

## IDEOLOGICAL DEFEAT

*There's a crucial difference between looking at a strange machine as magic, and trying to figure out how it works.*

CHRISTOPHER  
ANVIL

Arakal, King of the Wesdem O'Cracy's, got up early on the day of the Soviet ambassador's visit, finished his exercise at the Post, studied the latest plot as brought up to date by Colputt's flasher, and then met with the Council.

Easing into the luxurious armchair at the head of the table, with the white-bearded Colputt to his left and broad trusty Slagiron to his right, Arakal once again got stuck in the side by the double-beaked, two-headed bird that adorned the hilt of his sword, the scabbard being guided in the wrong direction by the support for the left arm of the chair.

"This meeting," Arakal began, as he reached down and got the beak of the bird out of his flesh, "will now begin. In case anyone hasn't seen the plot this morning, the Kebeckers are as good as their word, and the Bruns-wickers are going along with them. The St. Lawrence is watched from the coast in, the armies are ready to move, and Kebeck Fortress is reinforced. I've sent word by flasher that if the Russ make a lodgment anywhere on the south bank of the river, we will help take them. If they try to get Kebeck For-tress, we will cross the river west of the fortress, and hit the Russ from behind."

There was a murmur of approval. Arakal got the sword situated, and sat back in the chair.

To Colputt's left, Smith, Colputt's shrewd assistant, turned respectfully to Arakal. "By your leave—?"  
"Yes, Smith?"

"We've got the night-flasher work-ing."

There was a general stir. Across the table, young Beane, stuck handling the foreign diplomats, looked surprised.

"But I thought that was impos-sible!" He glanced at Arakal. "Beg pardon, sir."

Arakal nodded. "Go ahead. I've said my say."

Smith said, "Old Kotzebuth had us thinking it was impossible, but we decided to try it anyway. It works. Of course, the sun has set, and we have to spend some oil. But it works."

Slagiron's broad face creased in a grim smile. He said nothing, but Arakal had a good idea what he was thinking. The Russ prided them-selves on their superior communica-tions.

Further down the table, Casey, Slagiron's chief organizer, growled hopefully, "Will this work in bad weather?"

Smith shook his head. "Fog, snow, or rain blots out the flash."

"The Russ," said Casey, "can talk to each other almost any time."

"Well, they're using Old Stuff."

"That doesn't help us any. If we've got a bunch of them cut off, what do they do but yell for help, and here comes one of their damned iron birds, or a rescue force on wheels." He turned to Colputt. "We've got to do something about their long-talk-ers."

"Radios," nodded Colputt. "We've got a crew working on it, and I think we're finally getting a grip on the thing. Now, don't misunderstand me, I don't say we will ever be able to make long-talkers the equal of what the Russ have. But we should be able to do three things: First, we should be able to set up our own long-talkers to help out the flasher network. Second, we should be able to listen in on what the Russ say. Third, we should be able to turn out portable garblers to block their long-talkers. That is, they could still yell for reinforcements, but all that could be heard on the other end would be garble."

"That would all help."

Arakal said, "Anything would be an improvement. But why should we have to take second place? You're as smart as any of their men—probably smarter. Smith here is as shrewd as any they have to

offer. Why must they be in front of us?"

Colputt shook his head sadly. "Old Stuff. They have more Old Stuff than we have. Captured radios have been turned over to me, and we've studied them, thinking to make our own, but to no use. We can't begin to work out the way they're made. The trouble is, the Old Soviets got in a fight with the Old O'Cracy's, and the Russ threw more stuff, did more damage, got the edge on the O'Cracy's. I don't say they won. But they did more damage. They have more Old Stuff left over. Long-talkers, iron birds, power sail-ers. We were knocked off our perch entirely. They had enough left over to use it still. Some of it, even, they may know how to make again. Not the long-talkers. But other things. They threw us back so far that I can look at the latest of our old books about radios, and see the words in front of me, and read them, and not know what they mean. That shows how far we were thrown back."

"Then," frowned Arakal, "this special crew you set up—"

"Ah," said Colputt, beaming, "that's different. We go at it now from the other end. We use the old-est of the old books—those we can understand. And we're working our way forward. The Russ, now, have their stocks of Old Stuff. Very useful. But, when it runs out—"

Slagiron looked at Colputt, smiling. "You aim to have a position you can hold?"

Colputt nodded, and his eyes glinted.

Arakal glanced at the clock on the wall. "This ambassador of theirs gets here when?"

Beane said, "Shortly before the sun is at full height, sir." He craned to look at the clock. "Another three hours, say."

"What is this one like?"

Beane shook his head. "The same as the rest."

"He is on safe conduct, of course?"

"Yes, sir. Worse luck. But he wouldn't come without it."

"There is always a chance of treachery—either way. Have all your precautions ready. Does this one talk English, or—"

Beane brightened a little. "There is that difference. This one does talk English. Of course, when he talks—"

"Let your translator take a place amongst the guards. Who knows? He might overhear something."

Beane nodded, smiling.

"Yes, sir. But I think they learned that lesson the last time."

Vassily Smirnov, Ambassador-General, glanced uneasily at Simeon Brusilov, Colony Force Commander, as the helicopter thundered around them.

"Just how safe," said Smirnov, "is a safe conduct from these savages?"

Brusilov said moodily, "Safe enough. As long as you don't look too long at any of their women, sleep with your ears under the covers, or drink anything except water or milk. Watch out for this Arakal. He's smart in streaks."

"What does that mean?"

"He's ignorant in obvious ways, but just overlook that. Where it counts, he's smarter than any of us."

Smirnov frowned. "An odd statement for our own commander to make."

"I say it because I know. And I did not enjoy gaining the knowledge."

"And just where is he smart?"

"Militarily."

"You flatter yourself. That is not what counts. Ideology is what counts in the end. That is why I am here."

"It didn't help us much in the last ambush."

"With your technological advantage, I'm surprised the natives dare to ambush your men."

Brusilov shook his head. "Comrade, kindly get it through your skull that there are two technologies on this continent. One is shipped to us packaged and ready to use, but if it goes bad, who is going to fix it? The other is growing up steadily, and knitting the pieces of the continent together, and while it is in every way less impressive than ours, there is much more of it, and it is getting very tricky."

