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THE US RELIGIOUS RIGHT IN SOUTH AFRICA

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Over the past few years, particularly after the Reagan Administration took office in January 1981, the world, including Southern Africa, has been a sudden sprouting and mushrooming of pseudo-religious groups and sects. These are known under the all-embracing name of Religious Right and whilst in many "Third World" countries, claim to be only concerned with the need to spread the word of God.

However, a close look at their timing, source of funding and activities on the ground in various countries of Latin America/Caribbean, Asia and Africa and links with reactionary regimes and groups world-wide strongly suggests that many of these fanatically religious sects, also known as born-again Christians, have wittingly or unwittingly allowed themselves to be used in support of the foreign policy interests of the major western countries, in particular those of the United States, and therefore cannot be said to be apolitical.

The above has caused serious concern, if not alarm, on the part of both political and church leaders in our region and other parts of the world. For instance, Dr. Beyers Naude, the former General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches (SACC) and now Director of the Institute for Contextual Theology at Braamfontein outside Johannesburg, pointed out in a report to a meeting held in Lusaka in May 1987 on 'The Churches' Search for Justice and Peace in Southern Africa that:

"...the role of the 'charismatic' churches and evangelical groups, especially those which have active links with (similar groups in - JM) countries like the United States of America and the Federal Republic of Germany, is being actively promoted through the government's propaganda, especially as they are being presented as 'non-political' all actively opposed to 'violence'. The continued wooing of the largest single African independent church in South Africa (the ZCC) by the government as well as its satisfaction in knowing that it could depend strongly on the political feelings of support from the membership of the Pentecostal, Baptist and other evangelical churches as well as the charismatics, and thereby divide the united Christian witness against the evil of apartheid, is a very successful tactic followed by the government."

Last September, President Kenneth Kaunda expressed the same feeling when he addressed the fifth general assembly of the Association of Evangelicals of Africa and Madagascar (AEAM) and pointed out that these pseudo-religious groups were averse to joining the broad ecumenical movement. Instead, they preferred to follow the tactic of recruiting new members from among the marginalised sectors of the society, the peasants, youth students and women as well as winning unsuspecting individuals from their church denominations into their own ranks by "sowing seeds of doubt and ambiguity in the minds of believing Christians". President Kaunda then sadly added that this situation "...causes a great deal of pain to those of us who see that unity in a country like Zambia on the social and political levels is greatly enhanced by inter-faith unity on the spiritual level" and not by the Fundamentalist Christian groups' sole concern with spiritual salvation and rugged individualism.

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The above concern and fear has also been expressed by a number of Zimbabwean government officials and Rev. Kuchera, General Secretary of the Zimbabwe Christian Council of Churches earlier on in 1987.

Writing in an article which appeared in the June 1987 issue of the ICT NEWS Almuth Kock, a respected theologian from the FRG also pointed out that "it is high time in South Africa for Christians to find out more about these groups, their interests, their theology, their connections and their funding (because) this will help us to understand their mission more clearly and determine our role in this regard as servants of the Lord". Finally, the ANC Arusha International Conference last December also took up the issue and made a call to expose "...the essentially right-wing political nature of some fundamentalist Christian groups operating in South Africa but based in the USA..."

Our preliminary investigations have made the finding that although some of these groups have been in existence from twenty to thirty years and their roots as an evangelical movement go as far back as the nineteenth century, most were formed and reactivated since 1980, and especially after the Reagan Administration took office in 1981. The emergence of new fundamentalist evangelical groups and reactivation of old ones as well as their proliferation in the US itself and various parts of the world followed a recommendation made by Reagan's transition team in the Santa Fe Document in 1980, according to which:

"The United States must seize the ideological initiative...(because) the war is for the minds of mankind. Ideo-politics will prevail...(and) US foreign policy must begin to counter (not react against) liberation theology as it is utilized in Latin America by the Liberation clergy. The role of the church in Latin America is vital to the concept of political freedom..., private property and productive capitalism."

