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Ex-CIA agent compares covert operations

By Terry Crogar

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CLEMSON — The CIA's involvement in Central America is similar to conduct 10 years ago that helped push the United States government to tighten controls over the agency, a former CIA agent said Tuesday.

In an interview prior to his speech Tuesday night at Clemson University, former CIA case officer and author John Stockwell said the CIA is repeating covert actions in Nicaragua that it took during the 1975 civil war in Angola.

"The CIA is using the same blueprint, the same covert action in Nicaragua," Stockwell said.

Stockwell, who headed the CIA's Angola task force during the civil war there, said that, as in Angola, the CIA is supporting two factions in Nicaragua and, as in Angola, it has built an air force and navy in the Central American country.

Stockwell was recruited by the CIA in 1964, where he remained until 1977. A

year later he wrote *In Search of Enemies*, in which he accused the CIA of misleading the United States government concerning the CIA's role in the civil war in Angola.

In his book, Stockwell charges the CIA used American military advisers in Angola without informing the White House or the State Department. He also accused the CIA of recruiting mercenaries to fight for U.S.-supported factions there.

The federal government sued Stockwell in 1980 for violating a secrecy agreement he signed when he joined the CIA. The lawsuit was settled that year, with Stockwell agreeing to hand over subsequent profits from the book to the government.

Stockwell, who was a Marine Corps officer prior to joining the CIA, said Tuesday that actions by presidents Ford and Carter, and Congressional measures during the late 1970s to make the CIA more accountable to the federal government have failed.

"Those restrictions — the new rules and guidelines, the oversight by the Senate — have been simply brushed aside," he said.

Stockwell said the Reagan administration has "stonewalled" attempts by Congress to investigate reports that National Security Council officials directed rebel activities in Nicaragua after Congress ordered the activity to be stopped.

"The White House and the CIA won't give Congress the documentation," Stockwell said.

"As a result, you have a president who has upped the CIA's budget, upped its manpower and set it 'back to full historical function,' to use his (Reagan's) words," Stockwell said.

Stockwell said the current CIA should be dismantled and replaced with an intelligence gathering agency that is "accountable to the people."

Stockwell is touring the country, speaking on what he calls "the secret wars of the CIA."