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A CIA Role Of Quiet Vigilance

By FRANK GREEN
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William Colby believes that the Central Intelligence Agency should be given new freedom to infiltrate and influence terrorist groups.

"Suppose you have a band of terrorists, say backed by Libya and Mr. (Moammar) Khadafy, plotting and planning subversive activities against this government," said the 61-year-old former CIA director. "It might be appropriate to have the CIA involved to ferret out these people."

Colby, in a telephone interview prior to a speech last night at the University of San Diego, emphasized that he did not foresee using the resources of the agency to spy on or disrupt American political organizations.

"You have vigorous congressional watchdog committees that were established in 1973 and 1974 to oversee CIA operations," he noted, adding that it was important that some of the congressional powers and regulations passed "during the white heat of the mid-1970s" be modified — as has recently been recommended by the Reagan administration — so that the agency could do the work that it was originally empowered to do.

"Our job should be to help our allies in moderate, decent and quiet ways to diffuse tense situations," he said.

Colby lamented that the CIA's image has not been good for the last decade. He blamed part of the problem on the Senate CIA investigations of the mid-1970s, headed by Sen. Frank Church, which accused the agency of, among other things, the overthrow of the democratically elected socialist government of Salvadore Allende in 1973.

"The popular notion is that the CIA conducted a coup in Chile. That's just not true," he exclaimed. "Over the 1960s, we helped political center groups in that country. We wanted to keep Allende not from

being elected but from being ratified. He was hostile to us and was supported by Castro and the Soviets, who would have used Chile as a base for further expansion in South America.

"When the Chilean military moved against him in 1973, the CIA stayed away. Our strategy was to wait until the elections in 1976 in the hope that a democratic center government would be voted into power."

Colby, a Princeton graduate, has had a long career in covert activities dating back to World War II when he served with the Office of Strategic Services.

As a paratrooper with the OSS during the war, he was dropped behind enemy lines in France to work with the underground.

After the war, he practiced law and worked for the National Labor Relations Board.

Colby joined the Foreign Service in 1951 and was assigned to Stockholm and Rome. A decade later, he jumped to the CIA, serving in a number of capacities, including directing the notorious Phoenix pacification program in South Vietnam during the Vietnam conflict.

He served as CIA director from 1973 to 1976 and is now a Washington-based attorney specializing in international law.

People who have been close to him over his career have described him as being a cold, quiet and unassuming man who has an unswerving firmness and unflinching nerves.

In yesterday's interview, he was guarded in his responses and refused to discuss sensitive issues regarding the organization he once headed.

However, Colby was out-

spoken about his contempt for former CIA operatives now working as mercenaries for foreign powers, some of which are enemies of the United States government.

Two ex-agents, Edwin P. Wilson and Francis E. Terpil, were recently indicted by a federal grand jury on charges of illegally exporting terrorist equipment to Libya.

Former agents such as these "should be indicted and convicted," Colby said. "We should apply criminal sanctions against them as vigorously as possible."

He explained that in an organization such as the CIA, consisting of thousands of people, there are always a few bad apples. "There have been a remarkably few bad apples in the CIA over the years," he emphasized.

Colby was equally harsh on private citizens engaged in the naming of names of CIA agents stationed overseas, saying it was a "crime" comparable to someone attempting to raise a mutiny in the armed forces.

"Those individuals who would make a little cottage industry of attacking and trying to destroy the CIA must be stopped. Agents should not be put under the unnecessary threat of being exposed," he said. "They do expect that to a certain extent from the other side. But they don't expect that from fellow Americans."

Such publications as Covert Action Information Bulletin and CounterSpy have been responsible for naming agents who were then subsequently harassed — and even killed — by terrorists, he said.

While Colby said he was content with most of the congressional regulations placed on the CIA in the

mid-1970s, he was upset with the "hysteria and sensationalism" that went along. "So much came out of the debate on CIA abuses — much of it untrue — that our allies didn't think that we could keep secrets. It was a dangerous time."

But today these policies should be modified, he stressed, because in an increasingly unstable world, the American government "seriously needs the eyes, ears and brains of the agency."

