployment and storage.

Barbed tape concertina

Barbed tape concertina is formed from flat, razor sharp, steel barbed tape which is permanently cold-clenched to a hardened spring steel wire. Adjacent coils of the concertina are joined by steel clips to form a continuous barrier.

Light and compact, the standard roll of barbed tape concertina measures 1m in diameter, and weighs only 13-4kg. Two handles at each end of the roll make it easy for one man to handle.



- 5.7 It would seem that, notwithstanding the existence of NATO controls (known as the COCOM system), computers manufactured by Western firms may have been used for the purpose of surveillance in the Soviet Union. According to the British computer journalist, Roland Perry, computers are being utilised to record details of the mail delivered to suspected dissidents and in the recording of telephone calls. However, it does need to be recognised that manufacturers experience considerable difficulty in determining that particular computers are actually being used by repressive agencies (this will be particularly the case when computers are handed on from an "innocent" to a "repressive" user and when the user takes over the entire maintenance from the manufacturer).*
- 5.8 This section of the briefing paper is not intended to be comprehensive and the references to applications of repressive technology merely illustrate the theme. Considerable difficulties are encountered, and not only by Ammesty International, in assessing the implications for human rights of specific technological developments. It is clear that in many cases, for instance computer applications, there is uncertainty about potentials for repression as well as a general lack of information about specific exports. Thus, while there is concern in civil liberties circles about the use of police computers even in Britain, it is not at all easy to elucidate the human rights implications. Even for countries where there are gross violations of human rights, information concerning computer applications for repressive purposes is hard to come by, if sometimes highly suggestive.+
 - * However, the involvement of some computer manufacturers, as also of firms providing "software" and "liveware", in the customer's actual use of the machines can mean that suppliers get to know about the "end use" of their equipment.
 - + "Refugees from other Latin-American police states also tell of the use of computer printouts during interrogations to cross-check data provided by detainees. According to these exiles, dossiers are shared among the police forces of Argentina, Chile, Uruguay and Brazil.

The most detailed report of the use of computer-generated information during a police interrogation comes from a clergyman. He entered Uruguay and was picked up by the police there for questioning. During the ordeal the police tried to get him to talk about a Catholic priest they were investigating.

A THE "GREY AREA"

6.1 Computers are not the only items of equipment in what is sometimes called the "grey area", i.e., materiel that is capable of both "civil" and "military" applications. Vehicles, for instance, may be supplied supposedly for civilian use and then, with or without modification, be utilised by police and military forces. Where South Africa is concerned the export controls that have been instituted under the terms of United Nations sanctions have stimulated the practice of "evasion by re-classification." Thus, for a time at least, the American government classified as "noncombat" a whole series of exports to South Africa of transport, communications and surveillance equipment that greatly enhanced the operational capacity of the security forces. Very similar processes are at work in Britain. Anthony Sampson, the author of The Arms Bazaar, cites a British defence salesman on the evasion of the embargo.

"We were able to sell them some helicopters because they were half-French: and they're the deadliest machines against natives. When the South Africans came through with an order for patrol boats we told them to redraft the order to make it look as if they're for civilian use: ('surely you must have some black fishing boats that need protecting?')"

- 6.2 The UN resolutions do not prohibit the manufacture of arms inside South Africa by the local subsidiaries of transnational corporations. Moreover, they leave it to governments to define what constitutes "arms and military equipment." Some countries, notably the United Kingdom and the Federal Republic of Germany, use narrow definitions. Thus, by various means (notably narrow definitions of what constitute "arms and military equipment" and the re-classification of equipment intended for the military as being for "civilian use") firms are enabled to avoid the full effect of existing licensing control systems, as they exist in Britain and elsewhere. The Amin regime
 - + When detained for questioning the clergyman was presented with a computer printout describing the details of the career of his colleague. On the printout were all the addresses at which the sought-after priest had lived, his salary at each point in his career, his telephone numbers and his realtions with other Catholics in Uruguay.

The interrogated clergyman said that the most incredible thing about the questioning was that, as far as he could tell, the man the police sought had never been in Uruguay.

This printout, a church spokesman claims, could not have been stolen from the personnel files of the Catholic church, it must have come from some police computer system. "Police in Latin America, he said, keep close tabs on many priests."

(Would you sell a computer to Hitler, by L. Nadel, H. Weiner, Computer Decisions, nd)





in Uganda also benefited in its time from ambiguities over the supply by British firms of "grey area" equipment, especially of vehicles and telecommunications. Thus landrovers and Bedford trucks were exported to Uganda: although they were destined for the military authorities they were not classified as military equipment. Not being so classified the vehicles were exempted from the export licensing system. Whether consciously or not, civil servants and politicians on occasion divert public inquiry by suggesting legitimate uses for dubious exports, even if the explanations sometimes strain credibility. (Mr. Callaghan, for instance, when he was Prime Minister, suggested that communications equipment that was going to the Amin regime was intended to spot television licence dodgers).

7 DUAL PURPOSES

- 7.1 Confusions in understanding can arise as the result of the dual purpose of many military forces. Thus, given that the raison d'etre of armed forces, generally speaking, lies in external defence (and external aggression) it may be objected that equipment and training that is supplied to them from abroad raises no issues for those who seek to protect the human rights of domestic populations. However, in the contemporary world a great deal of military activity in a number of countries is directed towards the population, or towards sectors of the population that are classified by the government as dissident. In a number of countries counter-insurgency programmes conducted by regular military forces, and by specially created security agencies, have helped to bring about situations in which there is massive violation of human rights.
- 7.2 In some cases other governments have intervened in these situations, the interventions ranging from the provision of "hardware", training, operational assistance and the posting of "advisers", all the way to full-scale military involvement amounting in some cases to occupation (witness what is now happening in Afghanistan and, in an earlier generation, happened in the Dominican Republic and Vietnam).
- 7.3 Thus, the distinction between armed forces that perform "external" duties and police forces that have "internal" functions frequently become blurred and may disappear altogether when a regime becomes committed to full-scale repression. When this happens the supply even of conventional military equipment to the armed forces of regimes may come to be regarded as deeply objectionable purely in human rights terms and this quite apart from wider concerns about the effects on development in Third World countries of the diversion of scarce resources to expenditure on armanents. A strictly contemporary example is provided by the efforts that currently are being made by a number of Roman Catholic bishops in this country to help bring about a ban on American arms sales to El Salvador.

7.4 In a South African context the dual purpose of the military forces is especially clear, as is brought out by Anthony Sampson in The Arms Bazaar.

"...as South Africa continued on its collision course, with black states and guerrilla movements emerging all round it, the distinctions between military and civil equipment, or between external and internal defence, became all the more impossible. As the black townships turned to rebellion, policing was indistinguishable from military defence. When in June 1976 black children began rioting in the slum-city of Soweto outside Johannesburg... it was the French Alouette helicopters that were used to drop tear-gas on the crowds. In the use of electronics the line between civil and military was always blurred, and the arms salesmen blurred it further. In 1975 the South Africans ordered a computer-controlled communications network called the Tropospheric Scatter System from the British Marconi company, worth \$20 million, which was typical of the "grey area" between military and civilian equipment. It was not capable in itself of killing anyone; but was indispensable to computer-controlled warfare and the electronic battlefield. In any advanced police state, sophisticated communications were now in. separable from means of repression."

THE RIGHT TO KNOW

- 8.1 Some of the burdens of an arms sales policy become evident when alliances are reversed and arms exporting countries find themselves in diplomatic or military confrontation with an erstwhile client. A strictly contemporary example is provided by Iran, the armed forces of which were extensively equipped by Britain and the United States in the time of the Shah. Other adverse consequences have been extensively commented upon over the years notably the propensity of wars in Third World countries, the diversion of scarce resources from development and social needs to military expenditure, and the dangers for the exporting country of reliance upon a trade that is at once so morally dubious and so prone to upsets (e.g., the abrupt cancellation by the Iranians early last year of immense arms contracts).
- 8.2 These upsets do not seem to have dissuaded the present Government from pursuing arms sales. Their policy may be gauged from the reported remarks of the Minister of State in the Ministry of Defence, Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.