"For instance, there is this sun-sig-nal system. It started in Arakal's sec-tor, and now he's linked up with the descendants of the Canadian sur-vivors. Six months ago, we tried to cut Arakal's zone up the line of the Hudson, preparatory to biting off the whole of the old Northeast United States. The idea was, with that in our hands, we'd have a base suitable for protection of our colonies to the south. Arakal saw the plan in a flash. It was nothing but traps and am-bushes, and dead stragglers and small parties yelling for help all the way from the time we hit the Forest.

"But we expected that. What we didn't expect was that an army would come boiling out of Quebec and the old seacoast Provinces, and get to us before we could finish the job. Not too long ago, Arakal would have had to send couriers. Now he uses the sun-signal system. We were lucky to get out of there with a whole skin."

"Certainly the savages' speed of motion is inconsiderable, compared with yours."

"We have the edge there, all right. It's just too bad so much of the road net is centered on the worst zones of lingering radioactivity."

"Is that their camp, there?" Brusilov looked out, to see a tall steel tower. A gun thrust out and fol-lowed the helicopter, but didn't fire. "That is one of their sun-signal towers. You see, these 'savages' have learned to work steel again."

"You should bomb them—destroy them!"

Brusilov looked at the ambassador. "Will you increase my ship-ments of fuel, and bombs, and planes? Will you get me more pilots? Do you know what this one trip is costing me in gas, and hence in fu-ture freedom of action?" He glanced out. "There is their camp. Try to re-member that they are not as stupid as they may seem to you. Backward, yes. Stupid, no."

Arakal shook the hand of Smir-nov, smiling gravely but noting the softness of the ambassador's grip. Such was not the grip of the Russ commander. The ambassador was like the rest of their ambassadors, but Brusilov, now, was a good man.

"The great Central Committee," Sinirnov began impressively, "sends its greetings to you, despite the fact that your actions have not been of the best."

Brusilov muttered something and removed himself out of earshot, to the far end of the tent. Slagiron ex-cused himself and went over to talk to Brusilov.

"This war," said Smirnov, with the air of an oracle, "costs much money, many lives. It must end."

Arakal smiled pleasantly.

"Then get off the continent." "This land is ours," said Smirnov, spacing his words, and making his tone deep and impressive.

"Go home," said Arakal brusquely. "*Leave.*"

"Our colonists grow their wheat, plant their trees, speak their tongue, sing their songs. This is our land and belongs to us, just as the land of your tribe belongs to you, so long as we grant it to you."

Arakal gave a low growl of irrita-tion, then looked up as Casey came over. Casey glanced around, appar-ently for Slagiron.

"Excuse me, Mr. Smirnov," Ara-kal said. "What is it, Casey? Your chief is over there with Commander Brusilov."

Casey nodded, looked thought-fully at Smirnov, who was waiting impatiently for the interruption to cease, and then Casey spoke intently to Arakal, seeming somehow to send an additional message along with the spoken words: "Carlo is there."

Arakal's eyes momentarily shut, and he seemed to shiver. Then he drew a deep careful breath.

"I see," he said. "Well, I don't think it's worth bothering your chief with that. You can tell him later."

"Yes, sir." Casey smiled, bowed slightly, turned, and left.

Arakal looked at Smirnov blandly.

"Now, Mr. Ambassador, let me explain why you should do as I sug-gest. The Old O'Cracy's, which is to say the great clan to which we all here belong, once owned all the land, that which is good, that which is sick, and that upon which you have planted your colonies. The O'Cracy's once fought at your side long ago, and were mighty warriors, armed by the incomparable wizards who lived at that time. But they grew weary of war, and made fewer magi-cal weapons than the Old Soviets, who in time struck

them down. Why, or how this came about, I do not know. That is of the past. Both sides suffered, but that is over. Now, how-ever, the land was ours, so it is not stealing when we take it back. It again will be ours, because we are growing stronger much faster than that part of your clan which is over here. This is why you should now get out."

Smirnov looked at Arakal and laughed. "There is not and never was a 'clan' of the O'Cracy's. Your 'knowledge' is a mixture of fables and errors. I suppose that word *O'Cracy* came originally from the word 'democracy,' an inferior gov-ernmental system which your leaders made much of in the past, before we destroyed them. But never mind that. I will explain to you why you must not only end your rebellion, but must, and will, come to us that your tribe may be lifted by stages into ideological purity and civilized knowledge. And that you may know that my words are indisputable, I will tell you first just who and what I am."

Arakal leaned forward in his seat, as one braces himself who faces into a wind.

Smirnov said, "As you know, the rulers of all the Soviets are known as Party Members, and not just anyone can be a Party Member. Only the child of a Party Member can be a Party Member, except by direct ac-tion of the great Central Committee itself. Now, Mr. Arakal, you are sprung out of nothing, and have nothing behind you. But I am the child of a Party Member, who was the child of a Party Member, who was the child of a Party Member, who was the child of a Party Mem-ber, and indeed even I do not know for how many generations back this may go. You see the difference?"

Arakal's eyes narrowed, and he said nothing.

"You observe," said Smirnov, "that I speak your tongue. You can-not speak my tongue. But I speak yours with ease. It is nothing to me. This is because of my *education*." He held up his right hand, turned the palm toward Arakal, and made a little thrusting motion of the hand toward Arakal. "Education is to be taught at such an age and in such a way that the knowledge becomes one with the person who is taught. He need make little effort to learn, Mr. Arakal, because he is naturally intelligent, and taught by skilled per-sons, whose job it is to teach, and to do *nothing else*. Such a thing you have not, but it is mine by right of birth. Those are two things we have that you do not have and cannot get without coming to us: One, the Party. Two, Education. But that is not all."

Arakal watched the glint in Smir-nov's eyes, and listened to the wasp note in Smirnov's voice.

"Three," said Smirnov, "we have Technology. Let me point out to you, Mr. Arakal—and remember who it is that is pointing it out—that when your ancestors dared to raise their hand against us, the Central Committee gave the word: 'Strip from them all their power and all their technology, that they may never have power again. Because it is only from technology that power comes.' But, in the same order, the Central Committee said, 'See to it that our technology is stored, good and plenty, with grease and all the instructions to keep it running.' And so it was done. And our ancestors smashed yours to their knees, and then they kicked them off their knees onto their face, and they smashed your technology, and you can never rebuild it, because you have no Edu-cation. You are savages, nothing more, and never can be more, except you come to us to ask for it. Those are *three* reasons, and now there is the fourth, and most important of all."

Arakal pushed his chair back, and took pains to get the swordhead free of the arm of the chair.