"We should be there to help understand the complexities and the factors pushing any one government economically, politically and socially. And to understand the factors that are apt to result in political upheavals."

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Put CIA 'Back to Work,' Former Director Urges

By ROBERT GETTLIN
Courant Staff Writer

There was a time, says former CIA Director William E. Colby, when the agency was told to "go out and be more ruthless than its adversaries." It was the late 1940s, and "nobody asked questions about whether the CIA was following the Constitution."

But things changed during the last decade, when revelations of assassination plots and domestic spying focused a public spotlight on the government's most secret activities. To Colby, who headed the agency from 1973 to 1976, those turbulent years sparked a "great orgy of recriminations" which must not be repeated.

Colby, 61, whose conservative well-tailored suits match a dry, scholarly demeanor, is now a Washington D.C. lawyer and an "investment-risk assessor" for several multinational corporations. But he also is busy these days trying to project a new image for the CIA.

Speaking at Quinnipiac College in Hamden Wednesday night, Colby complained that critics "greatly exaggerated the way the CIA violated rules" and said all the "the breast beating" had created "oceans of myths" about the U.S. intelligence service.

Returning to the post-war mentality is not the answer, said Colby, who favors congressional oversight of the CIA.

"The CIA used to make up the rules as it went along," he said. "That can't happen anymore because now we have some guidelines." But he also warned that unless "we reignite the spark in our intelligence officers" it will be difficult to counteract the military threat from the Soviet Union.

Colby, who received \$2,000 for his two-hour lecture to a friendly audience of 350 students and local residents, has been busy spreading this message across the country. He said that about once a week he travels somewhere in the country to give his views.

"Let's let the CIA get back to work," he concluded.

His speeches come at a time of renewed congressional debate over the CIA. Several senators have sharply criticized a plan by President Reagan to allow the intelligence service to conduct some domestic spying. On Wednesday, two key Republicans and a Democrat on the Senate intelligence committee warned the president that such a move would rekindle public suspicion about the agency and the government itself.

Colby, who said his speeches reflect personal views independent of the CIA, seemed to come down on both sides of the domestic spying debate. He said the agency's role is to gather intelligence abroad, but "there are some cases in which groups operating might be infiltrated if they are connected to foreign groups."

Saying the gravest threat today is the "great gap between the affluence of our society and the poverty of the Third World," Colby asserted that the CIA should "try to understand problems of poor nations and neutralize threats before they break out in violence." He said the CIA should gather information which would help poor nations improve their economies while also helping American corporations gain "a positive image" in the Third World.

As a consultant to corporations pursuing worldwide expansion, Colby said that American corporations should not be prevented from conducting their affairs in the same manner as competitors from other nations. Specifically, he criticized anti-bribery laws and attempts to force U.S. companies in South Africa to reject that country's apartheid policies.

"What the CIA must do is gather information about the rest of the world so that we can develop policies which would avoid another situation like Iran," he said. "That doesn't mean finding a lot of secrets. Khomeini was not a secret before the shah fell. It means understanding how we can improve our position in another country before it's too late to meet a threat."

My life in the CIA file

JONATHAN MIRSKY suggests how Reagan's (anti-public expenditure) government might use the CIA against its opponents

THE CIA has always been a broad church. It contracted with the Mafia to assassinate Fidel Castro and ran an opium-producing private army in Laos. It also ferreted out, but withheld from me on national security grounds, that my mother was a musician and author.

And now, if Ronald Reagan gets his way, for the first time since its founding in 1947 the CIA will be permitted to spy legally on American citizens, a pursuit prohibited in the 1947 National Security Act which states: 'the Agency shall have no police, subpoena, law enforcement or internal security functions.' For years the Agency ignored this prohibition and kept thousands of domestic files.

Why did this vast organisation, busy with murders, destabilisations, and military responsibilities around the world, bother to break the law at home? The 1975 Rockefeller Commission on the CIA explained: 'Continuing anti-war demonstrations from 1968 led to growing White House demands for greater coverage of such groups' activities abroad.'