C. Military, Economic and Cultural Relations

26. The International Council

recalling International Council 1978 decision 9 concerning military, security and police transfers and the principle that AI abstains from drawing political conclusions and from proposing sanctions against those governments who are guilty of human rights violations,

considering that well-planned dissemination of AI's information to everyone and the prudent use of military, economic and cultural relations in the form of asking individuals and institutions in this field to raise human rights issues within AI's mandate with particular governments or other relevant human rights violators can be a potentially effective method for AI to work against and prevent human rights violations,

RESOLVES that the IS and national sections should provide in a more systematic way to those bodies or individuals responsible for or influential in respect of military, economic or cultural relations - national and international, governmental and private - AI information on human rights violations in the countries to which the transfers are directed;

RESOLVES that the timing, targetting and substance of AI's approaches to such bodies or individuals should be such as to ensure the maximum effect for the realization of AI's object;

RESOLVES that in its approaches to such bodies or individuals AI should inform them of its statutory concerns and objectives and make clear that AI does not draw political conclusions from its information;

RESOLVES that such approaches could include the seeking of changes in legislation and regulations that would prohibit military, security and police transfers to governments when these transfers can reasonably be assumed to be used by recipient governments for violations of human rights within AI's mandate. These actions should be subject to the prior approval of the IEC;

RESOLVES that the information provided to these bodies or individuals should be external and that all such contacts should be of an open and public nature, and could be publicized in the media if appropriate;

REQUESTS that existing internal AI information on military, economic and cultural relations should be made available to the national sections which should exchange experience as to the diversity and effectiveness of work in the field of military, economic and cultural relations;

CLARIFIES that AI takes no stand on the legitimacy of the economic relations as such between, on the one hand, governments, financial institutions, corporations and aid agencies and, on the other hand, countries that violate human rights;

CLARIFIES that actions on military, security or police transfers should be undertaken only when these transfers have been or are known to be used by recipient governments for systematic violations of human rights within AI's mandate. National sections should refer to the IEC all cases of such proposed actions. The IEC as a matter of priority is instructed to develop guidelines for the implementation of this entire decision in consultation with the national sections;

DECIDES that the IEC will report extensively to the ICM 1980 on the activities concerning military, economic and cultural relations to enable a serious evaluation and further decision—making.

(Formerly Resolution B82)

IV. ORGANIZATION

A. General

27. The International Council

recognizing the need for Amnesty International to publish only well-researched and carefully checked information,

recognizing furthermore the necessity for the movement to act with "one voice" and avoid giving inconsistent information to the public,

RESOLVES again that no country report or similar publication resulting from research by a national section should be published by that national section or group before prior approval has been sought from the IEC, provided that, where approval has not been formally refused within a period of time to be agreed upon by the IEC, publication need not be delayed.

(Formerly Resolution C231)

"'We have an instinctive feeling that we would wish to sell unless there was a compelling reason not to. I think the Labour Government had an instinctive feeling that we should not sell unless there was a compelling reason.'

Had Britain, in the past, lost lucrative arms contracts because she took a more high-minded attitude than some other countries such as France? 'We did lose out to France because we took a more moral point of view,' he said.

'But we think we are less venal than the French.' But now, he said: 'I hope we give the French more of a run for their money.'"

What this attitude may portend for human rights is hard to judge since Ministers do refer to human rights considerations when questioned in Parliament about the sale of arms. It is possible that the Government is applying stringent human rights criteria at the same time as it is vigorously pursuing new orders. However, it has refused even to contemplate a review of the existing licensing system (that permits so many objectionable exports to take place) and Ministers refuse, also, to provide relevant information to M Ps who want to find out whether Britain is implicated in human rights violations through the export of security equipment. This reluctance to provide information is nothing new. In this Parliament, as in earlier ones, members of both Houses have expressed disquiet at the effects on human rights of exports of security equipment to repressive regimes. However, inquiries have been frustrated by the refusal of successive governments to provide adequate information. It has been remarked that much less information is available to British legislators than to their American counterparts, and that Parliament is excluded from any important role in decisions concerning the sale of arms and of associated equipment to foreign governments. MPs have received the following answers to Parliamentary Questions on arms sales:

"Details of arms sales by country are not made available in the overseas trade statistics." (Hansard, 21 June 1977)

"Companies in the UK are under no obligation to publish

* Financial Weekly, 14 March 1980

information on their sales to the South African government or police. There are no powers available to compel them to do so." " (Hansard, 30 January 1978).

- Exports of repressive technology to Uganda in the period of Amin's rule continued to take place although the Government assured MPs that no "arms or ammunition" were being despatched. These assurances did not relate to the continuing export to the State Research Centre and to others of Amin's security forces, of telecommunications equipment and vehicles. Not only was this material supplied but, also, nothing was done to stop the periodic visits to Britain of the Head of the Technical Services Division of the SRC, Haroun Adam, and other agents of this most brutal of security agencies. The principal purpose of these visits was to undergo training from the exporting firm at a location in Buckinghamshire. Nor was anything effective done to control the transport of sensitive equipment through the weekly flights from Stanstead to Entebbe. Had there been any serious effort by the authorities it would have come to light that the American arms dealer, Mr. Frank Terpil, was exporting arms to Uganda. However, as we have seen, even such a prestigious British company as Pye Telecommunications Limited was prepared, knowingly, to sell telecommunications equipment to the SRC. The company, through its spokesmen, has asserted that its own sense of responsibility is related entirely to that which the British Government permits, or that it does not expressly forbid. The denial of responsibility by firms and the Government's denial of knowledge only too readily combine to block any prospect that might exist for preventing the use of British manufactured equipment for inhuman purposes.
- 8.5. Mr. Terpil, an "unfavourably discharged" agent of the CIA, and his colleague Mr. Korkala, found Britain to be a favourable place for their operations.

"Investigators assembling the case against two men arrested as 'major international gun-runners' have established that many of their activities were centred in Britain because British laws regulating arms sales could be bent more easily than American regulations. In particular, the end user certificates, the official documents needed to export arms, allegedly could be obtained and doctored more easily in Britain, even when a bogus final destination for the weapons was involved.... in (both Britain and the United States) Terpil and Korkala had high level contacts with people in the defence industries and the Services."*

8.6 Not only does the Government refuse to agree to a review of the licensing system, it also refuses to say how the system is applied.

"The Department of Trade... denied that its controls on the export of arms were lax but declined to give any details of the procedures. A spokesman said: 'We are satisfied that our procedures for dealing with applications for arms export licenses are sufficiently strict.' It would be 'counter-productive' to describe how the controls were applied, and what checks were made."*

8.7 Ministers in the present Government have refused to be drawn into providing the sort of information that would help MPs to judge what is meant by the contrasting statements of Lord Strathcona in the House of Lords.

"We would not export arms to a country which is guilty of torture." (10 March 1980).

"The question of establishing the existence of torture is inevitably a very difficult and emotional one... I dare say that under some definitions there are practically no countries in the world which do not resort to what people would regard as torture... this is not a black and white issue....Because we choose to do a trade in arms with a country, it does not necessarily mean that we are placing a seal of political approval upon the complexion of the Government in that particular country." (23 April).

The questions that were put to the Minister by the Bishop of Guildford and by Lord Avebury during the House of Lords debate on 10 March are pertinent ones.

"...Will (the Minister) not agree that these issues ought to be the subject of widespread public debate because they concern the standing of our particular country in the world? Furthermore, will the Minister agree that such debate can be conducted only if there is widespread information about the kind of arms that are being sold and to what extent?"

* Daily Telegraph article, op cit

^{*} Report in the Daily Telegraph, 2 January 1980.

- "...Does the noble Lord not consider that if people are debarred from obtaining even the slightest bit of information about the destination of arms sales, there will be widespread suspicion by the public that the criteria which the noble Lord mentions are not being properly observed and that we are selling arms to regimes which inflict torture and violence on their citizens?"
- 8.8 The Government's refusal to tell Parliament which governments have been invited to attend the forthcoming arms fair at Aldershot is of a piece with the general attitude of secrecy in this area. Commercial confidentiality is preferred to public knowledge. Debate upon the human rights consequences of the arms trade is under informed as a direct result of the frustration of legitimate inquiry. Members of Parliament, and the British public, apparently are regarded as unsuited to be trusted with information that is available to the companies that exhibit at the arms fair (there are several hundred of these) and to the representatives of the perhaps eighty countries that will be at Aldershot between 24 and 27 June.