"The Party, Education, Tech-nology," said Smirnov, "and then the greatest—Ideology. And it is in this that *I* am an expert. I could have been anything, but I chose this, the most difficult of all—"

Arakal came to his feet.

"It has been interesting to listen to you, Mr. Ambassador."

"I am not through. Sit down."

Behind Arakal, someone drew his breath in sharply.

Arakal didn't move, and there was a sudden hush.

Across the tent, Brusilov came hurrying, his expression harried. Slagiron was right beside him, alert and self-possessed.

Smirnov said irritably, "Sit down, sit down, Arakal."

Brusilov glanced in astonishment at Smirnov.

Smirnov raised his hand and thrust up one finger. "First, the Party." He thrust up another finger. "Second, Education." He thrust up a third finger. "Third, Technology." Each time he put up a finger, he gave his hand a little shake. He put up the fourth finger. "And fourth, *Ideol-ogy*." He looked at the King of the O'Cracy's. "*Ideology*, Arakal."

Brusilov's jaw fell open.

From behind Arakal came a murmur.

Slagiron's lips tightened and his eyes glinted, but aside from that, there was no play of expression on his face.

Smirnov looked around.

"What's all this? Be seated, the lot of you!"

Brusilov glanced anxiously around.

Arakal could sense his men gath-ering behind him. Now Brusilov's pi-lots and guards came running, their hands on their holstered weapons.

Arakal took pains to keep his hands at his sides, though his left hand tilted the scabbard just enough so that he could get his sword out quickly.

The situation got through to Smir-nov, who came angrily to his feet. Brusilov stared at him.

"Mr. Ambassador, what have you—"

"*Bah!*" said Smirnov. "I am trying to teach this savage a minor lesson! Very minor! But it is all that is suited to his intelligence! The fools know nothing and so cannot think!"

Slagiron's eyes widened. He glanced at Arakal.

Arakal sensed the opportunity, sucked in his breath and gazed sky-ward for an instant, imploring guid-ance. He cleared his throat.

Behind him, there was an ugly murmur, and the clearly perceptible rattle of loosened swords.

Brusilov's men glanced around.

Behind them, more of the O'Cracy's stood ready, their eyes on Arakal, waiting the command.

From above, the words came to Arakal.

He raised his right hand, palm out, and spoke distinctly, and his trans-lator spoke after him in the tongue of the Russ.

"Men of the Russ—go in peace. We have no fight with you."

Brusilov exhaled, and glanced at Arakal with suddenly bright eyes. Behind Brusilov, his own men mur-mured, the sound one of surprise, and relief, and something more.

Arakal looked steadily back at Brusilov, and smiled, admiring the poise and insight of the Russ com-mander.

Slagiron grinned suddenly, and clapped Brusilov on the shoulder. He said something in his ear, and Brusi-lov gave his head a little shake, but smiled nevertheless.

Smirnov looked around, his eyes narrowed.

"What's this? Why are they—"

Brusilov abruptly grabbed Smir-nov by the arm, and whirled him around.

Arakal shouted, "You men! Form an honor guard for the warriors of the Russ!"

All at once, there was a cheer.

Brusilov propelled Smirnov be-tween the lines, and the other Russ hurried along behind. Slagiron and Arakal went to the front of the tent, and watched the Russ climb into their big iron birds.

As they took off, Arakal smiled and waved, and from inside the iron birds, some of the Russ smiled and waved back.

As the helicopter thundered around them, Smirnov spoke furi-ously.

"You dared to lay your hand on me! And I am a *Party Member of the Fourth Degree!*"

"Mr. Ambassador," said Brusilov shortly, "would you rather have had your head sliced off and rolled around on the floor of that tent?"

"You *touched* me!"

Brusilov opened his mouth and shut it. His gaze seemed to turn in-ward for an instant, then he took a hard look at Smirnov, his gaze cold and measuring.

Smirnov, staring back, put a hand on the holstered automatic at his side.

Brusilov tensed, then caught him-self. For a long moment, he was motionless. Then he gave his head a little shake.

"No," he said. "No, it would be wrong." He looked at Smirnov again, then Brusilov went to a seat across the aisle and sat down, his face set and unresponsive.

Around them, the helicopter thundered, as it carried them above the tower of the O'Cracy's.

Arakal and Slagiron bent intently over the plot.

"So far," said Arakal, "there is no word from the Kebeckers of the Russ fleet entering the river. The Kebeckers say there is no sign of the Russ at all."

"Hm-m-m," said Slagiron. "I wonder if they could be going to try the Hudson again—with their main fleet this time."

"In that case, they would be in sight by now. Our lookout on Long Island has seen nothing, and the same word has come in from our boat off the Hook."

"Peculiar. Still, there is a delay in getting word to us."

"True. We get the word quickly from Kebeck Fortress over the flasher, but a runner crosses from Long Island by boat."

Smith cleared his throat apologetically.

"Beg pardon, sir. Just last week, while you were ... ah ... working with Carlo, we got the flasher set up across Long Island Sound."

"What? There's a tower there?"

"No, sir, that would be too risky, but the sea is flat, and we can do without towers over that distance. There's still a delay in reports from off the Hook. But from the Sound, in good weather, we get them fast. There was no long delay on this report."

"Good. But now, you see," he said, turning to Slagiron, "that leaves us up in the air. They've sent this new ambassador. This Central Committee is as regular as clockwork. They never send a new ambassador without sending reinforcements, and they never send reinforcements without sending their fleet. Now, we've had the ambassador. Where's the fleet? We want to take that blow on our shield, not on our head."

The door opened briefly, and they heard a rumbling thud, like distant thunder. Arakal looked around, to see Colputt, smiling faintly, hang his coat on a peg and walk over.

"Now they're bombing the conference site," said Colputt.

Arakal smiled. "The more they drop there, the fewer they can dump on our heads. And they bring those things a long distance."

Slagiron shook his head. "This ambassador is their worst yet. If a thing is disastrous, he does it at once. No doubt now his pride has to be soothed."

Colputt added, "And their fleet is sighted. We just received word."

"What? *Where?*"

"Penobscot Bay."

Arakal looked at the contoured plot, and the wide deep indentations in the Maine coast.

Colputt went on, "They are landing troops at Bangor. Before the landing, their planes knocked out the flasher tower at Skowhegan."