In fact, one can go further and say that the Religious Right groups, in particular Rev. Jerry Falwell's so-called Moral Majority, the Christian Voice, Tim LaHaye's American Coalition for Traditional Values (ACTV) played a no less important role in Ronald Reagan's triumph during the 1980 US elections by organising the many fundamentalist, Pentecostal and charismatic churches throughout the US into solid voting blocs. This, of course, must not be taken too far and lead to the erroneous belief among some circles that without the support of pulpit politics, Reagan himself a born-again Christian, would not have been able to win the elections. The big dissatisfaction of US voters caused by Jimmy Carter's economic and national security policies, the overwhelming support given by small and medium-size businessmen and industrialists, mainly from the South and South-West, independent oil magnates; disaffected labour and more importantly, the big corporations involved in the US military-industrial complex had also assured Reagan a victory in the elections.

Nevertheless, Reagan had to show appreciation for the large support given by fundamentalist, Pentecostal and other charismatic church groups by appointing evangelical activists to some posts in his administration and at least offering a symbolic championing of their cause. This he did, among...

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....other things, by appointing Rev. Robert J. Billings, former president of the National Christian Action Coalition, first executive director of the Moral Majority and coordinator of church voters for Reagan's Presidential campaign to a low post. In fact, Rev. Robert J. Billings had previously been proposed by James A. Baker III, former White House chief of staff, to be an assistant secretary in the Department of Education but Reagan's other aides blocked the appointment for fear of alienating mainstream constituencies in the private and parochial schools.

Carolyn Sundeth, a member of the Board of Directors of Christian Response International (CRI), the US branch of Christian Solidarity International, an organisation which was founded in 1977 in Zurich, Switzerland and incorporated in the United States in 1983, was appointed to the office of Public Policy as liaison officer between the Reagan Administration and the Religious Right. The above body is one of the main organisations which are involved in fanning religious intolerance and hostility among evangelicals and other Christians in socialist countries towards the authorities. CRI's International Board of Reference includes US Congressman Tony Hall, whose brother Sam was arrested in Nicaragua for espionage about a year ago at Atkinson, a Conservative Party MP in the British Parliament, and Chairman of the British affiliate of the International Society of Human Rights (ISHR). The ISHR is on record for saying in its October/November 1986 newsletter that under the Sandinista government censorship has been "far greater than that under Somoza". Its International Advisory Committee includes rabid anti-communist member of the European Parliament who to the disbelief of not only most historians but many average people stated in an interview given to Gene H. Hogberg and other staff members of the Pain Truth magazine at Pasadena, California in 1984 that:

"One third of Europe is today under foreign colonial rule... For us decolonization should not stop in Africa and Asia, Europe too has a right to be decolonized. That is our responsibility towards those nations (in Eastern Europe).... Those nations...were separated from us by foreign violence (but) shall have the opportunity to exercise their right of self-determination...Europe too has the right to be decolonized."

Plain Truth magazine is published by Ambassador College and its branches in various countries of the world. Both are owned by the World Wide Church of God, offices in about twenty countries, including South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Mauritius and Nigeria. Following a pattern established by the transnational corporations, it maintains its regional head office for Southern Africa in Johannesburg. Plain Truth magazine is published in seven European languages and is distributed free of charge worldwide. According to its editor-in-chief, Hebert W. Armstrong, it had a circulation of 6½ million copies per month in the seven languages by 1984, the year of its 50th Anniversary.

when asked by some of its readers on that occasion about its source of funding, Armstrong evaded the question and would only say that his magazine, which does not even accept advertisements, "...is supported by the tithes and freewill contributions of those who voluntarily, without solicitation, have become co-workers with us in this Work..." In this case, the unnamed 'co-workers' are a special category of Plain Truth readers who have sent in a sizeable contribution two or more times within six months and therefore entitled to receive a letter explaining the policy of the Worldwide Church of God from Armstrong and if they agree, are put on a 'Co-worker List' and receive a special monthly letter reporting on progress. Whenever necessary, the 'family of co-workers', as Armstrong calls them, is requested to make special financial contributions to meet the needs of the church. As to who are the members of the 'family of co-workers' remains a big mystery.

Like many other fundamentalist religious sects, the Worldwide Church of God is an apologist of capitalism and equates it with democracy. This is regardless of the class and social interests which it serves, even if its form of 'democracy' is that of the apartheid system. At the same time, it dismisses socialism and popular democracy as ungodly. Similarly, it finds fulfillment of its Gospel message in individual spiritual salvation to the exclusion of social and political justice. It is also characterised by the same attitude of religious intolerance as the other fundamentalist religious sects towards other Christians, not to mention non-Christians, and believes that on his return:

"Christ will place over nations and cities those he has already trained to rule under him. The 'Saints'-Christians who have voluntarily come under the government of God in his (Worldwide) Church and proved their loyalty to God during their mortal lives-will assist Christ in governing the world after they are born again as spirit sons of God..."

