

Behar, exist. However, these figures indicate that a substantial proportion of the affected flood and famine regions of India have been hard hit as well.

While the epidemic has now receded, this represents merely a characteristic seasonal pattern in the region. It typically reappears in the spring, and again the next fall, and its virulence is in direct proportion to the existence of famine. Thus, while this epidemic represents the greatest calamity of its type in the region in several decades, it is a mere hint of what will follow if famine and starvation are allowed to increase according to Rockefeller's design.

#### LEFT PURGED THROUGHOUT MIDEAST

NEW YORK, N.Y., Jan. 7 (IPS)-- Reflecting the CIA's rapidly growing right-wing turn in the Middle East, the governments of Egypt, Syria, and Lebanon--in collaboration with the Israelis--have launched a massive campaign to murder and arrest the remaining network of socialists and independent leftists throughout the area.

The hysterical drive by the CIA to consolidate air-tight control of its Middle East empire was triggered by the Soviet cancellation of party chief Leonid Brezhnev's trip to Egypt. The cancellation presented Rockefeller with the immediate threat that the USSR might shift its Middle East policy from an uneasy truce with the CIA's Arab dictators and the Shah to a "revolutionary strategy"--in the words of a leading member of the CIA-linked Council on Foreign Relations in an interview with IPS.

Despite the desperate moves by the U.S. to enforce its Middle East hegemony, however, the superficially solid cornerstones of U.S. Middle East policy--Egypt and Iran--have grown increasingly wobbly since the ICLC and the Soviets stopped the scheduled CIA-rigged Arab-Israeli war in mid-November 1974. By bringing Iraq into a Warsaw Pact-style military agreement, the Soviets could both secure Iraq from CIA attacks and set into motion the joyful process of toppling the lofty Shah from his throne.

#### Arrest and Attack

Following a series of government-provoked controlled riots in Cairo, the Egyptian Interior Ministry headed by loyal Sadat lackey and CIA agent Mamdouh Salem announced the arrest of up to 400 "communists" in Cairo and Alexandria, as well as in the working-class suburbs of Cairo where the Egyptian Communist Party has retained a small and relatively harmless following.

In southern Lebanon, which has been battered by endless Israeli raids and air strikes, the Israeli army has been rounding up and abducting members of the Lebanese Communist Party and Iraqi Baath Party. Under the pretext of striking back at "guerilla bases" near the Israeli border, the Israelis have thus acted selectively to purge the region of pro-Soviet and Iraqi forces. The style of the raids indicates that there has been extensive collaboration between Israeli intelligence and the Lebanese secret police. The precedent for such selective Israeli raids was set in April 1973, when Israeli special forces launched commando attacks on Beirut, assassinating three key leaders of the Palestine Liberation Organization. The Labor Committee intelligence unit learned from informed Arab sources that the 1973 attack was launched with the aid of PLO boss and CIA agent Yasser Arafat.

Meanwhile, Syrian dictator Hafez Assad was in Lebanon today to discuss the question of "Lebanese security" with Beirut officials amid reports that the hefty Palestine Liberation Army, PLO units loyal to Arafat, have been shifted into Lebanon. The PLA would be used in this context to enforce Arafat's discipline on dissident Palestinian elements.

#### Nato and the Shah

As the fascist clean-up operation proceeded, His Imperial Majesty, the Shah of Iran, was sent on a tour of his new realm, visiting Jordan today before arriving in Cairo tomorrow. While in itself the trip is of merely psychological significance, the Washington Post- which last week recommended U.S. support for what it termed "Iranian imperialism" - reported that the Shah was considering the sale of over 100 American-made F-5A interceptor jets, second-hand, to Egypt. Such a move would require the prior approval of the Pentagon, and as such, represents a direct U.S. move to take over from the Soviets as Egypt's main arms supplier.

With the CIA-backed Shah acting to consolidate the Arab world under his umbrella, in an unprecedented move NATO-controlled Turkey reached an agreement yesterday with its "Islamic brothers" in Libya for setting up a joint military weapons production plan. Under the provisions of the accord, officers from "radical, anti-imperialist" Libya will be trained under NATO-linked instructors in Turkey! Previous to the current rapid right-wing turn, the CIA had attempted to maintain the sham that Libya under Muammar Qaddafi was "independent" of the West. Not coincidentally, the Libyan embargo on the supply of oil to the U.S. was lifted yesterday. A spokesman for the Turkish government told New Solidarity that, as far as Turkey was concerned, "the barrier had been overcome" for increased NATO-Arab cooperation.

By threatening to swallow up the entire Arab world-- long viewed as part of the nonaligned nations-- within NATO and CENTO, Rockefeller is forcing the Soviets to make a painful decision. The Rockefellers

hope that by sheer brute force and heavy-handed military threats they will "persuade" the USSR to renounce any revolutionary ambitions in the Middle East and elsewhere. It is now up to Moscow to call Rockefeller's bluff.