Slagiron looked at the plot thoughtfully, and glanced at Arakal. Arakal turned to Smith. "Send word to the Kebeckers. Describe this landing. And tell them *Carlo is ready.*"

Slagiron said, "Will they come?"

"Why not?" said Arakal, looking at the plot, where the markers were already being set down. "Could we ask for more?"

"On the map," said Slagiron, "this will look bad. From Bangor it is only ... say . . . a hundred and eighty miles to Kebeck Fortress, across country. The Russ can cut straight for the river, and split us off

from the Kebeckers—on the map."

Arakal smiled. "A hundred and eighty miles of *what?* And when the Russ get there, they're on the wrong bank of the river. Meanwhile, their fleet is stuck at Bangor, or coming around by the Gulf, or else it gets there without the troops. Try the Kebeckers, and see what they say."

Brusilov returned the major's sa-lute.

"Sir," said the major, glancing around at the rugged peaks, and swatting at mosquitoes, "that map is either wrong, or we're turned around. There *is* no road. And the sniping is getting worse."

Smirnov spoke up sharply.

"You are a soldier, are you not? You expect to fight in a war, do you not?"

Brusilov spoke coolly, "We aren't lost, Major. Simply assume that the map is right, and cast around for the road. Don't worry. It will be broken up, but it's there."

The major said stubbornly, "The men say this is going to be the Hud-son all over again. They don't like it. They are growing hard to manage."

Brusilov smiled soberly and shook his head. "Have them look at this mess of lakes, ponds, and swamps. Did we have anything like this on the march up the Hudson? No." He waved a hand at the cloud of small black flies that, interspersed with oc-casional mosquitoes, settled on him as soon as he devoted himself to any-thing else. "So," he said, "it is not the Hudson all over again. This is quite different. Console yourself, my friend. We have variety, at least."

The major looked sullen, but sa-luted. Then he trudged off up one of the interminable hills over which the road through the heavy forest climbed and plunged.

Brusilov glanced at Smirnov. "Isn't this far enough? Speaking as a merely military man, devoid of ideological finesse, I think this is far enough."

"We must press on," said Smir-nov. "Until we are sure the natives are fully committed."

Brusilov shook his head.

"Comrade, in a general way, this plan is not bad; but there are details, and it is the details that will ruin us. Arakal will not react as you expect. You would draw him here by a threat, fall back before him, lure him to the coast, embark, and strike else-where. He will not be drawn, how-ever. He *will not take the bait.*"

Smirnov smiled in a superior way.

"I know the aboriginal mind. This native leader is without training. He is brave, and has personal presence, but no sense of grand strategy. He is already beaten in the realm of ideas."

"No, he is not." Brusilov frowned and waved away a cloud of the tiny flies. "That is the trouble. He is a master of conflict, in the realm of ideas as elsewhere."

"Look here," said Smirnov, sud-denly earnest. "The method by which the fellow's ancestors were beaten was quite simple. We took a little advantage, repeatedly, until we had a big advantage, and at each point the change was too small to stimulate them to action. The records are somewhat confused as to details, but obviously when we had *enough* advantage, *then* we struck. Now, this conflict here is the same thing, except that there is no longer another ideologically able side to op-pose our movements. We have now the fruit of the last war, an ideologi-cal and technological advantage they can never overcome. Specifically, our speed of movement is faster than theirs. That is enough. It is un-beatable. It is the advantage that will give us everything else."

"I am not sure of it."

Smirnov's earnestness gave out, and he spoke irritably. "You were defeated. Your plan was good, but you lacked subtlety. You proceeded straight ahead. 'Cut them up the line of the Hudson!' A good idea. But you were too direct. You should have drawn them elsewhere first."

Brusilov shook his head. "It was their solar flasher that wrecked my plan. They are not aborigines! Ab-origines do not know of technology. Arakal's people remember what they could do; they know it is possible. They keep thinking, trying to find the way again. It is *that* that distin-guishes them from aborigines."

"Well, their solar flasher is what will destroy them now, by decoying their main forces to this place."

And it is our speed of movement that will then deliver the deciding blow."

"I hope so," said Brusilov. "But where is Arakal?"

Arakal, perspiring in the humid foggy dawn, looked through the precious long-seeing glasses, and noted the lone guard pacing atop the breastworks, on the far side of the canal.

Beside Arakal, Slagiron murmured, "They seem asleep."

Arakal nodded. "They would be flattered to know how many are watching them. They have never had so many of us at once before- though we have traded with them secretly so long they no longer dread us."

Slagiron shut his glass with a snap, and grinned.

"Now, we will find out if all those crisscrossing rivers shown on our maps are obstacles or not. Only let us not be invisibly burned to bits by all the slagged ruins in the vicinity, and we will even see if your plan can work. . . War without blood. . I doubt it, but it is worth a try."

Arakal glanced around and saluted the Kebecker leader, who beamed and raised his hand. Then Arakal turned to signal to his own cavalry chief.

The cavalryman grinned and took off his hat in a sweeping gesture, then turned and beckoned to the dense woods behind him.

A long line of mounted men in gray emerged from the forest and, at a walk, started down toward the canal. Behind them came teams of oxen dragging long heavy logs, and behind them came small groups of infantry, some stripped to their waists, all quiet, and most looking cheerful, as if on some kind of outing.

Atop the breastworks, the sentry halted, turned, and started back. Hypnotized by his routine, he paced methodically, halted again, turned, started back, and suddenly froze. He stared up and down the line of smiling horsemen leisurely approaching the canal, stared at the oxen pulling the logs, looked hard at the infantrymen gaily jumping into the water, and before he could recover, someone called out in his own tongue, making him uncertain for an instant who this army belonged to.

Meanwhile, the infantry swam the canal. In the water, the engineers were taking the ends of the logs as they were rolled down, and pulling them out into the water. The cavalry were swimming their horses across, and soon, if all went well, the guns and catapults could go across on the bridges.

Atop the breastworks, the troops were now banging the stupefied guard on the back, and he himself was starting to grin and laugh, and now shook his head and turned to shout to someone, who climbed up, looked around in amazement, stared in both directions up and down the canal, where the gray uniforms were crossing over, and finally shrugged and spread his hands.

Slagiron murmured his satisfaction, and turned to Arakal.

"You were right. No shots, no advance bombardment, *no attack*, just an *advance*."

"As long as it lasts," said Arakal. "When we hit the garrison at Salis-bury, it may be different."

"If we get to Salisbury," said Slagiron, grinning, "we've got the whole colony. They'll have one sweet time getting us out once we get to Salisbury."

