

FOLLOWING THE SCENARIO
Reflections on Five Case Histories
in the Mode and Aftermath
of CIA Intervention

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* This paper represents strictly the personal views of the author.

Beyond its most publicized activities, from the Bay of Pigs to the continuing mercenary wars in Southeast Asia, there is gathering evidence that over the last two decades the Central Intelligence Agency has secretly intervened as well in nearly a score of countries around the world. The successes or failures of such involvement, much less its foreign policy justification, have been hidden from public view, buried behind official secrecy in a bureaucracy that rarely examines its conventions, and largely neglected by both the Congress and press. Yet these relatively obscure examples of CIA intervention are important precisely for being widespread, routine, and unaccounted. Far more common than proxy invasions or strategic overflights, a vast traffic in bribes, blackmail, and propaganda has become the daily staple of the CIA's covert intelligence operations. It is that traffic that rationalizes the existence of an equally vast intelligence bureaucracy, and poses some of the most disturbing questions about the future role of the CIA in American foreign policy.

What follows is a survey of five case histories of such CIA intervention in the 1960s - in Ecuador, Brazil, Zaire (formerly the Congo), Somalia and Indonesia. The history of these episodes is still fragmentary at best. But from interviews with official sources as well as public documents, the main outline of CIA involvement seems clear enough. It is a record worth recounting for what it shows of CIA methods and of the ironies, sometimes bitter, in the aftermath of the intervention. But these five examples are more than an account of intelligence operations somehow detached from other national actions. They are also a somber reflection of how the United States conceives and executes its foreign relations.

Nor are these cases merely historical or in any sense academic. Though they belong to the 1960s, much of the policies, techniques and mentality they exhibit still shape our foreign affairs. According to official sources, the CIA now maintains, with White House approval, close relations with regimes in four of the five countries, including substantial financial retainers for leaders in at least two of the states.

Moreover, these operations, carried out mainly from 1962 to 1967, were authorized by senior political appointees in past Democratic administrations. They are thus the responsibility of men who, if now out of government (and righteously pronouncing on the excess of the incumbents), might well hold office in some

future administration. Finally, just a little has changed within the Executive since these operations were conducted, there is still no reliable constitutional or political restraint on such intervention. A largely quiescent Congress, an often indifferent press and a distracted, uninformed public continue to surrender their responsibilities in the making of a democratic foreign policy.

Ecuador: Promoting Communism

"It was tribute to what a six-man station can do," said one former intelligence official of CIA operations in Ecuador in the early sixties. "In the end, they owned almost everybody who was anybody." Remarkable documentation of that claim -- including the identity of "everybody" and how much they cost -- is apparently about to appear in the London-published memoir of Philip B.F. Agee, a former CIA case officer in Latin America who served in Ecuador from 1960 to 1963. But whatever the accounting details, CIA efforts in Ecuador during Agee's period there have long been regarded within the government as one of the CIA's most impressive successes.

The intervention in Ecuador was rooted in the policy of the Eisenhower and Kennedy Administrations to isolate the Castro regime

in Cuba and, more broadly, to prevent the further spread of anti-US governments in Latin America. In the process, however, the principal target of covert action was neither Cuba nor the Ecuadorian Communist Party, but rather the country's non-Communist civilian political leadership.

With twenty seven presidents between 1925 and 1947, its history a veritable caricature of Latin American instability, Ecuador had gained by the late 1950s a period of rare governmental and economic calm. The respite was to be short-lived. Though traditionally conservative in domestic policies -- President Jose Velasco Ibarra was serving his fourth term -- the Ecuadorian regime maintained friendly relations with Cuba through Castro's rapid move leftward in 1960. That policy may have been in part an authentic sympathy for the new Havana government, in part an act of defiance toward Washington, fueled by US pressure in an Ecuador-Peruvian border dispute in the fall of 1960. In any event, the Velasco regime did not follow when the US formally broke with Cuba in January 1961, and the stage was set for a concerted CIA campaign to change Ecuador's policy and, if necessary, its government.