NOTE: A schedule of repressive technology transfers that has been proposed by a leading American researcher, Mr. Michael Klare, is appended as an Addendum to this document. Appendices A and B respectively list the companies that are exhibiting at Aldershot and the governments the representatives of which attended the last biennial exhibition in 1978.

Schedule of Repressive Technology suggested by Michael Klare in Social Control in the Developing Areas - the International Repression Trade.

Hardware:

- --Detection and surveillance gear, including eavesdropping equipment, telephone bugging devices, night-vision scopes, and other systems for spying on suspected dissidents and recording their statements and behaviour;
- --Data-processing equipment, including computerised file systems, fingerprint processing equipment, automated data transmitting systems, and other devices permitting instantaneous access to information on suspected dissidents, their friends, associates and relatives;
- --Torture and restraining devices, including electronic shock devices, truncheons, thumbscrews, trauma-producing drugs, shackles, and other devices for intimidating, torturing or otherwise incapacitating known or potential dissidents;
- --Riot-control equipment, including anti-riot gases (CN, Chloracetophenone, or "tear gas"; and CA, orthochlorobenzal-malononitrile, or "pepper gas"), chemical "MACE" (an incapacitating agent produced by Smith and Wesson), riot batons and clubs, shotguns, riot shields and helmets, water cannon, and other equipment designed to break up and disperse large formations of people;
- --Police and paramilitary gear, including pistols and revolvers, rifles and submachine guns, patrol cars and jeeps, armoured cars, communication gear, and other equipment used in police and paramilitary operations;
- --Counterinsurgency gear, including small arms and grenades, jeeps and helicopters, light combat planes armed with napalm and antipersonnel munitions, infra-red detection systems, and other hardware for locating, tracking, and destroying guerrilla forces in urban and rural areas.
- --Battlefield equipment including tanks, artillery and combat aircraft in use by the regular military forces when these are employed to force rioters off the streets, or to crush an incipient insurrection (note: such material may be used in full-scale civil war, in a threatening mode to deter potential insurgents, or to carry out a seizure of power possibly followed by the repression of dissidents using less potent weaponry).

Software:

Training and indoctrination play a critical role in political warfare, and accordingly form an important part of the repression trade. Such "software", normally provided by friendly governments through military and police assistance programmes, can include the following:

--Training in the use of arms and equipment described above, and in the techniques of intelligence-gathering;

--Advisory support, in the form of police and military advisers who collaborate with local security officials in the planning, organisation, and execution of anti-dissident and counterinsurgency campaigns;

--Technical support, in the form of military missions, technical assistance field teams, and other units which provide logistical support, maintenance and upkeep of sophisticated hardware, engineering services, etc.;

--Sociological and psychological research to identify the "symptoms" of incipient revolt and to develop a repertoire of short-term and long-term remedies;

--Covert intervention by foreign intelligence operatives to discredit or immobilise potential opposition groups and to create alternative repressive forces.

These activities are obviously much harder to detect and catalogue than arms delivery programmes, but probably play an equal or greater role in the transfer of repression capabilities to Third World governments. It is obvious, for instance, that specialised training provided to foreign police and intelligence officials will have significant effects long after those officers return to their own country.

Countries the representatives of which attended the British Army Equipment Exhibition at Aldershot in 1978*.

Malawi

Abu Dhabi Gabon Gambia Algeria Argentina Ghana Australia Greece Austria Guyana Honduras Bahamas Bahrain India Bangladesh Indonesia Belgium Bolivia -Ireland Botswana Braz11 Israel Italy Brunei Ivory Coast Burma Cameroon Jamaica Canada Japan China Jordan Colombia Kenya Denmark Kuwait Egypt Lebanon Finland Libya France Luxembourg

Malaysia Ma1ta Mexico Morocco Nepal Netherlands New Zealand Nigeria Norway Oman Pakistan Panama Papua New Guinea Philippines | Portuga1 Qatar Saudi Arabia Senega1 Sierra Leone Singapore Spain

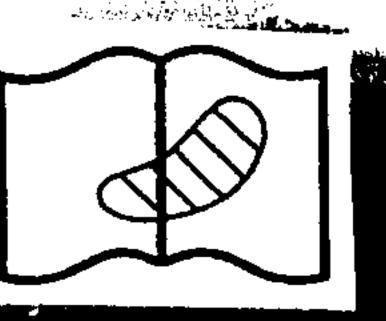
Swaziland Sweden Switzerland Tanzania Thailand Trinidad Tunisia Turkey United Arab Emirates United States Uruguay Venezuela West Germany Western European Yemen Arab Repub. Yugoslavia Zaire Zambia

Sri Lanka

Sudan

*Information supplied by the Campaign Against the Arms Trade.





NARRATIVE ACCOUNT OF THE SUMMER 1980 CAMPAIGN

On 10 June 1980, the Director of the British Section of Ammesty International, Mr. Cosmas Desmond, wrote to the Secretary of State for Defence, Mr. Francis Pym, asking him to publish the list of foreign governments that the Ministry of Defence had invited to attend the British Army Equipment Exhibition at Aldershot. Amnesty's concern derived from the knowledge that, at the previous such Exhibition (that had been held in 1978) altogether 27 governments had been in attendance in respect of which the organisation had received serious allegations of torture in the two intervening years. *These governments were:

Iran	Spain
Iraq	Sri Lanka
Korea (Republic of)	Sudan
Libya	Syria
Malaysia	Tunisia
Mexico	Turkey
Pakistan	Uruguay
Philippines	Venezuela
Singapore	Zaire
	Iraq Korea (Republic of) Libya Malaysia Mexico Pakistan Philippines

(see Appendix A for the complete list of governments that were invited to the 1978 Aldershot Exhibition).

The Director's letter was followed up by a further letter on the same theme, despatched to the Secretary of State on 23 June (see Appendix B/3). This letter was signed by some forty Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops, by leading Free Churchmen and Quakers, and by a number of other Christian ministers and priests; it was also signed by a number of academics and people prominent in the worlds of politics, the arts, medicine and law. In Birmingham and Scotland, there were similar initiatives.

* NOTES:

- (1) The reporting relates to the whole two-year period; in the case of some countries, changes in regime during the two-year period have led to improvements.
- (2) A distinction is made between "torture" and "other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment". Article 1 of the United Nations Declaration on the protection of all persons from being subjected to torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment clarifies what is meant by torture. ...

"For the purpose of this Declaration, torture means any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is inflicted by or at the instigation of a public official on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or confession, punishing him for an act he has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating him or other persons. It does not include pain or suffering arising only from, inherent in or incidental to, lawful sanctions to the extent consistent with the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners".

NOTES:
(continued
from previous
page)

(3) It should be stressed that torture is not the only gross violation of human rights engaged in by governments. However, the practice of torture has been singled out by a number of commentators as being utterly intolerable when adopted as a government policy.

Over the course of the following weeks, the Amnesty campaign attracted a good deal of media coverage in the national, provincial, local and religious press (there was even press coverage in Canadian and Indian newspapers). Both The Observer and The Guardian made editorial comment that was sympathetic to Amnesty's objectives in the campaign. Thus, The Observer on 21 June:-

"NO MORE GUNS FOR TYRANTS

When the 1980 British Army Equipment Exhibition opens at Aldershot tomorrow, Amnesty International will ask the Secretary for Defence to publish the list of Governments represented at the exhibition. Amnesty fears that arms sales to some of these Governments would contribute to their capacity to "unjustly imprison, maim, torture or kill dissident members of their populations." Only publication of the list can establish this. Refusal to publish suggests the fears are well-founded.

Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal, Minister of State for Defence, told the House of Lords last March: "We would not export arms to a country which is guilty of torture". If that sentence means what it says, Lord Strathcona has nothing to fear from publishing the list. Unfortunately, we know that the Government has unusual standards as regards torture. Spokesmen for the Foreign Office - who have never been repudiated - told the Press that what was done to Dr Sheila Cassidy in Chile did not amount to torture. Dr Cassidy's official interrogators used electrodes. If methods such as that do not constitute torture, then Chile is a country which is not guilty of torture, and one to which Lord Strathcona can export arms without breaking his word.