"Remember," Arakal warned, "they must be treated like O'Cracy's. They are good hard workers and decent people, and if we treat them right, they will *become* O'Cracy's."

Slagiron nodded. "I have pounded it into the troops. *They* know. I even almost believe it myself now."

Brusilov, half eaten up by bugs, was in a murderous frame of mind. He had three tanks in a bog, half a dozen out for repairs, the sniping was continuous and getting worse, and worst of all, the men had no heart for the fight. Smirnov, however, was delighted.

"I would say we are now drawing in the first of Arakal's troops. Would you agree?"

"Hard to say," growled Brusilov. "All this uproar could not be caused by locals."

"You can't be--" Brusilov frowned at a courier running up the slippery ruts. "What's this?"

The courier, out of breath, saluted and held out a slip of paper. Brusilov unfolded it, read quickly, and stared at Smirnov.



"What is it?" demanded Smirnov. Brusilov handed it to him. Smirnov took it, read it, stiffened, looked up blankly, read it again and, absently fanning at the bugs, stared blankly at the towering hills.

"Impossible. Delaware in the hands of New Brunswick troops. The Army of Quebec on the line of the Nanticoke River. Arakal swinging around to the east of Salisbury. *The whole Maryland-Delaware Colony is lost.* How can it have happened?"

Brusilov said grimly, "I've tried to explain to you not to underestimate Arakal. Well, now what do we do?"

Smirnov broke out in a fine perspiration.

"It is *impossible!*" He glanced at Brusilov. "You are the military commander! What is your opinion? This is your specialty!"

"Oh, of course. But you are the one with the letter of authority from the Central Committee. Also, you have the ideology."

"What would you *advise?*"

"Pull out. Maybe we can still save Carteret, Beaufort, and Florida Colony. We aren't doing any good here."

Smirnov stared into the distance. Suddenly he drew a deep breath.

"It is *impossible* for an unlettered fool who thinks the O'Cracy's fought the Russ with magic wands to win this contest! He has won a chance victory, but he has lost the war!"

Brusilov shook his head wearily. "How do you reason *that?*"

"He has shifted the full strength of this part of the continent to the south, against our colonies. We will strike to the north, take Quebec Fortress, open the line of the St. Lawrence, and later strike simultaneously up and down the Hudson to cut off all New England. He has won the Maryland-Delaware Peninsula; but can he hold it, can he pacify it? We will at once warn the other colonies of his atrocities. They must stand in their own defense at once.

Meanwhile, we will get this burr out of our hide, get this river fortress into our own hands!"

"You want the troops back on the ships?"

"No! Every last soldier must come *here!* Then send the ships around to come down the St. Lawrence and ferry us across. We will now cut loose from them entirely and march overland!"

Brusilov considered it thoughtfully, and shook his head. "No. Look—"

But Smirnov made an axe-like gesture of the hand, from the shoulder straight out.

"Cut the continent, from the Atlantic to the river line. Wheel south and east, smash all resistance in our path. Cut Arakal loose from his base. Swiftly, speed, decision—and the ignorant tribesman is whipped. In this first fight we will turn our soft soldiers into hardened troops, veterans. Then we will see!"

Brusilov stood thinking, his right hand on the flap of his holster. Finally he shrugged, and turned to give the necessary orders.

Arakal reread the message that had come in flashes of light down the line of towers from New England. He looked at Slagiron.

"The Russ are heading for Kebeck Fortress, overland" He handed the message to the leader of the Kebeckers, who had just joined them, and whose translator, standing between his chief and Arakal, translated Arakal's comment, then bent over the message and read it in a low voice.

The Kebecker chief glanced at the plot, where the red emblems climbing the green and brown slopes and surrounded by a multitude of small blue markers were now being moved further forward. Then he turned with a slight smile, to give the message back to Arakal.

"*Ca sera un peu difficile pour les Russes,*" the Kebecker said, speaking slowly and distinctly, and holding one hand up to silence his translator.

Arakal winced and glanced at the ceiling. It came to him that the Kebecker had somehow learned of the hundreds of hours he, Arakal, had put into a study of the Kebeck tongue, while the depth of winter made campaigning impractical. Arakal had been prepared to forget all about this and rely on the translators, but someone's sense of humor had given away the secret. All winter Slagiron and the others

had joked slyly at Arakal's laborious progress, while Arakal, chafing at the depths of linguistic incapacity revealed to him with each day's effort, never-theless had refused to give up. Deter-minedly good-natured, he replied, "While you pass the winter in per-fumed idleness, I am laying the groundwork for the future. If we are going to clout the Russ in the spring-time, one of us, at least, ought to un-derstand the Kebeckers' chief. He has shrewd ideas, but the translators are no military geniuses, and now and then they miss the point. And it is up to us to solve it somehow. You know as well as I do that their chief can't speak a word of English—not that he hasn't at least tried."

Slagiron shook his head. "He *did* memorize that greeting when we got Carlo across the border and went up there for a talk."

Arakal nodded, remembering the incident soberly. "That's what I mean."

Colputt turned to Smith. "Did we ever figure out what he said?"

Smith looked helpless. "Don't ask me. Did you see the looks on the faces of the translators?"

"In my opinion, it wasn't any-thing," said Casey. "Neither their talk nor our talk. Just *noise*. It *sounded* like something, but nobody could make it out."

Arakal shook his head. "Our translators explained it to me later. He had *our* words and *his* way of speaking. That's why nobody could follow it. But the translators finally figured it out. What he said was just what we thought he *must* be saying, from his expression. He greeted us, praised Carlo, and looked forward to our future cooperation."

"Hm-m-m," said Slagiron slyly, "but will *you* be able to do as well come next spring?"

Everyone had laughed at that as the snow whipped around the winter camp, and the cold set its teeth into the logs of the buildings.

And now, after the victory over the Russ, Arakal stared at the ceiling, and the Kebecker chief smiled and waited.

Slowly, in Arakal's mind, the meaning evolved: "That will be ... a little difficult ... for the Russ."

Arakal thought it through again. Unquestionably, that was what it meant. Now, he avoided glancing at the grinning Slagiron, and trusted to the labors of his Kebeck-born trans-lator. It was a somewhat ambitious reply he had in mind, but he thought he could get it out. He drew a deep breath, then spoke slowly and care-fully:

"*Carlo et nous, nous ferons beau-coup des difficultès pour les Russes.*" Across the room, Arakal's trans-lator winced, but the Kebecker translator looked agreeably sur-prised.