The main instruments of pressure against the Ecuadorian regime included not only the customary CIA penetration among influential elements in politics, journalism and the military,

but also those US-sponsored labor organizations which were later to play a similar role so often elsewhere in Latin America -- chiefly the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD), publicly founded by the AFL-CIO in 1961 and its companion organization, the Inter-American Regional Organization of Workers (ORIT), also established under AFL-CIO auspices. It was for these labor organizations, ostensibly voluntary and independent institutions in Latin America, that Philip Agee served as CIA liaison in Ecuador in 1960-1963 -- channeling covert financial support, orchestrating "spontaneous" political activities, directing the Ecuadorian labor organization's policy toward its own government.

The details on exactly when and how the decision was taken to mount the CIA campaign in Ecuador must await the publication of Agee's book. But it seems plausible that at least the initial decision was made early in 1961. At this point, US-supported labor groups -- of the kind Agee and the CIA serviced -- were already waging well organized, highly financed and largely successful campaigns to control the Ecuadorian labor movement. By mid-July, Velasco was under heavy pressure from his own cabinet and some elements of the military to abandon his Cuban policy. Diplomatic relations remained intact, but Velasco broke openly with his volatile Vice-President, Carlos Julio Arosemena, when

the latter returned from a summer 1961 visit to Eastern Europe urging closer relations with the Soviet bloc.

The split between Velasco and Arosemena deepened into the autumn and ended in a sequence of crisis and violence from which Arosemena, with Air Force backing, emerged in November as the new President. The new President immediately reaffirmed the maintenance of relations with Cuba, and within a week of the takeover of the Arosemena regime, Ecuadorian affiliates of ORIT publicly opposed diplomatic ties with Soviet bloc states and warned of "Communist demagoguery" in the new government.

When the Organization of American States voted to exclude Cuba on January 31, 1962, Ecuador joined Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile and Mexico in abstaining. And over the following months, the internal pressure gathered.

There was an extraordinary increase in anti-Communist press attacks and labor demonstrations. Indiscriminate charges of Communist sympathies were flung at scores of officials, many of whom were forced to resign. By late March, Arosemena had put down an attempted coup by army officers, but his political support was badly shaken.

On April 3, 1962 Ecuador broke relations with Cuba as well as Poland and Czechoslovakia, ending all ties with Communist states. There was a brief resurgence by Arosemena, now drawing

support from across the political spectrum but principally from a coalition of liberals, moderate socialists and independents. At mid-1962, he had forced out rightist Ministers of Defense and Interior and transferred or ousted several high-ranking military officers who had brought pressure on the break with Cuba. But a year later, in July 1963, Arosemena's civil government was overthrown by a military coup in the wake of mounting unrest, with labor in the lead.

"President Arosemena didn't want to break relations [with Cuba] but we forced him," Agee was to recall in a recent interview with the Washington Post. "We promoted the Communist issue and especially Communist penetration of the government."

The Ecuadorian case has seemed worth recounting in some detail because it was to prove almost a prototype of the later "spontaneous" overthrow of other Latin American regimes similarly at odds with US policy. The steady flow of money purchasing opposition politicians and strident editorials, the accompanying "vigilance" of US-affiliated labor organizations, the inevitable inspiration of the military to save the nation -- all were to be repeated with varying emphasis and intensity. In Ecuador as elsewhere, however, the outcome of the CIA intervention and the related overthrow of Arosemena was more than a change in the country's diplomatic alignment, the ostensible goal of the

covert action. After its interval of economic stability, avoiding the inflation and devaluation plaguing other Latin American countries, Ecuador fell during 1961-63 into a persistent depression stemming from the political turmoil and a resulting decline in banana exports, a main cash crop. Ten years later, despite a recent oil boom, the country remained one of the poorest in Latin America in terms of income distribution. From 1966 to 1970, U.S. development aid to Ecuador was less than \$22 million. A former U.S. official estimates that the CIA spent at least half that much bringing down civil government in Ecuador between 1960 and 1963.

