

First Of Three Reports

CIA Expert Trace Growth Of Secret Operations

By Ed Offley

The Central Intelligence Agency has come a long way, although some think it has taken the wrong direction.

Originally enacted by Congress in 1947, the CIA was charged with gathering and coordinating intelligence produced by it and other federal intelligence agencies. Today, the CIA is much, much more than that: It has evolved into the core of a shadow government, whose edifice is unrecognizable and whose power is unstoppable.

That's the opinion of one government official whose job enabled him to learn more about the CIA than most of its own employees ever could. L. Fletcher Prouty served as the Pentagon's chief support officer for the CIA for nine years from 1955 to 1963. As a full colonel in the Air Force, he was not constrained by the CIA's oath of secrecy.

In late August, 1955, Prouty was ordered to establish a CIA support office in the office of the Secretary of the Air Force. In 1960, he transferred the office to the office of the Secretary of Defense, and later expanded the support facility under the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the Pentagon. Prouty retired from the Air Force Dec. 31, 1963.

Documented History

Prouty has written a documented history of the CIA, which traces its birth under the National Security Act of 1947, through the "activist" directorship of Allen W. Dulles, who brought the agency into clandestine operations, and through the CIA's deceptive role in getting the United States into the Vietnam War.

"The Secret Team" (1973, Prentice-Hall), presents an indictment against the CIA, saying that it has subverted the language and intent of its own

doing so has become a threat to American democracy at home and international stability abroad.

In an interview in Williamsburg last Thursday with The Virginia Gazette, Prouty said that most accounts of the CIA are misleading, because few people know that only 10 percent of the agency's activity is concerned with the gathering of intelligence. "If you know what you're talking about," Prouty said, "You know that 90 percent of the agency's activity is in clandestine operations."

Power Of Exclusion

Prouty defined the "secret team" as personnel who have access to secret intelligence, which is "the really powerful stuff — inside information, advance knowledge, satellite data, agent data. This is what breeds the team." He added that the concept of "need to know" extends a total power of exclusion to those not on the team.

Who is on this team? Prouty explained that it begins with the National Security Council and the top executives of the CIA, and extends to a ring of Executive Branch officials, senior military officers, "think tank" analysts and leaders of the education and business worlds. "Henry Kissinger, by law (in his role as Presidential advisor for foreign affairs and chairman of the National Security Council), leads the team," Prouty said.

The National Security Act of 1947, as amended, states: "Powers and duties of the CIA—403.(d)(5) to perform such other functions and duties related to intelligence affecting the national security as the National Security Council may from time to time direct."

Loophole Used

The above quoted section of federal law was the primary means by which the CIA went beyond in-

telligence gathering and into clandestine operations during the early 1950s, Prouty said in his book. The chief architect of clandestine operations was Allen Dulles, director of the CIA during 1950-1961.

In "The Secret Team," Prouty wrote that Dulles' appointment as head of the agency "foretold the existence of a vast, secret intelligence organization, a top echelon clandestine operations facility at White House level, a hidden infrastructure throughout other departments and agencies of the government, and the greatest clandestine operational capability the world had ever known...."

The Intelligence side of the CIA is now little more than a "cover" for the CIA's ultra-top secret operations, Prouty told the Gazette.

Pouring It Out

"They (intelligence branch) have a job to do — to provide the President with intelligence. So they pour out their stuff day after day, like a newspaper or magazine," Prouty said. "But their big gripe is that people don't read it, and even if they read it, they don't heed it."

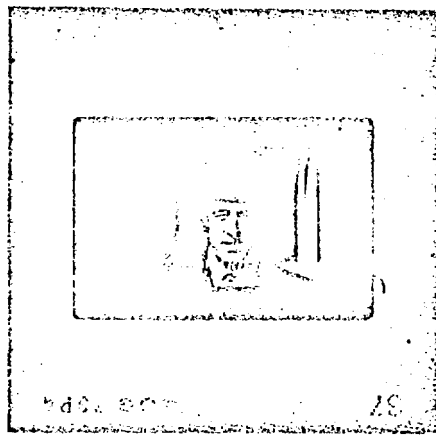
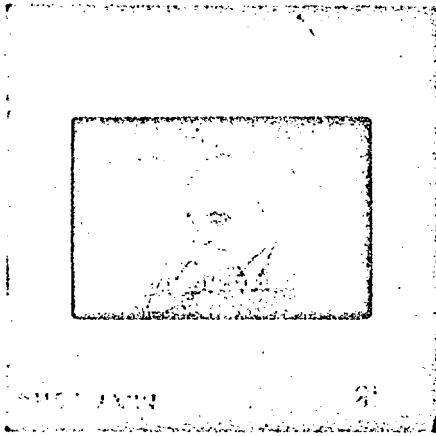
Prouty explained that the main function of the CIA's intelligence branch has been the preparation of the "national intelligence estimate," an intelligence situation report prepared for the President and other top government officials with the freshest information gleaned from the CIA's worldwide network.

"Those reports are very matter-of-fact," Prouty said. "They'll say, for instance, 'We're sure there's going to be a coup in Chile.' And the next day they'll say, 'Every appearance is that the coup d'etat will take place within the next 30 days.' They keep pouring this stuff out.

"We Told You"

"Well, sure enough, sooner or later there's a coup d'etat, and they (intelligence branch officials) say, 'See? We told you.'"

An Inside Look: Watergate and the World of



“Are these men really former CIA men or are they still subject to the orders of the CIA? The CIA would like to have it one way, and then to have it overlooked the other way.”

Explosive as the Watergate revelations have been, no disclosure has been more ominous than the 1970 Domestic Intelligence Plan attributed to the pen of Tom Charles Huston. The plan, as revealed last June, provided for the use of electronic surveillance, mail coverage, undercover agents and other measures to an extent unprecedented in domestic intelligence-gathering. This program was to be directed by a committee of representatives from all of the national intelligence agencies. It goes far toward justifying the worst paranoia Americans have felt during the past quarter century over the growth of secrecy and deception in our government. Much of this anxiety relates to what might be called “the CIA Mentality,” the stealthy abuse of power and the practice of deception of the American public—all performed under the cloak of secrecy and often in the name of anticommunism and national security. In fact, what makes the Watergate

case different from other scandals is that the system and methods used, the means by which it was all planned, staffed with experts, financed clandestinely and carried out was all taken from the operating method of the CIA.

The Central Intelligence Agency was created, and its powers and responsibilities defined, by the National Security Act of 1947. Its character was developed over a span of 11 years by its greatest mentor and guiding spirit, Allen Welsh Dulles. The “Frankenstein” product of this implausible union of a well-intentioned law and of a scheming opportunist is the agency as we find it today.

Before 1953, when Dulles became the Director, Central Intelligence (DCI), the CIA was primarily concerned with performing its assigned task: as the central authority for all of the various intelligence organizations of the government, the CIA’s business was to collect and interpret information gathered by other intelligence units. But that all soon changed.

In 1948, President Truman established a committee to review the CIA, to make recommendations for improvement and to evaluate its past performance. The members of this committee were Allen Dulles, Mathias Correa, and William Jackson, and their report was without question the most important single document on this subject ever pub-

L. Fletcher Prouty was the Air Force officer in charge of Air Force support of the CIA, a position he held from 1955 to 1963. His office put him in constant contact with the top officers of the intelligence establishment, and he has traveled to over 40 countries at CIA request. He is one of the few people with inside knowledge of the CIA who was not required to take a lifetime oath of silence. His book, The Secret Team, is published by Prentice-Hall.