In essence, the Worldwide Church of God combines three strains of fundamentalist thought: Firstly, the belief that the Anglo-Zaxons are the chosen people of the Bible and are descendants of the ten lost tribes of Israel who migrated from ancient Assyria and reached the West, a creed which it shares with the racist, anti-Semite and anti-Jew British Israel World Federation (BIWF), an organisation which considers the present Jews as 'the remnants of Judah', a separate state from ancient Israel, which, in its view, was under God's curse. The British Israelites or Covenant people, as followers of this organisation are known, have a large membership within the Anglo-Saxon population of Australia, North America and South Africa. Secondly, it holds a fundamentalist worldview similar to that of the Seventh Day Adventist Church as well as that of the Millennial Dawn, a movement out of which evolves the Watch Tower and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, commonly known as the Jehova's Witnesses.

The Seventh Day Adventist Church was established by William Miller, founder of the American Millennial Association in 1843. This body is one of the main churches born out of social and political frustrations faced by many Americans in the aftermath of the US Civil War and their..

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... inability to face the challenge posed by the relatively rapid process of industrialisation, the growth of a proletarian movement and spread of socialist ideas within it, Bolshevism, German rationalism, the theory of evolution, Catholicism and to crown it all, the failure of their fundamentalist champion, William Jennings Bryan to win the 1896 US presidential elections.

The Seventh Day Adventists believe in dispensationalism, the theology of fundamentalism whose main tenet is a Second Coming of Christ. The dispensationalists hold that when that moment arrives, there will be a secret Rapture and born again Christians would be quickly swept up into the air to welcome Jesus. That moment would come just before a period of terrible tribulation, called the Armagedon, occurred.

At the end of this period, they claim, the triumphant Jesus would return with born-again saints to establish the Millennial Kingdom on Earth. At the time of founding the American Millennial Association in 1843, William Miller predicted that the Second Coming of Christ would occur in 1844. Some dispensationalists, like Jerry Falwell, identified Armagedon with and consider a World War III to be inevitable. Hence their support for Reagan's Star War programme and opposition to any movement which fights for peace, social justice and against all war preparations.

The Seventh Day Adventist regard Saturday as their day of rest from work and main prayer - hence their name. This, inevitably, brings them into serious conflict with many Christian denominations. In addition, they are fanatically opposed to not only socialism and any revolutionary movement, but to Catholicism as well as other religious denominations, including some evangelical ones. They believe that they alone and nobody else is called upon to proclaim and spread of the Word of God among all non-believers.

According to the Europa Year Book, the Seventh Day Adventists have about 22 000 churches, 3 million members, 30 000 schools, 5 000 colleges, 290 hospitals and 80 000 preacher/missionaries spread and active across the world. Their message is strongly augmented by the ownership of or access to 850 radio stations and publication of Sentinel, a magazine written in five languages.

In Latin America, the Seventh Day Adventists have been active for a period of fifty years. Accused of involvement in espionage in and evangelical activities whose end result has been social disruption, strife and bitter internal divisions within some indigenous people and areas in Mexico and other Latin American countries, the Seventh Day Adventists would for a long time remain a strange and suspicious church group among many people.

Ironically enough, in 1969 the Seventh Day Adventist missionaries were involved in a strange and bitter fight for power and influence in the Amuesha village of Mueneso, Peru, which they helped to set up some thirty years before, with the Wycliffe Bible Translators/ Summer Institute of Linguistics (WBT/SIL), another US-based evangelical missionary group. The bitter struggle...

The bitter struggle was centred around a school and had both an economic and a religious aspect to it. On the one hand, the Amuesha Indians wanted the school in their village, run by the Adventist missionaries, to be replaced by a WBT/SIL school because of the high fees they had to pay to maintain it and its teachers. Since they were government-supported, the WBT/SIL bilingual schools were free but unfortunately for the Seventh Day Adventists came wrapped up in a contract package which included evangelism and obviously meant a different interpretation of the Bible from their own. The Adventists would not take this and at the end of the day to gather their loyal followers and moved them across a river to found another village settlement. Thus, the village was divided into two and entire families torn apart.