As for Ecuadorian labor, apparently so anxious to be rid of Arosemena and diplomatic relations with Cuba, the new military regime was soon to be a dubious blessing. "The Ecuador military regime has launched a systematic and ruthless attack on Ecuador's trade unions," an ORIT publication bitterly complained soon after the 1963 coup. "There is every reason to fear that Ecuador is heading towards a full military dictatorship..." The country returned briefly to civilian rule in 1968, albeit under military supervision, but a new constitution was suspended two years later and a military junta resumed power in 1972.

US-Ecuadorian relations were comparatively untroubled after 1963, flaring only briefly in a 1971 fisheries dispute. American firms, including ITT, Standard Fruit, General Tire, and Dow

Chemical dominate foreign investment with some 60% of foreign corporate holdings. Trade with the US is not significant by Latin American standards. In 1974, as in 1960, what authentic US national interest would justify CIA intervention in Ecuador seemed a fit subject for debate.

As a final irony, the Latin American states are now scheduled to meet in Quito to consider the re-opening of relations with Cuba, apparently about to benefit from the politics of detent. Washington would now quietly abandon its long-standing fear that diplomatic ties with Havana endangered vital US interests in the Hemisphere. For the people of Ecuador, however, there would be no escape from a decade of military dictatorship, labor repression and unrelieved poverty that began in large part with one of CIA's "successes" of the early sixties.

Brazil: "It did not just happen..."

As the pressure was mounting on the Arosemena regime in Ecuador, much of the same sequence was being played out in Brazil. There, as in Ecuador, the spearhead of anti-government activity was to be labor organizations spawned by the United States, and the target was a nationalist, non-communist civilian regime. Similarly, the result in Brazil was the institution of a military dictatorship which pursued foreign policies more congenial to Washington but which also savagely repressed

domestic liberties, including the rights of labor.

The development of events in Brazil during 1962-64 is perhaps more familiar than the parallel operation in Ecuador. The regime of President João Goulart clashed with the United States early in 1962 over the expropriation of an ITT subsidiary, the resumption of Brazil's diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, and Rio's abstention (along with Ecuador and others) in the earlier OAS vote to expell Cuba. Agee has reported that the CIA poured over \$20 million into Brazil's 1962 elections in support of opposition candidates for governorships, senatorial and deputy seats, and even thousands of provincial and municipal offices. The election, however, in which Communism was the issue, was disappointing to Washington. In a record turnout, pro-Goulart figures won a number of positions at national and local levels.

In the aftermath of the 1962 election, events moved rapidly. In November 1962, Brazil demanded transfer of a US diplomat for interference in domestic politics. By January 1963 Washington had decided to withhold \$50 million in development aid pledged two years earlier, ostensibly pending fiscal reforms by Goulart. Coincidentally, the Brazilian branch of AIFLD (presumably with a Rio counterpart to Agee husbanding its resources) began to step up anti-government operations. Courses in "labor affairs,"

in Brazil and in Washington, were given to anti-Goulart Brazilian labor leaders -- including the head of the vital Telegraph and Telephone union who, reported an approving Reader's Digest later, "after every class...quietly warned key workers of coming trouble and urged them to keep communications going no matter what happened."

U.S. aid remained frozen through 1963. Ambassador Lincoln Gordon became sharply critical of "leftist" elements in the Brazilian government. Charges of communist penetration were, again as in Ecuador, widely aired in the Brazilian press. On October 11, 1963 the Goulart regime announced the discovery of a cache of US weapons entering the country under Alliance for Progress packages and reportedly addressed to anti-Goulart figures.

In January 1964, Goulart signed a potentially far-reaching bill to curb corporate profits expatriated from Brazil by foreign investors, a bill affecting mainly the host of US interests in the country valued at nearly a billion dollars. By early March, Goulart had moved to repair his shifting political position by forming a popular front with leftist support, and had retained a coalition majority in parliament. "He had staying power," recalled one US official who watched these events, "and he was the popularly elected leader of the country."