Arakal laboriously went over it again in his head now that it was out. Surely what he had just said had come out as it was supposed to: "Carlo and we, we will make plenty of difficulty for the Russ."

The Kebecker chief glanced at the ceiling for only a moment, then smiled and nodded.

"*Ah, oui. Carlo et nous.*" He bent over the Plot, and speaking clearly and slowly his meaning came across almost as plainly as if he spoke English.

"Carlo—where does he go in these hills? Will the Russ not find him?"

"No," said Arakal carefully, now suspecting that he had already made one mistake in his first answer. "Carlo is back of those hills. The Russ will not find him. But we will show them what he can do."

Brusilov, though by no means charmed with this plan, was still un-certain whether it might not, after all, turn out to be workable.

Smirnov, now that he had set his mind on a definite idea, proved to have at least one outstanding qual-ity—total ruthlessness.

"Hang them!" he commanded when suspected snipers were brought in. "Leave their bodies dangling as a warning to others! Enough delay for these dogs! Forward! We must go forward!"

Under the lash of his tongue, with the reinforcements pouring in from the ships, the army had begun to move again. Through swamps, streams, rivers, up and down mountains, through dense forest, over a track of a road that had long since ceased to be useful, where the pines and oaks and hemlocks grew ten inches through and had to be felled to make way for the tanks and sup-ply trucks. Through endless snipers, who used guns, and longbows that were worse than guns—whose arrows could pin a man to a tree to wait in shock and despair for the next arrow that would finish him.

But they moved.

And with progress and a definite goal, the troops began to look up. Soon the endless hills would have to grow smaller. Arakal's men, on foot and on horseback, could not hope to return from the South in time.

Now Smirnov's troops were in the swing of the work, their superior weapons and numbers making them-selves felt. Sensing victory, they be-came tougher, would not be stopped, would not be overawed or in-timidated. The crafty Arakal was at long last outmaneuvered, and they were the ones who would beat him for good.

Before them, the snipers melted away, to content themselves with picking off stragglers that had fallen behind.

Smirnov grimly urged more speed, and now there was nothing but forest and hills and water and bugs to con-tend with.

They camped one night in a place where two small rivers came to-gether, to flow away in a larger river to the north. They had lost many of the tanks and quite a number of the trucks, but their spirits were high de-spite their weariness.

Brusilov listened to Smirnov's pre-diction.

"My friend," said Smirnov, "this march will go down in world history as a major military stroke."

"If," said Brusilov soberly, "it were not that we will rejoin the ships soon, we would be in serious trouble. Our gas, food, and even ammunition is getting low."

"But we *will* rejoin the ships." "We could have accomplished the same trip by boarding the ships and being carried there without losses," said Brusilov.

"True, but also without victory. We are conquerors now. And the men know it."

"There is truth in what you say. And yet—"

"And yet?"

"It is hard for me to believe that Arakal is beaten."

Smirnov laughed.

"You have been beaten by him, and so you think he can beat anyone. I have seen deeper than he from the beginning, and beaten him ideologi-cally."

"No. He outmaneuvered you at the meeting. He turned the men against you."

"If so, where is the result now? The men are blooded, tough and de-termined. The effect of Arakal's clev-erness is lost. He has been *out-thought*."

But in the morning, when they tried to cross the river, murderous sheets of fire greeted them.

Brusilov, looking down around the edge of a small boulder, and seeing the burning vehicles, the men spread-eagled in the water and other men who rushed into the stream while still others straggled back from it—Brusilov, seeing this, wormed backwards, dropped down a short slanting bank and ran doubled over toward the center of the camp. The heavy firing, he noticed, was all from in front, none from the rear or flanks.

Quickly, he gave the orders to pull back, then try probing toward the east. They *had* to get to the river, but they could never make it going straight ahead.

Meanwhile, the sniping that had let up a little while ago was worse now than it had ever been. The tanks, in this country, were worthless alone. They could sometimes ride the trees down, but only to make a tangled jumble that was worse than what they had had to contend with in the beginning. A way had to be cleared for them, but who could fell trees in this blizzard of bullets and arrows?

Toward ten o'clock, Brusilov, with the speechless Smimov in tow, broke through toward the east, then swung northward again toward the river. But in the unending fighting, in the dense roadless forest, the tanks and trucks were an unbearable encumbrance.

Smimov, finding himself alive, re-covered his voice.

"Let us send the armor and trans-port back the way they came. There, the old road is cleared, and they can escape."

"Where to?" demanded Brusilov. "Back to Bangor?"

"Why not?"

"Do you know what will happen to the men? Remember, you had the suspected snipers hanged and left as a warning. What will the people do now?"

"Our men can overawe them with their weapons."

Brusilov laughed, and gave orders to fire all the remaining ammunition of the tanks in the direction of the enemy and then smash the engines. The trucks he had unloaded of what-ever was useful, and rolled them into the river.

"It is a waste!" cried Smimov. "We need every man we can get," said Brusilov.

Desperately, they fought their way toward the north, and suddenly and unexplainably the opposition gave way.

A lone cavalry captain under a white flag made his way to Brusilov and Smirnov, to invite them to a conference.

"Do they wish to surrender?" wondered Smirnov aloud.

Brusilov looked at Smirnov and shook his head moodily—and ac-cepted the invitation. He gave orders that the march was to continue, con-ferred with a few trusted officers and went with Smirnov to the confer-ence.

Arakal seated himself across the little table from Smirnov, smiled at Brusilov's look of amazement and turned briefly to Slagiron.

"The pursuit, of course, is being continued?"

"Yes, sir," said Slagiron respect-fully.

Arakal faced Smirnov.

"We regret that we have to use harsh measures. But the men are in an ugly mood. They have seen the corpses dangling from the trees. And some of these corpses were badly disfigured. You understand that we must be severe or the men will take matters into their own hands." Brusilov was nodding moodily. Srimov said nothing.

"We know, of course," said Ara-kal, "where the order came from." He looked at Smirnov, and waited.

Smirnov, frowning, said, "So, the message was a hoax?"

"What message?"

"The message from Salisbury."

"A hoax?" said Arakal. "Ah, you think we decoyed you here?"

"Yes."

Arakal shook his head. He turned to an officer standing beside a wooden chest. "Show the Ambassa-dor General the flag from Salis-bury."

