



Roland Tabor

NYTimes

MAY 17 1973

Accent on Intelligence

By Lyman B. Kirkpatrick Jr.

PROVIDENCE, R. I.—For the many who have served their nation in the Central Intelligence Agency, and have faithfully observed their oath to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States both during and after their Government service, the Watergate affair is not only repugnant but disappointing and saddening.

The bill of particulars is damning. Two former staff officers and four other ex-employees of the C.I.A. were among those involved in the Watergate break-in. The agency, upon a request from the White House, helped in an operation against Daniel Ellsberg. The State Department, also on a request from the White House, provided classified cables to E. Howard Hunt Jr., convicted Watergate conspirator, who used them as background in an effort to smear President Kennedy. The persistent innuendos that the Watergate was actually a C.I.A. operation has rekindled fears that the "department of dirty tricks" was used to subvert domestic institutions.

In fairness to C.I.A. and other departments involved, the role of the White House staff should not be underestimated. It is not the custom of the bureaucracy to question a call from the executive offices. It is assumed that the President's people know what they are doing. While they may not inform the President of all details, it is usually believed they are operating under approved policy guidelines.

sonnel are engaged in political warfare, a dying remnant of cold war operations. Most C.I.A. personnel are in intelligence work: collecting, analyzing, estimating, supporting; and it is their unheralded efforts that are sullied and obscured.

The sordid mess of the Watergate re-emphasizes the necessity for tight controls over and persistent and critical review of all intelligence activities by the appropriate committees of the Congress. In my opinion the Congress has done a good job of checking on C.I.A. activities. But if the impression has been created that the C.I.A. is solely the action arm of the executive, then the legislature must assure us this is not so. In fairness to the nation, the President and the Central Intelligence Agency, the public must be confident that the C.I.A. serves the nation and serves it well.

Lyman B. Kirkpatrick Jr., professor of political science at Brown University, was a high-ranking C.I.A. official from 1947 to 1965.

Traditionally, Americans have worried about a Federal bureaucracy cloaked in secrecy acting with impunity to enforce the wishes of an all-powerful executive. To many, the C.I.A. had become the epitome of this evil following the Bay of Pigs and accounts of operations involving the National Student Association and other United States-based foundations. Thus to some the C.I.A. is solely the President's personal action arm.

Confidence in the C.I.A. is not enhanced when most of what one reads about it is bad. Presidential and Congressional statements about the agency usually are confined to cryptic expressions of confidence or reports of committee hearings in executive session.

Perhaps it all could be summed up in the question: if the C.I.A. trains its operatives to overthrow the governments of other nations, is it not possible that these same people might attempt to overthrow the Government of the United States when they disagree with its policies?

The presumption is that the C.I.A. is engaged in a continual process of deposing governments unpopular with the United States. This is hardly true today. Evidence is accumulating that United States policy is maturing to accept other forms of government even though they might not conform to our criteria. While it has been acknowledged that the United States did succeed in changing a government in Guatemala, and failed in a similar effort at the Bay of Pigs, there is a growing conviction that such efforts are counterproductive in the long run and serve more to defeat than enhance United States policy.

An implied assumption to the question is that the C.I.A. decides what governments to overthrow. This is not, and never has been, the case.

The C.I.A.'s covert operations are undertaken only after approval by "higher authority." What is true is that C.I.A. operatives in the field and officers in Washington have influenced policy, and on occasion have acted independently abroad. The first instance reflects poorly on the policy level at State, Defense and the White House, and is obviously not the case today. When C.I.A. men in the field have acted too independently, the United States ambassadors sent them home.

The question assumes that the C.I.A. is training a breed of experts in subversion who will seek employment in the same field upon leaving the agency: an assumption seemingly confirmed by the Watergate affair.

Actually only a small and rapidly diminishing fraction of the C.I.A. per-