

Editor's Report

The CIA controversy

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NEW YORK — It was hardly surprising, at least to me, when the Central Intelligence Agency this week suddenly found itself once more to be a major target of the left-leaning news media, their commentators and columnists.



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Exhilarated by their recent success and anxious to continue their momentum, these self-righteous champions of the left seized upon CIA operations in Chile as a rug to be jerked out from under President Ford and Secretary of State Kissinger.

The iconoclastic attack formula was startlingly familiar. Step One is to welcome the sneaky informer who comes with official but confidential documents, such as the stolen Pentagon Papers. Step Two is to print the material and raise editorial hands in horror that national leaders sometimes act without

checking with the Civil Liberties Union.

Step One in this case was the publication of a private staff report to the Senate Internal Security Committee. The

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report disclosed that the CIA had been authorized by the Nixon administration to spend \$8 million in Chile between 1970 and 1973 to help support newspapers, radio and TV stations, labor unions and other legally organized groups opposed to the regime of former Marxist President Salvador Allende.

Step Two was a barrage of comment suggesting that Kissinger had been less than frank in testifying before the committee on the CIA activity against Allende, who died in a bloody military coup d'etat a year ago after encouraging all manner of subversive communist activity while ruthlessly moving to kill any criticism.

The unanimous liberal comment also sang a familiar refrain. The motif was and is that it is a terrible disgrace for our republic type of democracy to attempt to influence the direction of others.

To do so, it was variously asserted, is not only "sordid" and "shameful," but downright "appalling." Nice guys, in effect, contemplate the beautiful sunset outside the bedroom window while being robbed by gangs of unfortunates who only seek to better their underprivileged lot in life.

President Ford, to the astonishment and dismay of his would-be snipers, calmly snatched a big hunk of the rug from under them at his White House press conference last Monday night. Along with other near-insulting queries, he was asked the following regarding the CIA activities in Chile:

"Is it the policy of your administration to attempt to destabilize the government of other democracies?"

Ignoring the implied contention that democracy had been served by the red-riddled administration of Allende, Ford bluntly admitted an inevitable fact of international relations. Certainly, he said, the U.S. not only did what was alleged in Chile — it does whatever it can to advance its interests everywhere and hopefully always will.

No American president had ever so frankly admitted that the U.S., as a matter of its own security, routinely tries to affect the political course of other nations. He followed his bland admission of a timeless truth with a wry observation which his listeners also well knew reflects today's reality:

"I am reliably informed that communist nations spend vastly more money than we do for the same kind of purpose."

The whole matter was left hanging by President Ford's accepted offer to meet with key lawmakers who were claiming their supervision of CIA activities was inadequate. The meeting, held Thursday, accomplished very little.

It accomplished very little because the people who can control the CIA pursestrings have known all along what the agency has been doing. And, if they didn't, it was their own fault for not learning the details.

ALL THIS LATEST CIA controversy, viewed in the kindest perspective, is simply kindergarten stuff involving a sort of naivete which is beyond belief. It is almost incredible that the perpetrators would believe the American public would swallow their nonsense.

The unfortunate fact, in my estimation, is that the perpetrators somehow sincerely believe that it is demeaning for this nation to do what its communist enemies do all the time. This view, naturally, is encouraged in every way possible by Moscow's agents and apologists.

So subtle is the Kremlin propaganda that many of our leading public figures are afraid of offending the subversives bent on destroying us. As an example I cite the case of J. William Fulbright, whose ignoble reign as chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee is about to end through his recent re-election defeat.

For years the senator has battled to end or severely curtail our government's financial support for radio broadcasts beamed at the Soviet Union, its satellites and other communist countries. His notion is that conveying the truth to the truth-hungry communist masses is a provocative insult to the commissars whose good will we should beg at all costs.

He still feels that way. Recently the lame-duck lawmaker let it be known in rug-chewing terms how terrible he thought it was for U.S.-backed stations to be broadcasting large chunks of the Kremlin-banned novel by exiled writer Alexandr Solzhenitsyn, "The Gulag Archipelago."

The eternal theme of the liberals is: Never do anything to offend the communists. This becomes almost comical in the fracas over minor CIA actions in Chile when you consider what our ideological enemies were doing.

Every American should have a chance to read the voluminously-detailed "White Book," issued in 1973 by the military government which deposed Allende. The takeover was certainly no step toward democratic freedom, but it certainly was no worse than the communist tyranny which was on the verge of being imposed.

The 257-page report traces, by name and time, exactly how communist agents from Russia, Cuba, Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, Peru, Santo Domingo, Nicaragua, Honduras and elsewhere collected in Chile after Allende's squeak election in 1970 to plot an armed insurrection with his tacit approval.

There were more than 15,000 of them, some of whom became the president's closest advisors. Meanwhile, there was a steady influx of all manner of guns and ammunition to support the planned communist coup. Castro's Cuba at one point shipped 13 crates of such material as a personal "gift" to Allende. He reportedly used one of the "gifts" — a Soviet-made machine gun — to kill himself when his army revolted.

Sure, as President Ford frankly admitted, sure we did something to halt the advance of communism under the Allende regime. And when you come right down to it, the \$8 million it cost us was a miserable pittance compared with what the other side spent.

Never forget that other side. The handshakes of detente have in no way altered its unchanging ultimate aim of taking over the world.

It will happen, too, if we listen to those who howl foul when we are forced to exercise common sense by fighting fire with fire.