The officer bent, opened the chest, took out a large flag, and handed it to Smirnov.

Smirnov held it, passed the cloth between his fingers, and looked up at Arakal. He tried to speak, swal-lowed, and tried again.

"So, it is true. You have taken Delaware Colony."

Arakal bowed his head.

"By the Grace of God. We also have Beaufort and Florida Colonies. Carteret is still holding out. We will go down later to Carteret and return the favor the Army of the South is doing for us here."

Brusilov jerked as if a hot wire had touched him.

Smirnov blinked, but it took him a moment longer to respond. "The Army of the South? *Kilburne's Guer-rillas*?"

Arakal smiled. "General Kilburne commands the Army of the South."

"But ... how—?"

Suddenly Brusilov clapped his hand to his head, winced, then re-covered his composure and drew a deep breath. He spoke sharply to Smirnov, his words indistinguishable to Arakal.

Behind Arakal, an officer cleared his throat.

"General Brusilov suggests to the Ambassador that if what this must mean is true, then the

Ambassador can appeal to the devil's grand-mother to save the Russ colonies here. It must be, the General says, that the Americans have rebuilt the railroads."

Smirnov looked as if someone had poured a bucket of ice water over his head.

Arakal leaned forward, smiling.

"Is there anything more natural, Mr. Ambassador? What else is there that will run on coal or wood—and we have plenty of that—and exceed the speed of your fastest tanks and trucks run on expensive fuel? What else can easily outpace all your trans-*port* ships and all your warships save only those rare few that ride on nar-*row* wings let down under the water? Is there any other way that we can travel a thousand miles in a day, and move an army from place to place faster than you can transport it by ships, and in far greater numbers than you can move it by air, and in any kind of weather? Why would we not connect together whatever well-sited roads of steel survived your attack, and why would we not salvage all the cars and all the engines that can use wood or coal to pull those cars and put our best men to work making new engines? Why not?"

Smirnov said sharply, "*We can do the same thing!*"

"No, you can't," said Arakal. "Not here. There would be nothing easier for us to sabotage. You must rely on tanks and iron birds and trucks. You can rely on nothing you cannot guard at all times."

Smirnov shoved back his chair as if to get up.

Brusilov rested a hand heavily on Smirnov's shoulder, and glanced gravely at Arakal.

"What did you ask us here for? To tell us this?"

"To ask the surrender of your army."

Brusilov shook his head.

"Do not catch the conqueror's sickness of quick conceit. Remem-ber, we are a world empire, while you are only a part of a ruined na-*tion* that was once great. Do not press too far. Be generous, and hope that we will be generous in turn. To avoid the trouble of a great effort, our leaders might come to an ar-*range*ment with you, if you are rea-*son*able."

Arakal waited a moment, then said quietly, "We seek nothing that belongs to the Russ. We ask only that which belongs to the O'Cracy's."

Brusilov's face twitched.

"It must be negotiated."

An officer stepped up beside Ara-*kal*, and excused himself. "Sir, news of the Russ fleet."

"Speak up," said Arakal. "Our guests will want to know, too." The officer cleared his throat. "They have passed Cape Cat and are moving at high speed upriver. Their iron birds are scouring the shore-*line*."

Brusilov straightened. Smirnov sat up in his chair.

Arakal said quietly, "You see, I am being fair with you. But I can do only so much. The more you fight with us, the more determined and filled with anger my men will become. It would be best to surrender to us and be escorted, without the weapons of your men, to the ships. But to be released in that way, the Russ must agree to make no move against any of the colonies which have become ours. Any colonist who wishes may, of course, go home with you, if you care about that."

Brusilov frowned, and spoke care-*fully*, "If the worldwide might of the Soviets were to be concentrated in this spot—"

Slagiron said quietly, "Then all the world would rise up wherever you pulled out."

Smirnov came to his feet.

"I am the Ambassador of the greatest empire—yes, *empire*—on earth." He tilted his head back, and Arakal leaned slightly forward, wait-*ing*. Smirnov, however, for some reason, did not say more.

Brusilov said firmly, "We can ac-*cept* no condition that would reflect discredit on our nation."

Arakal said, almost regretfully, "Now that the Army of the South is with us, and the Army of Kebeck, and the Army of Brunswick, and the Maine Militia, I would say you are outnumbered better than three to one. We respect your courage. But you must consider these facts."

Brusilov was silent, but Smirnov said, "You forget our Fleet."

"No," said Arakal, smiling, "I have not forgotten that."

Smirnov gave his head a little shake.

"They are *still* savages. They have learned nothing! Let us—" Brusilov interrupted, and his voice came out in a roar.

"*Enough* name-calling!" He turned to Arakal. "We thank you for your courtesy; but we do *not* give up! And we remind you that if we decide to put forth our strength, you will regret it!"

Brusilov turned on his heel and went out. Smirnov trailed out after him, then paused at the entrance and looked back.

"I associate myself with everything the Commander has said." He nodded and went out.

Slagiron said exasperatedly, "How do we separate Brusilov from that little worm?"

"We can only send our prayers for that," said Arakal. "We must be very careful now, that in trying to gain all we do not let the whole business slide through our fingers." He glanced at Slagiron. "Let us see how long we can keep them from reaching the St. Lawrence."

Brusilov, so tired by now that each motion took its separate effort of will, stared at the new columns of dust rising parallel to the column of dust raised by his own marching men.

Wearily, he said, "Arakal under-estimated his strength to us. This is worse than three to one."

Smirnov peered around.

"It is true. Look, we will be forced into the bend of that big stream."

"Do you think I don't see it? But on this side they are ahead of us in great numbers. We *can't* go straight. We must cross here and hope that we get completely across before they. . . Listen!"

They glanced up.

With a thunderous beat, three helicopters came flying toward them, and swerved suddenly as they took in the situation.

The nearest column of local troops, however, did not break or flee. Instead, they at once swerved to attack Brusilov.

Smirnov cried out, but Brusilov laughed half-hysterically.

"They want to get *close*. They wish to mingle with us to be safe from the bombs." He shouted orders, and his ragged columns broke into a run toward the stream.

The helicopters swerved to attack the oncoming troops.

Under the brilliant sun, the scene seemed to hang suspended, the men, the clouds of dust, the planes—all seemed to exist in a moment that would last forever.