In order to know whether Lord Strathcona is keeping his word - but only in the sense in which Dr Cassidy "was not tortured" - we need to see the list. If the Government refuses to publish it, it would do well in future not to have too much to say about its concern for human rights in other contexts."

By the end of the Parliamentary Session, 158 Members of Parliament had signed Early Day Motion 726 in the House of Commons, that argued along similar lines to the Amnesty proposal, viz -

"That this House calls upon Her Majesty's Government to state which countries have been invited to the British Army Equipment Exhibition from 24 - 27 June 1980, and to describe what steps are being taken to prevent the export of arms technology from contributing to the violation of human rights in countries such as Uruguay, Argentina, Libya, Zaire, Turkey, South Korea and Indonesia where such practices are widely attested."

All this effort was largely brought about by the intensive efforts of hundreds of Ammesty groups and members throughout the country. The campaigning effort was embarked upon because, following the Prime Minister's disappointing reply (Appendix B/2) to the letter sent to her by the Chairman of the British Section of Amnesty International on 14 January 1980 (Appendix B/1), it had been concluded that the principal activity (and preoccupation) of Government lay not in the controlling but in the promotion of arms sales; that public enquiry was deliberately inhibited by the refusal of information; that human rights concerns were honoured merely by uncheckable assurances, and effectively discounted; that some at least of the firms concerned were indifferent to moral considerations; and that London was a favoured place for international arms salesmen on account of the climate of secrecy and the "bendability" of the rules.

When Mr. Pym replied, on 7 July (Appendix B/6), he declined to provide the information requested, citing the right of self-defence of countries as sovereign states under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, but stating that he was "considering what our practice should be in respect of any exhibitions in the future". A further exchange of correspondence, on 14 and 22 July (Appendices B/7 and B/8) elicited no further concession from the Government.*

On the same day that Mr. Pym made his second, and final, reply to the request for information on the governments that had been invited to Aldershot, Amnesty International held a press conference in Middlesbrough to call public attention to a rather unusual "project" that had been carried out by a student at Teesside Polytechnic.

Mr. David Le Sueur, who had recently retired from the Army with the rank of Major, had spent two months in Argentina as the guest of the armed forces where he had studied "the opportunities open to British military equipment manufacturers". It transpired that his trip had been sponsored by a firm that was in the business of selling arms to Third World governments.

Members of the Teesside group of Amnesty International had noticed a brief report of the controversial project in the Middlesbrough Evening Gazette and had informed Robin Boyes, the Regional Representative for the North East. Alerted by Amnesty, The Guardian published a report on 22 July which described Amnesty's concern. Mr. Le Sueur showed small sympathy. "I don't think Argentina should be criticised as harshly as it is", he told The Guardian. "If you look at the peace and tranquility in the country today, compared to the chaos of six years ago, then you might argue that the firm measures taken by the military government make a lot of sense".

The Polytechnic authorities argued that the project was purely academic. However, the issue was debated by the Academic Board and the Board of Governors at meetings in September, and it was then decided to draw the attention of Heads of Department and of Course and Department Boards to the human rights provisions that were adopted by UNESCO in 1974.

Mr. Le Sueur subsequently obtained a job with Pilkington PE, the firm that had sponsored his trip (Pilkingtons manufacture equipment for military vehicles). However, the press coverage of his project alerted public opinion in the North East as never before, not only to the morally dubious character of arms sales to repressive governments, but also to the sheer scale of torture and disappearance in Argentina.

The Chairman of the Teesside group, Father Ricardo Morgan, took up the case with a local Member of Parliament, Mr. Ian Wrigglesworth. The MP stated a general view in Teesside when he wrote to the Lord Privy Seal: "I hope you will agree that providing students with education in the sale of arms is a rather offensive and objectionable abuse of our educational system".

Also on 22 July, the Hon. Nicholas Ridley, the Minister of State in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office with responsibility for Latin America, made it known through a written answer to a parliamentary question in the House of Commons that the Government had decided to allow the resumption of arms sales to the Chilean Government. The decision was challenged by people of diverse political opinions, although the main opposition was voiced from within the Parliamentary Labour Party* and by the TUC; (later, at its annual conference, the Liberal Party condemned the decision).

On top of all that, the British Government had a surprising and humiliating reaction from the Chilean Government, who stated that they were not interested in buying naval equipment from Britain anyway. Now that naval supplies have been ruled out by the Lord Privy Seal's would-be customer, I hope that he will tell us what equipment the Government are prepared to offer Chile and how they can pretend that non-naval supplies will not be available for political repression."

According to informed press comment, far fewer governments attended the 1980 Exhibition than in previous years, although a number of the governments that apparently did attend, according to Amnesty's information, engaged in repression in the previous two years. For a general comment, see The Guardian editorial at Appendix B/4. See also Mr Phillip Whitehead MP's article at Appendix B/5.

^{*} Thus, Mr. Peter Shore, MP (who was then the Opposition front bench spokesman on Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs) in the House of Commons on 31 July (Hansard: Cols. 1773/4):-

[&]quot;... Until the coup in 1973, Chile enjoyed an almost unbroken tradition of civil and democratic rule. The Pinochet regime has committed frightful abuses of human rights. It has only recently stated its firm intention to retain power for at least the next decade. The Government were utterly wrong to announce on 22 July, and in a written answer, that arms would be supplied to Chile on normal terms. That statement was not only a gratuitous encouragement to the Chilean junta, but a slap in the face for Chilean democrats. It has been said that there has been a recent improvement in human rights in Chile, but that is not the information tht is generally available. If I am correctly informed, the military Government passed an edict as recently as 17 July to make it an offence against internal security even to supply information about abuses of human rights.

Amnesty wrote to Mr Ridley on 24 July, challenging the decision to resume arms sales and in particular the claim that had been made by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, in press briefings, that the human rights situation had improved since 1974 when the arms embargo had first been imposed.

"The Government is reported to take the view that the human rights situation in Chile has improved. This assessment is cited as a justification for resuming the sale of arms. Since your earlier decision to exchange Ambassadors was justified in the same terms, it would seem appropriate to measure successive Foreign Office decisions regarding relations with the Chilean government against the record of human rights violations in that country.

"Given that this record shows that recently there has been a deterioration in human rights in Chile, it is difficult to understand the claims that the Foreign Office have now twice made that matters have improved."

Amnesty also queried the composition of military and security exports to Chile ...

"Your statement, even when amplified by civil service briefings to journalists, leaves everybody very unclear as to whether the Chilean armed forces and security agencies will, or will not, be permitted to obtain from Britain items that may be useful to them for the purposes of internal repression. I notice from the press reports that civil servants have said that export licences for the sale of weapons which could be used for internal repression would not normally be granted. What is left obscure by this assertion is what equipment is likely to be banned. We would be interested to know whether the Government will, or will not, allow the export to Chile of small arms, of crowd control equipment, of specialised armoured vehicles, of computers for police or secret police use, or of the sorts of vehicles and communications equipment that British firms sold to Amin's secret police in Uganda. Since the Prime Minister has refused even to review the licensing control system - the deficiencies of which allowed these British firms to supply the Ugandan "State Research Centre" without breach of legality and since Parliament is not to be allowed to know which foreign government attended the Aldershot Army Exhibition where internal security equipment was on display, it is impossible to know what contribution Britain may be making in the future to the repression of the Chilean population by a government whose inhumanity has become notorious."

A few days later, on 7 August, Cardinal Hume wrote to Mr Ridley protesting in strong terms at the arms sales decision (Appendix B/9).

In September, Amnesty International learned, and then publicised, the fact that the Anglo-Chilean student, Claire Frances Wilson, had been tortured. Amnesty's own interview and correspondence with Mr Ridley, and reports in the British press, elicited the information that although the British Embassy had known as early as 18 July that Miss Wilson had been arrested, they had not known that she had been tortured until 22 July - which was the very day when the Minister announced in the House of Commons the decision to resume arms sales. No proper explanation was forthcoming as to why the Foreign and Commonwealth Office did not subsequently reveal

this highly relevant fact during the public controversy that ensued (it was claimed that Miss Wilson had not asked for such publicity; in fact, she did what she could to obtain such publicity in Chile, although this was not available to the British press). Nor did Mr Ridley explain the reference that his officials had made to a human rights improvement in Chile at a time when there was heightened repression by the CNI secret police.