Although the CIA itself assured him it was not true, President Nixon felt certain that gold from Moscow, Peking, Hanoi and Havana sustained the protesters. The President therefore ordered the CIA to establish the Special Operations Group, which sheltered behind the cryptonym 'CHAOS'.

From 300,000 names in the CHAOS computer index, 7,200 'personality files' were 'developed'. According to the Rockefeller report:

Even the staff of the CIA's Inspector General were precluded from reviewing the CHAOS file . . . It is safe to say that CIA's top leadership wished to avoid even the appearance of participating in internal security matters and were cognisant that . . . CHAOS would generate adverse public reaction if revealed.

CHAOS was 'terminated' (as the CIA used to say of successful assassinations) in 1974.

I WAS ONE of its 7,200 'personalities'. As the dossier shows I had been a good soldier in the anti-war movement since 1963, when a group of my students at the University of Pennsylvania invited me to stand on a grapefruit box and deliver a US-out-of-Vietnam talk to seven spectators. Thereafter I wrote articles and books about Vietnam, went to Indochina twice, and to jail three times, once for a week after sitting under a bus-full of draftees. At the Spock trial I testified 65 seconds for the defence.

During this time I continued to teach my university classes, sit on academic committees, publish scholarly articles on 8th-century China, eat most of my dinners at home, and make appointments for polite disagreements in the White House, Senate, and even the CIA.

These facts, and sensations like my mother's occupations, emerged from my CIA, FBI, Navy, Army and Defense Department files, which I obtained in 1975 and 1976 under the Freedom of Information Act. The cost of such extensive surveillance, if paid for by anyone other than the taxpayer, would have broken a substantial bank account and floated a private detective agency forever.

My conservative Vermont Senator, also a believer in free speech, prodded CIA Director William Colby to hand over my file. Colby maintained that my allegations of 'a massive illegal domestic intelligence operation were totally false'. This assertion was revealed as a lie when Nixon resigned and the Rockefeller Commission emptied a lot of dirt onto the table.

I then engaged in a postal duel with the CIA's 'Freedom of Information Coordinator', who finally conceded that 'we do have certain information believed to be identifiable to you', and months later disgorged my heavily-deleted file in a thick brown envelope which proclaimed the CIA to be an Equal Opportunity Employer.

The file naturally includes my three years spent as an English teacher in Taiwan for the Asia Foundation. I say 'naturally' because unknown to me at the time the Foundation was a CIA front. This may have been excised from the file, in the hope, I suppose, that I might have forgotten who I worked for.

CIA JUDGMENTS about me during the anti-war movement were not always flattering. In one 'priority security check' I am merely 'fairly knowledgeable on Communist China and North Vietnam'. In 'Director Cable 62520' I am 'anti-us vis-a-vis Vietnam' which I later realised must mean 'anti-US'. Much energy went into reproducing dozens of my speeches to Quaker meetings, Rotarians and colleges.

What was never 'granted' was the name of the efficient person in my hometown, Thetford, Vermont, pop. 57, who annually reported that my wife and I were good citizens. 'Granting' me that name, said the chairman of the CIA's Information Review Committee, 'would reveal investigative techniques and procedures'.

Such sensitivity started at the very top. When the first CHAOS report was delivered to Henry Kissinger by the Agency's then director, Richard Helms, he cautioned: 'Should anyone learn of CHAOS's existence it would prove most embarrassing to all concerned'.

There is no suggestion anywhere in this mountain of documents that my country suspected me of illegal activities. What attracted the spies, according to the Freedom of Information Coordinator, were my 'views, travels, and speeches'. In one document, a Mr Ober, whose name was mistakenly not deleted, asks for a check on 'subject' (later revealed to be me). Mr Ober was the head of CHAOS.

Last week, the Congressional subcommittee endeavouring to explore the White House plans to unshackle the CIA from the 1947 prohibition on domestic spying was forced to shut up shop after half an hour. The committee's chairman, Congressman Don Edwards of California, said: 'The public is entitled to know that pressure has been placed on this committee to withdraw from the debate and that prospective witnesses have been pressured not to appear.'