On March 26, 1964 the first military units came out against Goulart and by April 1 an army revolt replaced civilian government with a junta. But the coup was also the result of a carefully orchestrated effort by labor organizations, and anti-Goulart middle class groups as well as the army. "Some democratic labor leaders," boasted an ORIT labor publication, "were involved in the planning of the popular revolution as far as six months ago." "As a matter of fact," AIFLD's William J. Doherty, Jr. later told a broadcast audience, "some of them (Brazilian labor leaders) were so active that they became intimately involved in some of the clandestine operations of the revolution before it took place on April 1. What happened in Brazil on April 1 did not just happen -- it was planned -- and planned months in advance. Many of the trade union leaders -- many of whom were actually trained in our institute -- were involved in the revolution, and in the overthrow of the Goulart regime." In the event, a key role in the coup was played by telegraphers trained in AIFLD seminars. One of the first acts of the military regime was to name several AIFLD "graduates," many trained in the U.S., to purge the labor movements of "subversives."

Scarcely twenty-four hours after the coup, the Johnson Administration offered "warmest good wishes" to the junta and

offered to resume aid. Once more, though, the scenario managed in Washington and the field had incongruous results. Within months, the junta harshly suppressed the labor movement, and even AIFLD was to break with the regime. "They're not too favorable to any movement that's too democratic," explained one labor official of junta policies. A decade after the overthrow of Goulart, Brazil stands accused before the United Nations of gross abuses of human rights, including torture of some 15,000 political prisoners and alleged genocide of Amazonian Indians.

Zaire (The Congo): "An exercise in nation building"

It was to be, promised President Kennedy, "a long twilight struggle." And nowhere did the struggle seem longer, or the light so dim, as in the chaotic politics of the Congo following its independence in 1960.

Fourteen years later, the train of Congolese governments, the exotic place names, the endless confusion of personalities and conspiracies, even the violence, have a dated, almost comic quality. But in the 1960s, the United States Government saw it all as deadly serious business, a test that would determine the destiny of a continent important and perhaps vital to American interests. The Congo was not only a wealthy nation strategically placed in the heart of Africa: it was also presumed to be a symbolic battleground between East and West, where the success

or failure of one's clients would have repercussions throughout Africa and the developing world. Briefly then, for the first and last time, an African problem became a priority for the White House and the subject of a US-supported action by the United Nations.

Bureaucratically, the Congo crisis was supposed to be the final triumph of anti-colonialism in American foreign policy, residing in the authority of the State Department's new Bureau of African Affairs. "We're running this show," Roger Hilsman later remembered the boast of one of State's new African experts. But if the thrust of U.S. diplomacy at the UN and elsewhere was anti-colonial, the decisive American policy in the Congo itself was soon being executed not only by the State Department, but by the new CIA station on the scene. From the fall of Patrice Lumumba in 1960 to the coup installing General Joseph Mobutu in 1965, CIA cash payments to politicians, manipulation of unions and youth or cultural groups, and a rising investment in planted propaganda helped establish increasingly pro-Western regimes ending in the military dictatorship that has governed the country for the last nine years.

Perhaps the most dramatic instance of CIA intervention came in the 1964 Stanleyville revolt when Cuban Bay of Pigs veterans

were contracted to fly vintage B-26 bombers and white mercenaries were recruited by the Agency in South Africa and Rhodesia. ("Bringing in our own animals," as one long-time CIA operative described the mercenary recruitment.) The revolt was crushed, though not before fifty eight European hostages were killed by the rebels in the wake of the CIA bombings and the Belgian-US airdrop on Stanleyville.

The mercenary action, however, was extraordinary. More often, the intervention continued quietly in the passage of money and advice. Mobutu succeeded in a bloodless coup in late 1965, and has reportedly kept up a close liaison with his former patrons. "Such relationships aren't terminated," said a former intelligence official.

By the customary standards of national policy, the Congo, now renamed Zaire, has been an obvious success story for everyone. The country is united and pro-Western, its history presumably an inspiration to other American client regimes in fear of disintegration or subversion. Diplomatic relations with the US are outwardly excellent. American corporate investment, notably in copper and aluminium, doubled to about \$50 million following a 1970 visit by Mobutu to the US. Investors include Chase Manhattan, Ford, Gil, Gulf, Shell, Union Carbide and several other large concerns. In many respects, Zaire seems

unrecognizable from the volatile, ungovernable mess of little more than a decade ago. "It's been a good exercise in nation-building," says a senior Foreign Service Officer.