The Summer 1980 campaign by Amnesty International aroused public interest - not least in the churches. However, the Government remains committed to overseas arms sales and continues to maintain an excessive secrecy in this whole area. Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal has recently said (House of Lords, 3 December 1980):-

"We would not sell equipment which, in our judgement, could be used for internal repression, to a regime which is known to practise torture."

It is impossible to evaluate this statement. However, as Lord Avebury pointed out in the House of Lords on 4 December, this formula has not prevented the sale of equipment that can be used for internal repression ...

"Great efforts are made to increase British trade with Indonesia, including trade in arms. And among the weapons that Britain is selling to Indonesia is the Hawk aircraft, which as the manufacturer's literature makes quite clear, can be used either as a trainer or in the ground attack role, by a very simple change in the field ..."

'... In yesterday's debate, the noble Lord restated the Government's policy on this matter, as he put it in clear terms. I quote from yesterday's debate; at column 415:

'We would not sell equipment which, in our judgement, could be used for internal repression, to a regime which is known to practise torture.'

"But this equipment, the Hawk aircraft, can certainly be used for internal repression. It would be an ideal weapon to use against the villages of East Timor, into which the Indonesian colonialists and aggressors have herded the population. By this simple modification in the field, of adding pylons to the wings, bombs, rockets, napalm and so on could be deployed against the civilian population. I do not think it would be denied that atrocities have been practised on an enormous scale and are fully documented ..."

" ... It is clear from a mass of evidence that the Indonesian Government do practise torture on an enormous scale, and yet we are still prepared to sell them these fearsome weapons ..."

The campaign continues.



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Nobel Peace Prize Winners 1977

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Director: Cosmas Desmond

The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London

14 January 1980

Dear Prime Minister

The Ministers of State at the Department of Trade and at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office wrote to Amnesty International, on 6th and 16th August respectively, in reply to a letter of 16th July 1979 from the Rev Paul Oestreicher, the then Chairman of the British Section of Amnesty International. He had also written to the Secretary of State for Defence. Copies of these letters are enclosed. In view of the nature of the ministerial replies, we now write to you in the hope that the Government will reconsider its position.

Amnesty International's letter of 16th July 1979 expressed concern at the fact that a number of British firms had supplied certain equipment to Uganda right up to the time of the overthrow of President Amin. Investigations in the news media had established that this equipment had been supplied to the State Research Centre and provided that fearful organisation with the technical means to extend the scope of its operations, thereby enhancing its capacity to carry out political murders. The Amnesty case, quite simply, was that events had demonstrated that it was essential that HMG should exercise more thorough supervision over the export of security equipment to repressive regimes. It was, and indeed remains our hope, that Ministers will be prepared to undertake a review into a system of attempted control over the export of repressive technology that has proved to be fatally deficient.

In view of the suffering inflicted by such agencies as the State Research Centre it would seem morally imperative that some attempt should be made to improve a body of legislation that has turned out to be so defective. We are therefore surprised that governmental response to our representations has so far been to defend the status quo. Despite what are for us very disappointing replies, we must continue to hope that the Government will be prepared to revise its approach, and to recognise that public interest requires that there should be a review of the operation of the present legislation and a canvassing of the practical steps required to improve the effectiveness of the system of control.

In his letter of 16th August to Amnesty International the Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office referred to the previous British Government's condemnation of the Amin regime but went on to assert that the Government's quarrel was "with the Government and not the people of Uganda". I should make it clear that the whole burden of our case has been, not to seek some general ban on trade, but to argue for the prohibition of exports of just the sort of equipment that the Amin government and other similarly disposed

regimes use against their own populations. It is hardly possible to claim that British firms that engage in this sort of export are thereby benefiting the people of the country in question, let alone that any attempt to control this trade would harm those who live under such tyrannies. I would point out, also, that the facts themselves are not in dispute. It is by now public knowledge that the equipment supplied by British firms to President Amin's government, and specifically to the State Research Centre, did materially assist the regime in killing and torturing Ugandans. Should there be any doubt on the matter we are quite ready to present to Ministers the full range of evidence that supports this contention.

In his letter Mr Hurd claims that HMG "had no power under existing regulations to stop what were private, commercial transactions". We have not, in fact, suggested that there has been any breach of formal legality, whether by individual firms in seeking contracts in this lucrative trade or by HMG in its failure to establish and then to operate an effective system of control. The issue at stake is rather whether the law as it present stands conforms to any defensible ethical position and, also, whether it effectively regulates exports that probably few public figures in this country would care to defend. The Ministers' argument does not meet the essential point that the existing law was drafted at a time when legislators, and the public in general, did not know of the tragic human consequences of the exports to the Ugandan State Research Centre. The Law, as originally drafted, has quite failed to cover this sort of contingency, and we are surely all agreed, knowing what we now know about the use to which such exports are put, that it is our duty to make it properly effective. In view of the complexity of the problems which your Ministers have raised I summarise our arguments below under a number of sub-headings.

1. Powers of HMG

There seems to be little doubt that the legislation in its present form does not provide officials with the regulatory powers necessary to stop equipment likely to be used for the violation of human rights from reaching organisations like the State Research Centre. When, in July 1977, Mr Greville Janner, MP inquired of the Department of Trade what it was proposing to do to stop the export of equipment designed "for use by the armed forces or police in Uganda", the official answer was that, as these goods were not classified as military equipment (even though they were going to the military authorities) their export required no licence and the Department had no power to prevent the export (Hansard, 11 July 1977). The previous month Mrs Judith Hart, the Minister of Overseas Development, had informed Mr Madden in a written answer that the Crown Agents are "not normally required to consult HMG about the fulfilment of orders placed with them by overseas principals". (Hansard, 21 June 1977). In August of that same year the same Minister wrote to Mr Goodhew, regarding the sale of thirty eight trucks and two landrovers to Uganda: "It is not our policy to intervene in individual transactions between the Crown Agents and their Principals. Detailed information about their Principals must be regarded as commercially confidential ... You will therefore understand that I am not in a position to provide detailed information". (1 August 1977).

Even though Mrs Hart, as she made clear to Mr Madden, had requested information from the Crown Agents before the dispatching to Uganda of any further supplies "for the use of the armed forces or the police" it was apparent that, despite Ministerial intentions, HMG did not have the statutory power to intervene to any real effect.

Since that time Ministers - and officials - have become acquainted, as have the rest of us, with what was discovered in the Kampala headquarters of the State Research Centre when the Tanzanian army entered the Ugandan capital. Taken together with everything else that is known about these exports and their uses, this evidence is morally compelling. We urge that the Government take it fully into account in considering the case for a review of the present legislation.

2. End Use

Mr Parkinson's letter mentions the difficulty of distinguishing between different categories of equipment, although he advises us that the items subject to control are those that, according to specification, are for military, paramilitary or police use or that, again according to specification, consist of surveillance equipment. Obviously, this would seem to leave items in the "dual purpose" category not subject to control. In practice, however, Ministers have concerned themselves with the end use of exported goods. In a written answer to Mr Frank Allaun, MP, Mr Hattersley stated: "It is already the policy of HMG to consider all the material factors, including the end use of the equipment, before approving any request for the export of arms". (Hansard, 5 August 1976). On another occasion, Mr Rowlands, then Minister of State at the Foreign Office, advised Mr Arthur Latham, MP, that "the supply of goods from the NAAFI to Uganda, had also been stopped since it was felt that they were of benefit to the Ugandan Armed Forces rather than the people of Uganda". (20 December 1978). As another example of Ministerial scepticism of the effectiveness of the control system I draw your attention to a comment made by Mr Crosland, then Secretary of State at the Foreign Office, when he advised Mr Steel on 28 July 1976 that he was "looking very carefully at the case again" - this being in response to a request for stricter checks on the equipment that was then being supplied from Britain to the Ugandan Government. It would seem clear that Ministers suspected that certain equipment sent to Uganda might be used for repressive purposes; that they envisaged action to control at least some of these exports on the grounds of their end use rather than their military specification; that they made some attempt to inquire into or even to inhibit the export of goods sent via Stanstead to Amin's security forces, and that they were conscious of their legislative impotence to prevent the export of more than a fraction of the sort of equipment that facilitates repression. However, in 1976 and 1977, relatively little information available about exports being sent to Uganda by such firms as Pye Telecommuncations, Contact Radio Telephones and Security Systems International would seem to have been available either to Members of Parliament or even to Ministers. Now that the information, at least as far as Uganda is concerned, is a matter of public knowledge, surely no case can remain against the setting up of mechanisms for collecting and assessing such data. The way would then be clear for appropriate legislation.