The Jehova's Witnesses are a fundamentalist evangelical religious sect which was founded by Charles Taze Russel, a Presbyterian and controversial figure from the US state of Pennsylvania towards the end of the last century. In 1913, he was divorced by his wife after accusing him of ill-treatment and adultery. Following his death, he was succeeded by Franklin Rutheford. Their current president is Frederick W. Franz.

With a claimed membership of 2.5 million people throughout the world, the Jehova's Witnesses are evidently the most widespread of all the fundamentalist religious sects and for that matter, one of the most pernicious. They are distinguished by their apocalyptic interpretation of the world, refusal to allow their patients to receive blood transfusion or donate blood because for them the latter constitutes the soul itself, and non-recognition of national symbols like the flag and anthem. The latter reflects a cosmopolitan approach to the national question rather than the presence of a spirit of internationalism on their part. On the contrary, the Jehova's Witnesses are among the most fanatical anti-communist and reactionary evangelical religious sects. In addition, they are opposed to the need to defend one's country against foreign aggression.

As if this was not enough, their theology does not recognise the Christian Trinity of God, the Son and the Holy Ghost, thereby putting them into conflict with most Christian denominations. Also, they state that on the Day of Judgement, only 144 000 human beings will be saved. However, their main spokesmen fail to give answer to the question on what will happen to the members who are not included in this quota. Like many of the other fundamentalist evangelical sects, the guiding principle of the Jehova's Witnesses seem to be "Saved or be Damned"!

In going about their evangelical work, they make use of the 'family contagion' tactic, in which the first converted member of a family is obliged to persuade his or her relatives, friends, workmates etc., to join. As for their target audience, the Jehova's Witnesses prefer to do their evangelical work by and large among poor people, especially within the informal settlements around big cities and towns as well as in the rural areas. This is a well-thought out strategy based on the assumption that since educational standards and exposure to modern modes of thinking among people who stay in these areas are low, they would be more easily influenced.

Though there is no hard evidence linking the Jehova's Witnesses to espionage activities, secret mineral prospecting for transnational corporations or even smuggling, the end result of their activities is not less dangerous. Their aggressive approach in their evangelical work and uncompromising attitude towards those who disagree with them is capable of creating conflicts with the rest of the population of a country and tearing whole families apart, especially in the underdeveloped countries, where there is a very fragile social cohesion and are therefore vulnerable to harmful outside influences.

A less talked about but more pernicious fundamentalist evangelical group is the Wycliffe Bible Translators and Summer Institute of Linguistics (WBT/SIL). Founded by William Cameron Townsend in 1934, it is the largest Protestant evangelical missionary society in the world in terms of personnel sent abroad, mainly from the US and Canada. Born in Orange County, California, in 1896, his father was a poor and devout Presbyterian tenant farmer who soon managed to overcome this lag and achieved a relative measure of prosperity. His first experience as a missionary was to work for the Central American Mission of Dallas, Texas, among the Mayan (Indian) peasants of Guatemala between 1917-32. The Central American Mission was an inter-denominational faith enterprise organised towards the end of the last century to undertake "the evangelization of the world in this generation" by some millenarians, part of the movement gave birth to present-day fundamentalist and evangelical thought.

By 1932, Townsend had gained some experience and fame, and following a vision he claims to have seen in a dream, proposed the translation of the Bible into the Cackchiquel dialect of Guatemala to the Central American Mission. Unable to secure help from the Central American Mission, he decided to leave both Guatemala and the latter to establish his own project, initially called Camp Wycliffe, named after the first translator of the Bible into English, or the Pioneer Mission Agency, itself backed by wealthy Philadelphia millenarians of the Victorious Life Testimony. Later, Camp Wycliffe was to evolve into the present WBT/SIL. Townsend died in April, 1982 at the age of 82 and still active at the head of WBT/SIL.

To the public, WBT/SIL presents itself as "a private, non-profit, non-sectarian, scientific education, international organization". But a careful and deeper analysis of its composition, work on the ground and its effects, as it is documented, show that the above words are just a cover under which it hides its real identity, objectives and nefarious activities in different countries of the world.

Two Danish scholars, Soren Hvalk and Peter Aaby point out in the book Is God an American? that although WBT/SIL claims to be an inter-denominational organisation, "its mandatory Statement of Doctrine ensures that recruits come from the conservative wing of US Protestantism; composition has been estimated roughly at two parts 'evangelical' to one part 'fundamentalist', these terms denoting the conservative and ultra-conservative tendencies in North-American Protestantism. WBT/SIL's expansion has also led to its recruiting more and more members from other western countries. Nevertheless, members are overwhelmingly white American," and of Anglo-Saxon extraction for that matter.

