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Turner Downplays Intrigue As CIA Intervention Tactic

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The CIA is reducing but not abandoning the political interference and intrigue it once employed in such countries as Vietnam and Angola, CIA Director Stansfield Turner says.

"Today, we don't think that kind of interference in other people's governments — political action — is as useful a tool for this country," Turner said in a copyrighted interview in the current issue of U.S. News & World Report.

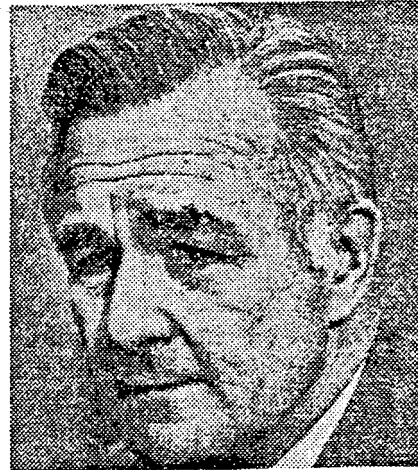
"We're not eschewing it completely, but we're downplaying it," said Turner, who has just gained expanded powers as director of central intelligence.

"We are not cutting the clandestine service overseas," Turner said. "We are not emasculating its capability to collect intelligence for us."

HE SAID 30 YEARS ago the agency was interested primarily in spying upon "the Soviet Union, its satellites, and the few countries around the world where they were trying to establish a position. Today, we're interested in intelligence in a wide variety of countries."

"Also, for most of the past 30 years, the Central Intelligence Agency was called upon by the nation not only to tell what was going on overseas but to help influence events — for example, in Guatemala, Iran, Cuba, Vietnam, Angola," Turner said.

Turner acknowledged there had been many complaints about his ordered retirement of 820 clandestine officers, many of them senior employees, but said "very frankly, it's long overdue." He acted, he said, to



STANSFIELD TURNER
Forced retirements "long overdue"

bring "young blood" into the intelligence hierarchy who might otherwise have left the agency, convinced they never would get promoted.

"I would rather have a short-term morale problem among these disaffected people whom we have had to ask to leave," Turner said.

"I'D RATHER HAVE them disgruntled for a very short period of time than I would to have a long-term, gnawing morale problem existing in the bowels of this organization, where the future lies," Turner said.

Turner, a four-star admiral, criticized those CIA personnel who have gone "to the media with their personal complaint against me and against the fact that I have had to bite what is a difficult and unpleasant bullet in carrying through a re-trenchment."