

28 AUG 1972

HENRY J. TAYLOR

STATINTL

Our Friend, King Hassan

Moroccan King Hassan II's attempted assassination by jets that strafed his plane, implicating strongman Defense Minister Gen. Mohammed Oufkir who committed suicide, was clearly an internal putsch. This is, the conviction of our Central Intelligence Agency. But that the King is caught in a vicious internal crisis is not the whole truth.

More than 200 Moroccans were on trial in Marrakesh for sedition at the time of last year's appallingly bloody July 10 attempt on King Hassan's life in his Skhirat seaside palace.

The CIA now believes the Skhirat horror had been plotted for at least 14 months, although it took the King totally by surprise. And King Hassan himself has told me that he was then, and remains, utterly shocked by the size, scope and depth of the conspiracies.

PRO-AMERICAN KING HASSAN also stated that he does not know to what degree his troubles are attributed to the U.S.S.R. But the CIA now finds that the Soviet Union is launching intensified subversion in his country. And the wider target is anti-Communist Spain.

There are two Spanish enclaves on Morocco's northern coast. Ceuta, opposite Gibraltar, has been a Spanish possession since 1580. Melilla, 130 miles east, has been Spanish since 1497, the era during which Columbus discovered America. And there is, as well, the vast Spanish Sahara south of Morocco's border.

The Sahara is larger than India. The Spanish Sahara covers 102,000 sq. miles. You travel from nowhere to nowhere through practically nothing. The searing heat flows across the sand like liquid tin and you must visit that place sometime if only to realize how far into the future Dante saw.

But the Spanish Sahara has tremendous phosphate and other valuable raw material deposits which Spain is currently developing.

IT IS THE DOMAIN of the crack, colorful, sun-scorched 6,000-man Spanish Foreign Legion with its immensely picturesque Camel Corp, straight cut of Beau Geste by Spanish application. But the CIA has now discovered that the Soviet is sending in arms from the U.S.S.R. and

satellite countries, chiefly East Germany and Czechoslovakia.

The Soviet Union operates its African insurrections from Leipzig, East Germany. The tools are African natives, blacks and Arabs alike. The CIA knows that between 6,000 and 8,000 constantly undergo guerrilla cadre training in Leipzig and Bautzen, East Germany, Prague, Czechoslovakia, and in Castro's Cuba.

The new revolutionary organization is called Morehob. Some desert tribes are known as "blue people" because of their indigo robes. Morehob is a dialect word for these people. The Leipzig headquarters formed it in July. Edouardo Moha is the leader. His base is Rabat, the capital of Morocco. And Morehob is already making its dangerous thrusts into Ceuta and Melilla as well as the Spanish Sahara.

MOREHOB'S PROPAGANDA CLAIMS these Spanish areas should be integrated into Morocco. It is building anti-Spanish cells inside Morocco, training guerrillas there under Leipzig's direction and terrorizing Spaniards in Spain's territories.

Following the (often denied) Soviet line, Morehob is also intensely, systematically anti-Semitic.

Morocco has been the largest remaining Jewish community in the Arab world. I myself have heard King Hassan say that he considers an attack against Arab Jews to be a personal attack against himself. But Morehob capitalizes on the fright of all Moroccan Jews.

Arab Jews in Morocco totaled an amazing 300,000. This has dwindled to less than 30,000. Many have left for Israel, where they are known as Sephardim and represent an agonizing problem there.

Still not appearing in the news we read is the fact that the Kremlin is using Morehob well against both pro-American King Hassan and anti-Communist Spain in an explosive area which likewise threatens us.

Except for Israel, Tunisia and Morocco the entire southern rim of the Mediterranean is hostile to the United States. Now Morocco has the added push from Moscow's Morehob.