But the success story in Zaire can also be seen in a different perspective. After a decade of authoritarian rule, despite comparatively heavy US and European aid, despite vast natural wealth, Zaire remains one of the poorest countries in the world, its growth rate over the decade 1960-1970 less than 2.7% and its GNP per capita only \$90. Its stability has been purchased at the cost of recurrent terror and repression. This model state of American policy in Africa has yet to conduct a national free election, to allow the free functioning of political parties or labor unions, or to condone a free press.

The Agency's most "successful" client in Africa rules by decree with a grotesque impulsiveness that seems to shock even his former case officers. One recalled that in June 1971 Mobutu had forcibly enlisted in the armed forces the entire student body of Lovanium University. "He was put out by some student demonstrations," remembered the official. Mobutu finally relented, but ten of the students were sentenced to life imprisonment for crimes of "public insult" to the Chief of State. Nor has Mobutu been altogether a model for US diplomatic efforts in Africa. While reportedly dealing covertly himself with South Africa, Rhodesia and Portugal (presumably to secure his southern

frontier if not African solidarity), he has steadily refused occasional US requests that he intercede to halt genocide in neighboring Burundi or Uganda. As if to make the point, at the height of the killings of Africans in Uganda, Mobutu renamed Lake Edward Lake Idi Amin.

As for the CIA itself, the exercise has also had its drawbacks. One intelligence source recalls a fervent Mobutu approach, eventually deflected, that either Zaire with CIA help or the Agency alone undertake an invasion against "those bastards across the river" in the Congo Republic (Brazzaville). He's a "real wild man," said one former official, "and we've had trouble keeping him under rein."

Somalia: Campaign financing around the Horn of Africa

If the Congo enjoyed its moment of chic in world politics, and the covert investment which flowed from it, Somalia by contrast seems an obscure backwater of international politics. But the CIA intervention there in the mid-sixties, as in Ecuador earlier, is reportedly another tribute to what a small station can do, however remote from the national interest.

An impoverished land of less than three million along the northeastern coast of Africa where the Indian Ocean meets the Gulf of Aden, Somalia was of concern to Washington for a number of

reasons. Irredentist claims threatened border warfare with both Kenya and Ethiopia, the latter a long-time US client state under Haile Selassie and the site of a major intelligence base. Somalia was also an early recipient of Soviet aid in Africa, and its coastline held potentially strategic ports for any future rivalry in the Persian Gulf or Indian Ocean, an interest shared by France and Britain. At that, however, the country was apparently not an urgent concern in US diplomacy. When Somalia predictably rejected a 1963 American offer of "defensive" arms conditioned on the exclusion of all other supplies, the State Department leaked its "displeasure" but seemingly did no more.

Over the next four years, 1963-1967, official US-Somali relations were distant and US aid next to nothing while Somali leaders visited the Soviet bloc, Somali newspapers published anti-American forgeries planted by Soviet intelligence, and the country fought a brief but bloody border war with Ethiopia. Then, suddenly, early in 1967 history took a turn for the better. President Abduwashid Shermarke was elected for a six-year term as President in June and in July appointed as Premier Mohammed Egal, American-educated and avowedly pro-Western. By fall, US aid was resumed in amounts twice the previous total since independence, and Somalia had concluded a border agreement with Ethiopia. In 1968, Egal visited the US following a visit to Somalia by Vice President Humphrey, and was hailed by President Johnson as

"enormously constructive in a troubled area of Africa." What the two leaders did not discuss, say official sources, was how "constructive" the CIA had been for Mr. Egal, whose rise to power was reportedly facilitated by thousands of dollars in covert support to Egal and other pro-Western elements in the ruling Somali Youth League Party prior to the 1967 Presidential election.

