

# Outsmarting Ourselves

Everyone is still so distracted by the continuing controversy over President Ford's pardon of Richard Nixon and his amnesty plan for Vietnam war resisters that another subject he touched on in his second press conference has not received the attention it deserves.

In answer to a question about the alleged role of the Central Intelligence Agency in the overthrow of President Salvador Allende of Chile, the President denied any involvement by the CIA but made this significant remark:

"Our government, like other governments, does take certain actions in the intelligence field to help implement foreign policy and protect national security. I am informed reliably that Communist nations spend vastly more money than we do for the same kind of purposes."

In other words, the CIA had nothing to do with Marxist Allende's downfall, but even if it had, as long as our interests were served it would have been all right. We have, so to speak, to fight fire with fire, or rubles with dollars. (In this case, it is reported that the CIA was authorized to spend more than \$8 million between 1970 and 1973 to make trouble for Allende.)

Thus once again the incantation of "national security" is invoked to justify activities that traduce the very ideals the United States is supposed to stand for.

What is a nation profited if it gain the whole world and lose its own soul? And nations do have souls.

Even if America has gained something in the short run through "certain activities" it may have undertaken in the intelligence field during the course of what we used to call the Cold War, it is becoming increasingly apparent that in the long run it may have lost a great deal.

For only one recent example, Daniel P. Moynihan, ambassador to India, has warned Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger that the reports of the CIA's alleged activities in Chile have confirmed Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's "worst suspicions and genuine

fears" about this country's policy toward India.

Mrs. Gandhi, says Moynihan, "thinks we are a profoundly selfish and cynical counter-revolutionary power."

So easily could everything America has done for India, and for other countries, be destroyed by shortsighted policies and misreadings of our true national interests.

At home, in the cause of anticommunism and in the name of "national security," Americans have permitted the serious erosion of their most fundamental right — the right to determine collectively what their government does in their name. For they cannot make that determination unless they know what their government is doing.

This year, for the first time in America's history, a book was subjected to prior government censorship — "The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence" by former CIA and State Department agents Victor Marchetti and John D. Marks. Some 168 blank spaces marked "Deleted" appear in the book, representing passages objected to by the CIA and ordered suppressed by a U.S. District Court judge.

These censored passages had nothing to do with the number and placement of U.S. missiles or the sailing schedules of Polaris submarines. They concerned things the CIA has done whose revelation would embarrass the CIA and which the CIA does not want Americans to know about.

No government, of course, can operate in a fishbowl, especially in intelligence matters. But when there is no public accountability of officials who were never elected by the people, when their mistakes are permitted to be covered up, when we entertain — even theoretically — the subversion of other governments and when we tolerate the dangerous precedent of prior censorship, we have gone a long way towards transforming ourselves into the image of the very enemy we claim to be defending the world against.

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