And then the helicopters lit in a blaze as of a hundred suns. Brusilov, stunned, saw the clouds of smoke where the pilots lost control and the planes crashed, but his mind could furnish no explanation. Then a sort of terror seized him, as if he were in the grip of some super-natural force that step by step undid the gains of the past, and would never let up until it had its way.

Shouting and cursing, he drove his men into the stream, led them out on the other side and pointed to the distance, where a shimmer like steel showed the presence of the great river.

Now the enemy was so close, however, that Brusilov in the wild flight could no longer say whose men were his and whose belonged to the enemy. All were fleeing in a tangled jumble, and behind them came a tightly controlled body of cavalry that with repeated charges harried them till they were all one tormented, running, indistinguishable mass of suffering, seeking the river and salvation.

Brusilov, his mind hazed by fatigue and confusion—and the shock of the unexpected and the unpredictable—gave up trying to reason and just thought of the river, and the ships, and peace and safety.

And at last they were there, after no man knew how long. The gun had climbed up past the zenith and was now hanging in the west, and Brusilov, by pure habit, scarcely aware what he was doing, was ordering the men, placing this one or that one in a better position to fire, organizing a defense to hold off the harrying cavalry and the fast-approaching columns of troops.

From all the ships, warships as well as transports, the boats came in and ferried out load after load of stunned, dazed, dead-tired men, men too drugged with fatigue to do anything but clamber into the boats

and fall down one on another. Men who stared stupidly when given an order, and had to be moved from place to place by hand. . . But they were get-ting them onto the ships.

As the big guns of the ships held off the encroaching enemy, Brusilov wished dazedly for rockets, but those, unfortunately, were reserved for special purposes. Still, the guns held off the pursuit, the last men were loaded into the boats, and now it was Brusilov's turn to accompany them, and—

A glare lit the ships, as if the sun, to the west, had risen and passed in a flash to the east, and multiplied itself a hundred, a thousandfold.

From a point of land upriver, a little cloud of smoke rose up in the air.

A plume of water rose high beside the largest of the ships.

A heavy *Boom* reached Brusilov's ears—a sound as of distant heavy thunder.

Suddenly he was surrounded, horsemen were everywhere, and be-fore he knew what had happened he was caught up; the world spun around him, and he gave it up, and plunged into a deep black quiet that welcomed him into its depths—and long long after, it yielded him up again, refreshed and wondering at the confused impressions that he found in his mind.

Arakal, smiling, was standing be-side a round window. "You are awake, General Brusilov?"

"You again," said Brusilov. He sat up, and nodded also to Slagiron. "So, I did not reach the ships?"

"Look around," said Arakal. "Feel the motion underfoot. Of course, you have slept so long that it must seem natural."

Brusilov stared around.

"But why are *you* here?"

"These," said Arakal blandly, "are our ships, taken in return for some little damage you did in Bangor and on the way here."

Brusilov got carefully to his feet. He looked at the bland Arakal and the grinning Slagiron, and peered out the porthole of the cabin. There, riding at anchor, were the other ships of the Fleet.

"How did you do *this*? Are you like those wizards of old you speak of?"

"Did it seem," said Arakal, "that your ranks became somewhat swol-len toward the end of the fight?"

Brusilov shut his eyes and satdown on the edge of the bunk. "My men," said Arakal, "were res-cued along with yours—special corps whose uniforms are really not too much different from your own. They were very tired from catching up and joining you, and so they collapsed al-most as soon as they were on board. Therefore, Colputt's big multiplied version of his solar flasher did not blind them as it did your men. And so, when they stood up again they found it easy to overpower your blinded men long enough for the rest of my men to get out here. Oh, it was uncomfortable, and our railroad gun almost wrecked everything by taking a crack at you before you tried to get away, but we still got your fleet. It is ours now, but you need only join us, and it will be yours, too."

Brusilov stared at him.

"I tried to tell that fool Smirnov not to underestimate you militarily. And I wound up doing it myself. He is dead, I suppose?"

"No," said Arakal, "I persuaded my men that your great Central Committee will do things to him that we could not dream of, and then the weight will be on *their* souls, not ours. Moreover, to destroy him would be a gain for your side. We are sending him back to them with an offer of peace, if they return the lands of the O'Cracy's."

"You have already got them," said Brusilov. "All except Carteret. I can't believe that will hold out long against you, now that our fleet . . . cannot interfere."

"Why," said Arakal, "there is still the land of the Kebeckers across the sera. And Old Brunswick, from which the New Brunswickers came. All that must be returned to the O'Cracy's. It would be as well to do it. You are stretched too thin holding so much."

Brusilov stared at him a long time, then started to grin. "You are send-ing Smirnov to carry that message to the Central Committee?"

"Yes. We hope they will agree. But in any case, we want them to have him. He is so well-educated, and of such good birth, and knows so much about technology and ideology that it is to our benefit that

they have him."

Brusilov grinned.

"And what is your idea about the greatness of ... yourself, for in-stance? When your son is King of the O'Cracy's, what will his education be like?"

"We of the O'Cracy's," said Ara-kal seriously, "believe that only the best man should lead—the best per-son for the particular job, that is. Not the son of the best man, unless he himself is best. The only way we have found to pick out this best man is to have an election, but that method is not yet perfected. Why not join us, and see if you can help us work out improvements? You have so much experience with Party Members of the fourth generation that you must have done some think-ing and have *some* ideas."

"So, you would have me, eh? But then I would be a traitor to my own people."

"Which people? Smirnov—or the Delaware colonists who have joined with us voluntarily?"

"*Voluntarily?* You conquered them!"

"We conquered the troops sta-tioned among them—such of them as woke up in time to fight. We then agreed to keep those like this Smir-nov of yours away from them if they would join us. They were very agree-able. They have had much ideology jammed down their throats."

"Ideology," said Brusilov in dis-gust. "True, it is important. But the fact is that where Charles Martel stopped the advance of the arms of the Arabs, there the advance of Is-lam ceased. Cromwell defeated the English king, and Puritanism was es-tablished. Hitler went down in de-feat, and Nazism ended. America overspread the earth, armed with the ideology of democracy and with her know-how and power, and then they took things too easy, and my ances-tors got more power than they, and that was too bad for the American dominion. And now this donkey, Smirnov, tells me it is the ideology that counts!"

"Well," said Arakal, "it does count. His reasoning has become confused, but the general idea is right."

Brusilov looked doubtful.

Arakal said, "Ideology *counts*. The only catch is—almost always when ideology counts, *it does the counting with a sword*"