In retrospect, this clandestine bank rolling in Somalia seems very modest by CIA standards, only a tiny fraction of what the Agency now spends in a month in Southeast Asia or even in the Congo in the early sixties. And its immediate benefits -- in rising US influence, in the detente with a grateful Ethiopia -- no doubt seemed real enough at the time. In any event, several sources say the subsidies were discontinued in 1968. But the withdrawal was to be perhaps too late. On October 15, 1969, while Egal was again visiting the US, President Shermarke was assassinated. A week later the army seized power, dissolving the National Assembly and Constitution and arresting the entire Cabinet, including Egal. Among the charges against Egal would be corruption of the electoral process and complicity with foreign intelligence services. Ironically, the bizarre CIA political contributions before 1967 may have been a decisive factor in the eventual fall of the Agency's candidate.

Little changed for the people of Somalia as a result of the CIA intervention. They are still grindingly poor, with a

negative growth rate in 1968-1970 and less than \$70 GNP per capita. The main beneficiaries of the covert action, Egal and his colleagues, are mostly in jail or dead. The country has turned again toward the Soviet bloc in the last five years, with reports of Soviet naval bases and airfields menacing the Indian Ocean. Perhaps it is out of some sense of bureaucratic defensiveness, rooted in memories of the Egal episode, as well as a valid difference of view that CIA Director Colby is now reported to be less alarmed by the Soviet presence in Somalia than his Pentagon counterparts.

Indonesia: The Biggest Dominoe

Finally, one of the most familiar CIA "successes" has been the succession of a pro-Western military regime in Indonesia. Though there is no clear evidence that the Agency was instrumental in the 1965 coup that eventually overthrew President Sukarno, there is also no doubt that it was precisely Sukarno's ouster from the Right that had been an Agency goal for nearly a decade. In that sense, Indonesia seems another telling measure of the possible results of covert action.

CIA intervention against the Sukarno regime probably began as early as the 1956 Sumatra revolt, and was brought drastically into the open with the downing in May 1958 of a CIA B-26 and its

... pilot, Allen Pope, who was released during a brief thaw in US-Indonesian relations in 1962. Diplomatic hostilities soon resumed in 1963-1964 during Sukarno's confrontation policy toward Malaysia, and by mid-1965, following violent anti-US demonstrations in Indonesia, the US Congress adopted a resolution urging a total aid cut-off. Then, in September 1965, in the wake of an abortive coup by pro-Chinese officers, the Indonesian military began the purge of Indonesian leftists that was not only to displace Sukarno but also lead, within a year, to the death of as many as 800,000 people -- tens of thousands of them, by the Army's own investigation, wholly innocent bystanders.

Assuming no direct CIA complicity in these events per se, the Indonesian coup should be seen in the context of what the Agency was trying to accomplish by covert action in Indonesia and elsewhere. Thus the fear of Communist subversion, which erupted to a frenzy of killing in 1965-66, had been encouraged in the "penetration" propaganda of the Agency in Indonesia just as it was exploited in Ecuador or Brazil. So too the Indonesian military must have known that their replacement of Sukarno and the obliteration of the Indonesian Communist Party would hardly be opposed by an American government whose own covert intelligence operations had long been directed at both. "All I know," said one former intelligence officer of the Indonesian events, "is that the Agency rolled in some of its top people and

that things broke big and very favorable, as far as we were concerned."

By 1974, there were some signs that Indonesia might be moving toward some relaxation of the harsh military rule applied since 1965. But Indonesia, like Brazil, was cited in the United Nations for gross abuses of human rights and several sources estimate as many as 50,000 political prisoners are still being held without trial.

For all the clear differences in setting and events, these five cases have much in common. And viewed together, they seem to characterize (if not caricature) some of the main elements of the CIA's covert action abroad.

First, there are the obvious ironies in both the techniques of intervention and the outcome of events. In most of the five cases "success" -- however temporary -- came largely at the expense of the Agency's own instruments. They trained political organizers and found political organizations outlawed. They used a more or less free press to plant propaganda and were left with more or less rigid censorship. They spent thousands to buy elections from the Amazon to the Gulf of Aden and were left with

dissolved assemblies and no more troublesome voting. Relying on labor unions for their purposes, they saw the labor movement suppressed.