3. Access to Information

The consignment by Pye of equipment to the President's office in Kampala in 1974, and the documented meeting that took place between a member of that company's executive staff and officers of the State Research Centre in 1976, indicate that officials of this important British company were fully aware of the identity of the end user - and the nature of the end use - of their equipment. However, when Pye was informed by the New Scientist that their

radios were in the State Research Centre "cheek-by-jowl with reports from informers, identity cards of people who had 'disappeared', and files on 'subversives'", a senior manager replied that

"... we trade anywhere in the world unless specifically directed otherwise by HMG. We are not always aware of end-user application: this is particularly the case where we trade through a third party". (New Scientist, 10 May 1979).

It would seem that Pye officials were aware of "end-user application", at least in this Ugandan instance. It would seem also that the company felt that it could leave the ethical question to the British Government. Meanwhile, by a sad irony, Ministers seemed to have been insufficiently informed of the facts and insufficiently equipped with the statutory powers required to exercise the moral responsibility so firmly transferred to them by British exporters.

The supposition that Parliamentary and, indeed, Ministerial, access to the requisite information may have been imperfect, and that this is therefore a significant area in which review may be necessary, is borne out by what two Ministers had to say in the House of Commons with regard to Ugandan exports. Thus, Mr Meacher, in a written answer, stated that "details of arms exports by country were not made available in the overseas trade statistics" (Hansard, 27 July 1976); while Mrs Hart alluded to the principle of "commercial confidentiality which prevented the supply of information by Crown Agents about individual items of equipment" (Hansard, 21 June 1977).

4. Existing Legislation

Mr Parkinson's letter states that the security implications of the Export of Goods Control Order, and particularly of Schedule 2, arise "principally in relation to Eastern Europe". We would suggest that the special defence considerations that apply to aspects of trade with certain Communist countries are paralleled by the human rights concerns that apply to a number of other countries - notably to South Africa. Where South Africa is concerned the human rights and the security issues do seem to converge, in that both the internal policies of the Pretoria government and its military build-up (described as promoting "persistent acts of agression against neighbouring states" representing threats to "international peace and security" - (Resolutions on UN arms embargo 1963 & 1977)) were cited as justifications for the United Nations arms embargoes. Furthermore, the debate in the House of Commons leading up to the imposition of a mandatory British arms embargo focused not so much on South Africa's relations with its neighbours as on the likely effectiveness of an embargo in bringing about the ending of the unjust and oppressive apartheid system in South Africa. The existing export controls against South Africa (which entail a prohibition on the export of "solely military equipment") intentionally weaken that country's capability for external defence. For our part we are concerned neither to attack nor to defend this particular justification of policy, but merely to point out that the legislation in question fails to cover exports of "dual purpose" equipment used in programmes of terror and coercion against the population inside the country. Thus, for example, ICL computers that are used by the South African police to enforce pass laws, and that are also utilised for influx control and population removal, are not covered by the Export of Goods Control Order.

It is perhaps worth mentioning that the very United Nations resolutions which have determined this all-too-lax British legislation, have inspired in the United States legislation that is sufficiently stringent to prevent the American competitors of ICL from providing the South African police

with their computers. It is difficult to believe that administrative reasons alone can explain why Washington has succeeded in controlling at least some of their 'dual purpose' exports while London has so far failed to do so.

5. Conclusions

We appreciate the repugnance expressed by you, in your letter of 20th August to Miss Chambers, an AI supporter, for the denial of human rights by some countries and your assurances that HMG takes "every opportunity to bring about a change in attitude". However, such changes are less likely to be forthcoming if HMG does not demonstrate its will to control the export of British goods used for the massive violation of human rights abroad. We challenge what seems to be the readiness of Ministers to permit the export of sensitive equipment to the security agencies of governments that, while posing no threat to us in this country, destroy the rights of their own citizens. Commercial considerations should not be allowed to inhibit a full appreciation of the moral and human consequences of such indifference or inertia. It would be appalling if this sort of negative judgement, hitherto made on an ad hoc basis of defective information, were now allowed to harden into a principle governing policy in this area.

We therefore urge HMG to make every attempt to develop a more effective control system. We understand the difficulties of administering new policy and appreciate the problems of drafting that "drawing the line in a different place" would pose. However, we do feel that the Government should extend its control over the export of such goods as are likely to be used for military, paramilitary or other "internal security" purposes, whether by the South African or by other governments that violate human rights.

Yours faithfully

Jacques Berthoud Chairman British Section of Amnesty International



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

24 January 1980

Vean A. Fentand

Thank you for your letter of 14 January in which you argue in favour of changing our system of export controls to prevent the export of equipment to repressive governments which might assist them in their repressive policies. I am grateful to you for setting out your case so fully.

I have considered carefully the points that you have made. I believe that your proposal that we should introduce legislation to widen the scope of existing controls would present us with very considerable practical difficulties and have significant implications for our trade and our relations with other Mr. Parkinson has already explained to your countries. predecessor what extending the range of existing controls on exports of goods for civil use would involve. We would constantly be faced with the difficulty of trying to draw a line between goods which fall within and those which fall outside the categories that you would like to establish. An attempt to control use beyond the military or strategic fields would cause similar difficulties. Any workable legislation which would meet your requirements would involve us in effort to exert an excessive degree of control over our exports, adding greatly to the burden of Government (in terms of manpower and money) and of British exporters at a time when our export industry already faces serious difficulties.

/I believe

I hope that this explains the position adequately. If there are points on which you would like further clarification I am sure that officials would be glad to supply it.

> Louis sixuely Magair Molter

Jacques Berthoud, Esq.

amnesty international

APPENDIX B/3

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Nobel Peace Prize Winners 1977

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Telegrams Amnesty London
Director: Cosmas Desmond

The Rt Hon Francis Pym MP Ministry of Defence Main Building Whitehall LONDON SWIA 2HB

23 June 1980

Dear Secretary of State

We are writing to ask you to publish the list of governments that will be represented at the British Army Equipment Exhibition which will be held at Aldershot in a few days' time.

This event, which is being organised by your Department, is a major occasion for the promotion of military and other security exports to foreign governments. As has already been pointed out, for instance by the Bishop of Guildford and Lord Avebury in the House of Lords, and by the Director of Amnesty International in his letter to you of 10 June, the promotion of these exports has grave implications for human rights.

We would further point out that the security forces of a number of governments that are known to have sent representatives to the last Aldershot Exhibition in 1978 have been responsible in the intervening two years for torture and for other violations of human rights. There is ample reason to fear that your Department's promotion of arms sales to these governments, as to others that may subsequently engage in repression, may contribute to the capacity of their security forces to unjustly imprison, maim, torture or kill dissident members of their populations.

We agree with Amnesty's Director that the publication of the list of governments invited to the 1980 Aldershot Exhibition is the only credible way to support any assurances that may be given by HMG concerning the consequences for human rights of the activities of your Department in promoting security exports.

We urge you to publish the list of invited governments. We also ask you publicly to indicate what steps you are taking to prevent Britain's arms exports from contributing to the violation of human rights abroad.

Yours faithfully

(Signed by 40 Bishops of the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches and leading members of the Free Churches and of the Society of Friends, as well as a number of people prominent in public life)

ARMS AND A CHOICE OF CUSTOMERS

"Under some definitions there are practically no countries in the world which do not resort to what some people would regard as torture." Thus Lord Strathcona, a Minister of State for Defence with special responsibility for arms sales. Lord Strathcona, speaking in April, was heavily qualifying a remark he had made a month earlier: "We would not export arms to a country which is guilty of torture." Since then the Government has sponsored the Aldershot Arms Exhibition (in vulgar parlance, trade fair) which comes to an end today with an open day at which the kids can have fun with the (less highly classified) instruments of repression and death. The serious business had been done at closed sessions during the week with representatives of the security services of such democratic and tolerant regimes as those of Argentina, Brazil, Indonesia and Syria.

