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RADIO TV REPORTS,

4701 WILLARD AVENUE, CHEVY CHASE, MARYLAND 20815 (301) 65

FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

PROGRAM Take Two STATION CNN-TV

DATE May 22, 1984 12:00 Noon CITY Atlanta, Ga.

SUBJECT The CIA

CHRIS CURLE: Right now we want to continue our series of reports on the CIA, the Central Intelligence Agency. The agency has been criticized in the past for covert activity. Charges of engineering foreign coups, assassination attempts in foreign lands, and most recently the mining of Nicaragua's harbor. In today's report, CNN's Gene Randall looks at the ethics of the CIA's covert activities.

GENE RANDALL: Nicaraguan rebels, Contras fighting the Sandinista government with money and weapons from the Central Intelligence Agency, covert action. It is one way the CIA does the Reagan Adminstration's bidding in Central America, though covert action has been around since the CIA was founded in 1947. It is defined by the agency as a special activity abroad in support of United States foreign policy objectives and executed so that the role of the United States Government is not apparent or acknowledged publicly.

In the case of Central America, onetime National Security Council staff member Morton Halperin says the Reagan Administration has substituted covert action for policy.

MORTON HALPERIN: If, for example, the Reagan Administration thinks that the government is Nicaragua is a threat to the security interests of the United States and needs to be overthrown, then it needs to defend that publicly and try to get a consensus for it.

RANDALL: Of course, the White House has never said its aim is to bring down the Nicaraguan regime. But that is the Contras' goal, and we are supporting the Contras.

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