Then, too, there were the ironies in tactics. Presumably to avoid "instability" in Latin America, the Agency deliberately fostered political turmoil and division which might easily have gone beyond its control. No one planned the frenzied slaughter by Moslem gangs and undisciplined troops in Indonesia, but it stemmed in part from a climate of fear and suspicion which the United States worked covertly to ferment. Or on a more subtle level, to combat Soviet influence in Somalia, our covert policy lavishly (by Somali standards) embraced the few politicians who might have done that, and destroyed their local credibility in the process.

There is, of course, no record of amends to our clients who suffered these untoward results -- no escape engineered for Egal, no covert campaign or case officers to reestablish labor rights in Ecuador or Brazil, and, we must assume, no sure exit for Messrs. Mobutu or Suharto or their many peers if it should come to that.

All this raises the often puzzling question of exactly who were the clients and what were the basic interests of covert policies in these cases or others. It is clear enough that the

Agency's clients were scarcely the institutions or popular organizations spawned or exploited. Least of all is there evidence of a direct interest in the social or economic welfare of the mass of people in any of the countries.

Intervention left untouched the substantial human misery in all five countries, and in varying degrees added the burden of political repression. But then that was hardly the Agency's mission or target.

In the end, of course, the CIA's only authentic client was itself. Regimes, labor leaders, obliging editors, moonlighting Cabinet Ministers, ambitious colonels all come and go. The station remains, altering its rolls as necessary and passing them along from case officer to case officer, with the power of manipulation the only real criterion of covert operational success.

Within the U.S. government, all five of these cases have been judged as a major credit to the CIA's bureaucratic stock. Even Somalia can be rationalized as a vindication of covert action; our men in Mogadiscio fell, after all, when they left the payroll. Yet even within the bureaucracy there are apparently doubts about the longevity of our success. The covert money continues to flow in many cases because the

"stability" of the agreeable successor regimes never seems secure. Guerrillas in Brazil, leftists or anti-American students in Ecuador, the psychological aberrations in Zairean politics, the resurgence of opposition in Indonesia -- a station's work is never done.

Beyond the sometimes bizarre measures of success, these five cases also obviously share the common mythology of covert action. All belong to the cold war anxieties of the sixties. All reflect the abiding conviction that the United States should and could shape the politics and diplomacy of other countries by clandestine, if necessary ruthless, and altogether extra-legal means. The prevailing orthodoxy was that our security was at stake in some measure in virtually every capital of the developing world as well as in the industrialized states. And security was surely nowhere inconsistent with repressive regimes. On the other hand, in none of the five cases -- Ecuador, Brazil, Zaire, Somalia, Indonesia -- did the CIA or its political superiors ever make a public case that the national security was so involved.

The offending element in all cases -- even, again, in Somalia, where the Agency now tends to discount Soviet influence -- was an uncontrolled or sometimes belligerent nationalism. It was the infectious power of independence that seems to have been most disturbing to US policy-makers in the pre-detente era.

But then none of these cases are relics of the past. The techniques they illustrate were applied anew, albeit perhaps with more sophistication, to the Allende regime in Chile, with similar results. (One wonders how many unionists or students or journalists who obliged us in deposing Allende are now -- as their Ecuadorian, Brazilian, Congolese, Somali or Indonesian counterparts before them -- suffering second thoughts under the less tender rule of the Chilean junta.)

But perhaps the central point of these experiences is that the Agency was not really some autonomous evil machine, buying and selling countries by some hidden bureaucratic impulse simply to manipulate or exist. In these five cases and many more, the CIA was truly, as Richard Bissell once told the Council of Foreign Relations, "a responsible agency of national policy." What we are talking about in each of these cases is foreign policy, from the lowliest desk officer in the State Department to the junior staff of the station in the field. The CIA ultimately carried out the operations in these five countries because it was national, Presidential policy to have compliant regimes in Latin America, a "stable," pro-Western rule in the Congo, a reversal of leftward, irredentist politics in Somalia and an end to Sukarno's volatile nationalism. In that sense, the CIA met real needs within the United States Government. And if it had not existed, bureaucratic

imperatives and interests included, in all probability it would have been invented.