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"Like Townsend", Hvalk and Aaby conclude, "most also have social backgrounds in conservative Evangelical circles in the Mid-west and South" of the US.

In 1963, Townsend established the Jungle Aviation and Radio Service (JAARS) as an extra arm of the WBT/SIL. This event reflected its need and desire to expand its activities into more remote areas of the world, in particular the Amazon basin jungle, hitherto inaccessible to many foreign missionaries and mineral explorers. The JAARS hires its own teams of pilots, mechanics and radio technicians and announcers to meet the increasing demands of its mother body and its sponsors. The personnel of JAARS also shares the fundamentalist evangelical world outlook of the WBT/SIL. In addition to their mainly technical duties, they are expected to and do usually serve as missionaries.

In the face of unwelcome and damaging exposures, Townsend decided to set up the International Linguistics Center based in Dallas, Texas and affiliated to the University of Texas at Arlington in 1971 to enhance its waning credibility as a 'scientific education' body. The International Linguistics Center is virtually a college intended to turn out new translators armed with master degrees and upgrade those returning from field-work. In addition to the International Linguistics Center, WBT/SIL runs a series of training programmes at various universities in North Dakota, Washington State of Oklahoma and also in countries such as the United Kingdom, West Germany, France, Japan, Australia, Brazil and South Korea. Talking about this expansion David Stoll, one of the contributors to the above-mentioned book says that WBT/SIL's "International Linguistics Center is producing the translators for that push into hundreds more native languages around the world. New vistas are opening in Africa."

According to the WBT/SIL's 1978 Prayer Directory, total membership in that year was 3,700 people. Of these, 2,668 (72%) were US citizens; 279 from Australia; 287 Canada; 214 United Kingdom; 76 Switzerland; 68 West Germany; 43 New Zealand; 14 Finland; 14 Sweden; 11 South Africa; 8 Japan; 6 France; 6 Peru; 5 Norway; 3 Belgium; Austria, Denmark, Mexico and Brazil had 2 each while Ghana, Hong Kong, India and Panama had 1 each. Broken down into percentages, this means that the major western countries as a whole accounted for 99.6% of its total personnel and excluding the US, 27%. South Africa alone accounted for .04%.

By the mid-1980s, it had a staff of over 4 250 people engaged in the evangelization and translation of the Bible into nearly 900 dialects and languages and an equal number of ethnic groups in more than 30 countries. By the year 1990, it plans to make entry into 800 new linguistic groups as well as to undertake the recruitment of 3 000 additional staff members.

As for its source of funding, the WBT/SIL relies heavily on donations from wealthy individuals, church groups, religious foundations, business organisations and some government agencies in the countries where it operates, including the CIA. Among its supporters is to be found the Le Tourneau Foundation, which has been one of its principal financial backers since inception.

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As its programme expanded, so did its financial base. For example in 1975 it had an overall budget of 16.9 million US dollars, thus making it the sixth-richest Protestant missionary enterprise in the United States. By 1981, this figure had jumped to 35.5 million US dollars. About 2 million US dollars of this was used for what it terms "financial resources development", i.e. public relations and fund-raising.

Beginning with its first assignment in Mexico in 1934, the organisation had to adopt a dual identity during the course of its work: On the one hand, Townsend presented his organisation as a missionary society to the US public, where the fundamentalist evangelical church groups are not just interested in Bible translations, but need converts as well. The functions for this role are undertaken by the Wycliffe Bible Translators (WBT), within which fund-raising is the major task. On the other hand, Townsend would present his organisation as a scientific-linguistic cultural body only interested in translating the bible and other works of a "high moral character" into the local indigenous languages and not evangelisation to foreign governments, most of which were initially in Latin America, region where a Catholic Church has strong influence over large sectors of the population and would therefore not allow a Protestant evangelical sector to undermine its position. This part of its work is handled by the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL).