The Government is still refusing to accept an early day motion calling for publication of the names of countries invited to view the exhibition - "in deference to the wishes of many potential customers" to quote Lord Strathcona yet again. Given that Idi Amin's State Research Bureau (a body which had more in common with the Gestapo than with our own Policy Studies Institute) obtained its Land-Rovers indirectly from Leyland and its radio systems indirectly from Pye, that many of the Shah's riot control systems came from the UK and that South Africa controls its ghettoes with British computers and "low light" spy cameras, those wishes are easily understood. Whether they should be complied with is another matter. The Government is right to stress that definitions of torture and indeed milder ill-treatment vary widely (see the defence put up by our own government when Northern Ireland cases filter through to the European Commission on Human Rights).

Ministers are also right to stress that much of the equipment we sell abroad is neutral in character. A computer system can be used to monitor health problems as easily as it can be used to police dissidents. Land-Rovers can take agricultural expoerts to out-of-the-way farms as easily as they take Amin's armed "researchers" to raid Kampala University. There are circumstances in which a democratic regime may feel compelled to resort to tear gas and rubber bullets to put down a violent and anti-democratic demonstration. Different ethical standards apply when a dictatorial regime uses the same weapons to put down legitimate, democratic demonstrations. Arms sales is an area in which circumstances do, quite properly, alter cases. That is why (give or take extremes like electrodes designed solely for torture) it is impossible to draw up a blacklist of "bad" technology which should never be sold or (give or take Amin's Uganda) a blacklist of countries so awful that nothing whatsoever should be sold to them.

But that is why it is important to know (certainly) who is in the market for British arms and instruments of repression and (probably) who has actually bought what. More so when the Government is so intimately involved in the whole sales process. Many of the foreign purchasers (including some of the most repressive) turned up at Aldershot only because our government paid their air fares and hotel bills. But government involvement

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does not end with a little free loading. As Amnesty International pointed out in its recent Briefing Paper, The Repression Trade: "Much of what is sold abroad is transferred though the agency of officially sponsored programmes in which technical and operational support and training is provided alongside the actual equipment. The firms themselves become involved in helping to define the requirements of their clients, and thus become intimately involved in the situations with which the technologies are designed to cope."

The arms and repression trade is big business and Britain is big in the business. Ammesty estimates that, at £1,200 million a year we are the fourth biggest arms dealers and probably the biggest riot control and internal security source. As long as it is accepted that defence, both internal and external, is a proper preoccupation of governments, that trade is legitimate. But to make it morally acceptable, and to define its immoral parameters, the public should be allowed to know who intends to do what and with what and to whom as a result of confidential bargaining sessions at Aldershot last week.

PHILLIP
WHITEHEAD
WRITES

(Derby Trader, 2 July 1980)

SHOULD BRITAIN BE PROVIDING ARMS - OR ALMS ?

In Aldershot, the Empire has never died.

You drive past the rows of cantonments. Every dripping lane leading out of the Surrey hills seems to have its platoon of sweating recruits humping their packs. Armoured vehicles that can do 70 mph are snorting up and down the Long Valley. And on the site of the traditional Army display area a huge array of infantry and mounted artillery is limbering up for parade with all the old swagger.

As they bear down on you, the ground shakes with the rhythms of Kipling, the Army's poet laureate: "Ho! get away, you bullock man, you've 'eard the bugle blowed, There's a regiment a comin' down the Grand Trunk Road."

But this mighty display outnumbers its audience.

True, at the weekend, the public will be invited in, as they always are, to watch the Aldershot tattoo, but what I was watching was a private show, laid on for a few hundred carefully chosen visitors, mostly in the uniforms of foreign armies.

A large Chinese delegation sit impassively in their baggy caps as a battle tank lets fly at a Fox armoured car. It misfires, but on cue, the Fox releases a puff of smoke to register a "hit".

There are not many mistakes like that. The hardware all works. For this is a special exhibition launched by the Ministry of Defence to sell arms to foreign buyers.

The foreign delegations, big men from little countries, like King Hussein, and small men from big countries, like the Chinese, are there to look at military goodies which can cost up to a quarter of a million pounds each.

There has been a lot of heart-searching about this exhibition. Britain is the world's fourth largest arms seller, with about 5% of the total trade.

In the teeth of the present recession, a cancelled arms order, like that for the Chieftain tanks which were going to Iran, can mean economic disaster for the makers. The Vickers /Rolls-Royce merger in part comes from that failure to sell the Chieftains.

So the Ministry of Defence is going all out to boost its sales, which currently run at over £1,200 million each year.

Certain awkward moral questions arise, and it was these which took me to Aldershot.

Should we be selling arms at all to some of these countries, which are dirt poor, and should not be spending their foreign exchange on expensive military toys for their ruling elites?

Should we be selling them to any country which is involved in the systematic repression of its own citizens?

These are hard questions, and it takes more than the romantic nostalgia of a military parade to blow them away.

I have not forgotten the bitter arguments we had some years ago locally about Amin. The butcher of Uganda was equipping his State Research Bureau with equipment made by a Leicester firm. Not until its Kampala representative, Mr Scanlon, was actually killed by Amin's thugs, did this firm's local apologists abandon their defence of the deal.

Amnesty International have been trying to find out who gets invited to Aldershot, and what conditions cover sales to them.

The government will not publish the list, but about 40 seem to have been there this year. They include some very repressive regimes indeed.

Nor will ministers reveal what their licensing policy is, in the discussions which take place between the Ministry of Defence and the Foreign Office.

Back in March, the Minister, Lord Strathcona, was specific. He said: "We would not export arms to a country which is guilty of torture".

By April, he was backtracking. "The question of establishing the existence of torture is inevitably a very difficult and emotional one," he said.

How will we know or not unless we see who the invitees are? How will we know unless we know what they are buying - computer technology for their police, rubber bullets and MACE for their security troops, helicopters to hunt down their fugitives?

The All Party Human Rights Group at Westminster have called for this debate to be opened up. The response has been stoney silence.

However, the Ministry of Defence did allow me to go to Aldershot on one of the closed days, and wander round more or less at will with a watchful civil servant.

Only when we encountered the Chinese - who seemed to be everywhere - was I hustled out of the way.

I am not a pacifist. I have no objection to our selling defence hardware to our allies in NATO though the sheer mind-blowing cost of the stuff should make even the wealthiest government cringe.

Nor could I see anything beyond a defensive, life-saving use for many of the smaller gadgets on display, like bullet-proof waistcoats, helicopter seats, and so on.

But how can we justify selling military and police technology to countries which systematically oppress their own citizens, like Chile, Argentina, Indonesia or Iraq?

Why do we have no foolproof licensing system for such countries ?

The only counter argument I heard at Aldershot was that if we didn't sell to these horrible chappies the French would sneak in and bag the trade.

I seem to remember that that argument was also used about the slave trade.

It's easy to get seduced by the enthusiasm of the military down at Aldershot; there's something about a soldier ... But there's something about a torturer, too.

Lord Strathcona may find him hard to define, but we would recognise him if we met him.

Recognition would be doubly unpleasant if he was kitted out with British surveillance and combat gear.

That will continue to happen, until we bring repressive technology under proper export control.



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE WHITEHALL LONDON SWIA, 2HB

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D/S of S/337/80

7th July 1980

Dar Mr Dinni

Since receiving your letter of 23rd June and its list of distinguished signatories I have been considering yet again the question of whether we should publish the list of those Governments represented at the recent British Army Equipment Exhibition.

Before I turn to the specific points you raise in your letter and your earlier one of 10th June, I should like to remind you of the Government's general approach to the sale of defence equipment overseas. First we respect the right of other countries as sovereign states to acquire arms to protect their independence, and to exercise their right of self-defence, as embodied in Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. The Government believe that we should not deny to others a right which we claim for ourselves; and industrialised countries - including the UK - are recognised as traditional sources of supply by countries which may not have their own armament industries.