For the same reason, it is clear what the Agency does not do covertly, whatever its capabilities. It does not attempt to relieve the torture or prisoners in Brazil, or to discredit the police there, or to undermine the savage exploitation of the Amazonian Indians. It does not mobilize on behalf of higher wages for the vast Indian population of Ecuador. It does not pressure Mobutu for free elections in Zaire or for denial of his own covert support of a genocidal regime in Burundi. It does not finance legal or journalistic pressure in Indonesia to free the prisoners held since 1965. One searches in vain for any evidence that the Agency has intervened anywhere in two decades on behalf of human rights. But that is not only a matter of covert intelligence operations. An argument could certainly be made on strictly practical grounds by the CIA (as indeed officials say it has been) that some support for groups downtrodden by "friendly" regimes is simply a way to cover all bets. Covert action is most often no more nor less than the way we do business with the world, the ruling expediency and inhumanity of diplomacy as apart from the hypocrisy of rhetoric.

Finally, each of the five cases shares to a large extent the common process by which covert operations -- and foreign policy -- have been and are decided. Most often recommended by the field

or desk, then approved by the highest level of government, mainly by the predecessor of the current Forty Committee, these cases proceeded with no visible trace of bureaucratic debate. There is no record of opposition from the State Department or White House staff, no resignations on principle, no major leak to forstall action.

For most Foreign Service Officers, one suspects, these operations are distasteful, embarrassing and certainly bureaucratically annoying to the degree that their clients are in the action, but not essentially inconsistent with the accepted conduct of foreign policy. So too they were accepted by two Presidents and their men. It seems a banal yet still striking fact: a large number of people in the United States Government unquestioningly accepted and supported -- and accept and support now -- the proposition that it was necessary for this country secretly to bomb and bribe in some of the most marginal precincts of the national interest imaginable.

An analysis of covert action by the CIA can only lead toward a most basic discussion of United States foreign policy, and beyond that to the standards and concepts of a democratic foreign policy that we expect of public officials at all levels.

But then it is not only the sinister Executive Branch that bears responsibility for these episodes and the mentality they

mirror. Congressman Michael Harrington recently expressed dismay that his colleagues from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee seemed uninterested in the revelations of \$11 million spent to unseat Allende in Chile. It is not, of course, so surprising or merely a reflection of the Congressional awe of Secretary Kissinger. The Congress has largely consistently ignored covert operations, in comfortable, earnestly cultivated ignorance, for as long as the Agency has existed. The exceptions, such as Harrington's letter or Senator Case's exposure of Radio Free Europe, or the Senate Hearings on AIFID and IIT are all too rare.

For its part, the press has tended to treat the subject with the same air of resignation or gingerly neglect. Beyond the familiar exceptions, journalism has found it just as hard, or unimportant, to follow the mundane rhythm of covert action abroad. The CIA, like the reputation of the incumbent Secretary of State, is a continuing beneficiary of the distaste for investigative reporting in foreign affairs.

There seems no facile answer to any of this. But a beginning could be made by the Congress to control covert action just as it has demanded control over war powers, and for the same reasons of Constitutional responsibility and sanity.

A Foreign Intervention Control Act might include the following:

However unlikely these changes seem in the political realities of Washington, where the incentive to control the CIA and assume genuine responsibility for national security remains, as the bureaucrats say, "thin" in all quarters, there will be no answer to the abuses of covert action without such reforms.

But the ultimate reform must come in foreign policy. The most careful controls on covert action will be unavailing so long as we see our role in the world in the way we have seen it for the last two decades. Our vast national intelligence apparatus, besides protecting authentic security interests, could conceivably be directed to strengthen the capacity of governments to resolve the enormous human problems now beginning to break over them. But that is not a matter of intelligence technique or success. It could only come from a larger decision that the United States conduct at last a humane and open foreign policy.