

# How a President Might Wage a Private War



**Jack Anderson**

A FORMER insider has charged that the Central Intelligence Agency has provided the President with the military wherewithal to wage his own private wars around the world and is geared to fight still new clandestine wars.

In a confidential memo to Representative Herman Badillo (Dem.-N.Y.), ex-CIA official Victor Marchetti makes these allegations:

... The White House has used "vague phraseology" in the law to build up a vast military arsenal and paramilitary force. Past Presidents have ordered the CIA to wage secret wars in Asia, Africa and Latin America without the traditional constitutional safeguards and congressional oversight.

... The CIA "has bought and sold air transport companies all over the world" from the Congo to Nepal, so the President could mount paramilitary operations almost anywhere. Marchetti claims one such company, Air America, "has grown so large, owning more aircraft than most major U.S. airlines, that it was a source of embarrassment within the agency.

... Southern Air Transport, a Miami-based firm, is also fingered by Marchetti as a CIA subsidiary. "The sole purpose for the existence of SAT," he asserts, "is that the CIA be ready for the contingency that some day it will have to ferry men and material to some Latin American country to wage a clandestine war."

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MARCHETTI also identifies Rocky Mountain Air of Phoenix as "one of

the more colorful companies owned by the CIA." The outfit specializes, he says, "in training and airlifting parachutists, ostensibly for fire fighting purposes."

... The CIA's "air capabilities, its warehouses full of unmarked military supplies in the Midwest, a secret demolition training base in North Carolina, even a secret airbase in Nevada, and its connections with international arms dealing firms," Marchetti charges, give the President a formidable, secret war-making capability.

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A CIA spokesman acknowledged that Marchetti formerly held a position of trust at CIA headquarters. He resigned several months ago to write a novel, "The Rope Dancer," based on his CIA experiences. But he abandoned fiction recently to write a detailed background memo for Representative Badillo, who has introduced legislation to restrict the CIA to intelligence gathering and to prohibit clandestine wars.

The Marchetti memo cites the CIA's operations in Laos as the most notorious example of clandestine warfare.

**Footnote:** The CIA declined to comment on Marchetti's charges. Paul C. Velte Jr., who has just succeeded George Dole as president of Air America, denied that the airline is controlled by the CIA. Stanley Williams, president of Southern Air Transport, also denied that his airline was affiliated with the CIA. We were unable to locate an office in Phoenix for Rocky Mountain Air.