The release of information concerning defence sales overseas presents us with considerable difficulties. Political, commercial and security considerations are involved - particularly for the recipient - and we are bound to take account of the importance which customers attach to the disclosure of information which could affect, for example, their relations with other neighbouring countries, the terms on which the transaction is completed and the security of the country itself. An increasing amount of information

Cosmas Desmond Esq



on defence sales overseas has been made available by this Government, but the details of arms sales have invariably been treated as confidential by successive Administrations. The countries to which we sell arms trust us to maintain that confidentiality, and this must, I am afraid, also cover the question of attendance at the British Army Equipment Exhibition this year. I am considering what our practice should be in respect of any Exhibitions in the future.

Attendance at the Exhibition does not carry with it an entitlement to purchase. The Government's policy on the sale of arms is - and will continue to be - one of responsible restraint. Such sales cannot be treated as normal commercial transactions, and, of course, arms should not be exported indiscriminately. That is why all proposals for defence sales are very closely scrutinised. Each case is examined on its merits and an export licence is required before a sale of defence equipment can proceed. A wide range of considerations are taken into account, including the character of the regime concerned, its record on human rights and the use to which the equipment is likely to be put. In this way the Government seeks to ensure that factors affecting human rights are taken into account, and given their due weight, in reacing a decision.

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Francis Pym

amnesty internationa

Appendix B/7

Amnesty International British Section

Tower House
8-14 Southampton Street
London WC2E 7HF

Nobel Peace Prize Winners 1977

Telephone 01-836 5621
Telegrams Amnesty London
Director: Cosmas Desmond

14th July 1980

Dear Mr. Pym,

Your letter of 7th July provides no satisfaction for all those who care about the morality of Britain equipping the Armed Forces and security agencies of repressive governments. The distinguished signatories of our letter of 23rd June asked you to make information available so that Parliament and the public might be enabled to make their own judgments on the morality of such exports, based on the relevant knowledge. This desire to make an informed judgment is frustrated by your Ministry's practice of not discussing individual arms sales; by the Department of Trade's refusal even to describe the operation of the system that exists purportedly to control the export of arms; and by your own rejection of the appeals that have been made both in Parliament and in our own letters asking you to state which foreign governments were invited to Aldershot. This refusal to name the governments invited to the Army Equipment Exhibition seems particularly unreasonable since your Ministerial colleague, Lord Strathcona, did provide a Member of Parliament, Mr. Frank Hooley, with the names of the governments invited to the Royal Navy Equipment Exhibition which took place at Greenwich last September.

You cite the necessity of protecting the security, political and commercial interests of client governments as a reason for not saying who was invited to the Aldershot exhibition. I simply cannot understand how these interests are jeopardised if the public know who attended the Army Exhibition, but are unharmed if we know who went to the Navy Exhibition.

If there is a significant difference between the two exhibitions it would seem to lie in the fact that the Army Exhibition had a much greater concentration on the theme of "internal security". In other words, client governments would seem to have had demonstrated to them - if not, as you say, necessarily sold to them - equipment which might be used for internal repression. It is sad indeed that the British Government's concern to protect the national security interests of client governments extends so far as to provide a cloak of confidentiality over the presence in this country of security personnel of repressive regimes.

The Rt. Hon. Francis Pym, MC, MP, Secretary of State for Defence.

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In your letter you assure us that "the Government seeks to ensure that factors affecting human rights are taken into account, and given their due weight." I doubt if any conscientious person can be satisfied with this assurance. There is totally inadequate public knowledge of security exports: you and your Ministerial colleagues refuse to provide the requisite information. In any case, your assurance concerning human rights has been undermined on two separate occasions by the Minister of State for Defence, Lord Strathcona. In the House of Lords on 23rd April he cast doubt upon whether there could be reliable knowledge or effective definition of torture. One is left wondering on what possible grounds the Government can now presume to judge the behaviour of its foreign clients. On another occasion, in an interview with Financial Weekly, Lord Strathcona expressed a viewpoint that negates your assurance.

"Had Britain, in the past, lost lucrative arms contracts because she took a more high-minded attitude than some other countries such as France? 'We did lose out to France because we took a more moral point of view,' he said. 'But we think we are less venal than the French.' But now, he said: 'I hope we give the French more of a run for their money.'"

In the last few months a number of people have taken up the human rights issue, whether through the medium of the Amnesty appeal, through other institutional approaches, through debates in Church conferences, through media reporting and newspaper editorials, or through questions in Parliament. In the House of Commons over 150 Members of Parliament, of all parties, have signed an Early Day Motion on the subject. In these circumstances we had hoped that the Government would have felt able to meet these concerns, especially since what was requested was of so reasonable and limited a nature. Your reply does nothing to meet these concerns. It is as unhelpful as was the Prime Minister's own letter of 24th January in which she rejected Amnesty's proposal that there should be a review of the licensing system for arms exports.

We therefore have no recourse but to press, by all the means that are available to us, for a Parliamentary debate on the issues. Only through such open debate can we now hope that public opinion may be brought to bear upon the responsibilities that we in Britain acquire for the victims of torture abroad.

Yours sincerely,

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Cosmas Desmond



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE WHITEHALL LONDON SWIA 2HB

DIRECT DIALLING OI-218 2111/3

D/S of S/337/80

22nd July 1980

Bor Mr Desmoro

Thank you for your further letter, of 14th July.

I am sorry that you found my earlier letter disappointing (and I noted that you said as much in your letter to "The Times" this week). I tried to explain in my letter of 7th July why I am unable to agree to provide you with the information you requested about the recent Exhibition. Publication of the Exhibition's guest list bears directly on the prerogative of other countries to decide themselves whether publicity about their defence procurement activities is in their own national interest; and I believe that to broadcast the presence of our guests after they had been invited on a basis of confidentiality, would be to break faith with them. I do not consider that that would be right.

As I said in my earlier letter, I am considering whether there is scope for doing things differently at any future Exhibition; and I cannot usefully add to that for the present. By the same token I see little purpose in debating the Early Day Motion to which you refer: the Government's position on this was made clear in the House of Commons on 3rd July by the Leader of the House, Norman St John-Stevas, (Hansard Cols 1767-8).

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Francis Pym

Cosmas Desmond Esq

Appendix C

Archbishop's House Westminster London SW1P 1QJ

Nicholas Ridley Esq MP
Minister of State
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
King Charles Street
London SW1

7th August 1980

Dear Mr Ridley

I am writing to you on the eve of the arrival of the British Government's Minister of State for Trade in Chile since I feel it is important for us in Britain to understand that, whatever may be the benefits of trade between our two countries, we should not close our eyes to the repression which so many Chileans are now suffering. In view of the deterioration in the situation of human rights in Chile I must seriously question the wisdom of lifting the embargo on arms sales imposed by the British Government in 1974. Moreover, I believe it is important that British Companies which enter into trading agreements in Chile should not allow a possible trading advantage to persuade them to provide assistance to the Chilean security forces.

Recent reports reaching me from Church sources in Chile indicate that members of catechetical classes have been harassed by armed police; priests have been held at gunpoint; Church workers and seminarians have been sent into 'internal exile' in the extreme south and extreme north of the country; Churches and ecclesiastical offices have been bombed and machine-gunned; and Cardinal Silva himself has received death threats and his parents' grave has been desecrated. On 29 May the Permanent Committee of the Chilean Bishops' Conference protested at this systematic campaign against the Church.

Furthermore, I understand that in July 1980 alone, over 1,000 people have been arrested and detained for varying periods of time. The security forces have assumed new draconian powers and the period of incommunicado arrest has been extended from five to twenty days. I am also told that prolonged and sophisticated methods of torture have been introduced once again and that several persons have been killed. This is most distressing.

It is important surely, that political and economic decisions should always be taken and judged within the wider context of social morality. I question whether this has been the case with regard to the renewal of arms sales to Chile.

Yours sincerely

Cardinal Hume

Resolution of the General Synod of the Church on England on 13 February 1980

RESOLVED

'That this Synod, having taking note of the references to the arms trade in the report GS 414, urgently requests that strong representation (particularly by the Board for Social Responsibility) be made to H M Government to :-

- 1. Provide public information about arms sales so that in a free society proper judgment can be made regarding their morality;
- 2. Ensure that arms are not sold to regimes where there are proven abuses against human rights especially torture;
- 3. Investigate and create means whereby those employed in arms manufacture may constructively use their resources.'

January 1981.

Landrovers for South Africa



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