The dual identity character of WBT/SIL has enabled it to maintain a decentralised fund-raising system, whereby its members, in a typical evangelical fashion, are obliged to secure some financial support from their home community and church by convincing the latter about the missionary aspect of their work. This has the advantage of keeping expenses for the training of new recruits and field work to the most minimum level. At the same time, by emphasising the translation, alphabetisation and literacy aspects of its work while playing down or denying altogether the evangelisation aspect, SIL has been able to secure itself long-term favourable contracts from foreign governments, especially in Latin America, to do its linguistics and secret evangelical work among indigenous population groups in remote and usually inaccessible parts of these countries. In many cases this has resulted in a situation in which SIL, by serving as the only intermediary between the local governments and the indigenous groups in these countries, has succeeded not only in keeping out those it considers to be intruders in these areas, but has been able to undermine the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of these countries by engaging in smuggling activities, espionage and illegal exploration for the US intelligence agencies and transnational corporations. As Scott A. Robinson, another contributor to the same book mentions:

"There is an undeniable, synchronous link between evangelical missionary efforts and United States strategic interest...When the Republican Party returned to power under Richard Nixon's authoritarian leadership, it was only natural that the simplistic rhetoric of a prior decade would be instrumental in convincing the religious groups to perform covert intelligence tasks, particularly in areas where strategic petroleum and mineral resources abound."

This was particularly so in Ecuador, where Townsend and his staff, after being briefed by the US State Department and using information from the office of Strategic Service (OSS), the predecessor to the CIA, in 1948 began to send in SIL missionaries to successfully blaze the trail for several US corporations, including Texaco-Gulf, in those remote areas inhabited by indigenous groups which were thought to be hostile to foreigners but rich in petroleum, timber and coffee.

To Townsend and his followers, it hardly mattered that the dual identity nature of WBT/SIL ran against Scriptural honesty. The dual identity, to quote David Stoll, "has permitted a single, Janus-faced organisation to explain itself as a faith mission to home supporters in the United States, and as anything but that on the mission field", and has resulted in a situation where the WBT/SIL, "reflecting the discrepancy between the requirements of honesty and empire, (has) institutionalized the plausible denial of Holy writ."

Making full use of the plausible denial as a method, Townsend repeatedly denied the connection between WBT and SIL until August 1953, when Catholic Church bishops in Lima, Peru denounced the Summer Institute of Linguistics and accused it of "making an active and tendentious campaign to convert the Indians of our Amazon to evangelical Protestantism (through) a vast proselytizing action, hiding its true intentions behind a series of disguises." Still, Townsend continued to deny the link. It was only after the bishops took out a University of Oklahoma publication openly linking the two that Townsend was forced to admit the connection. But while doing this, he found it necessary to justify this relation by saying: "Our work of dual nature brings us contracts of dual nature". However, a 1981 SIL brochure was rather more honest on this issue when it quoted Townsend as saying: "One day we'd like to see the Bible available in every language spoken in the world." This, to be sure, is a repetition of the battle cry which Townsend once made when he declared: "Two thousand tongues to go".

Townsend had surely learned the 'plausible denial' method, which forms an essential part of US covert operations, from the US security and intelligence services, with which he maintained close contact since the end of the Second World War. The extent to which this method forms an essential part of US covert action strategy could be seen in 1954, when the US National Security Council (NSC) adopted a plan of subversion and sabotage against unfriendly states. According to this plan:

"Overt foreign activity of the U.S. Government should be supplemented by covert operations...If uncovered the United States can plausibly disclaim any responsibility for them. Specifically, such operations shall include...propaganda, political action, economic warfare, preventative direct action, including sabotage, anti-sabotage, demolition...subversion against hostile states or groups...deception plans and operations."

At this stage, it becomes clear that the fundamentalist evangelical groups, whatever their field of work, can and have indeed played an important part in the covert side of U.S. foreign policy. For instance in 1957, WBT/SIL obtained a series of grants totalling 160,000 U.S. dollars from the US government to undertake bilingual missionary work among the Montagnard and Nung ethnic groups in Vietnam. The funds were channelled to the WBT/SIL through the U.S. Alliance for Industrial Development, a supposedly 'private aid' body which has since been exposed as a CIA front organisation for undertaking covert operations in South East Asia. The evangelical missionary work which WBT/SIL undertook formed part of the US "pacification" plan, in which there was need to overcome the long-held and almost traditional antipathy of the Montagnard and Nung ethnic groups towards the US puppet government of Ngo Dinh Diem in Saigon and recruit men for counter-insurgency operations against the National Liberation Front (NLF). At the end of the day, more than one-third of the nearly 900,000 Montagnards died as cannon fodder as the CIA recruited them into its para-military formations to fight the NLF.

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