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'Intelligence is' only the start

By David Buchen
and Mark Weinstein

One year ago, protests against the Central Intelligence Agency here at the University of Michigan helped to spark nationwide campus protests against CIA recruitment. In April, nearly 500 people were arrested at the University of Colorado for protesting the CIA. On campuses everywhere, the CIA has been met with active resistance to their attempts at recruitment.

This Tuesday and Wednesday the CIA is returning to Ann Arbor to recruit. And again they will be met by large crowds demanding that they leave.

Why does the CIA get such treatment from people all across the nation? Aren't they just an intelligence gathering agency for the government? What is wrong with that you might ask?

The CIA is the government department in charge of not only "intelligence gathering" but also more importantly overthrowing governments they don't like, assassinating people they consider a "threat" to our security, training the secret police of fascist countries to protect "democracy," influencing the elections of foreign countries, producing misinformation to manipulate public opinion in the U.S., keeping track of U.S. citizens opposed to government policies, and who knows what else.

Everything that we know of the CIA's activities is vehemently denied by the government. The operations of the agency are kept secret from the U.S. public. What we know of the CIA is only the tip of an iceberg.

The action of the CIA most prominent right now is the training, funding, and directing of the Somocista contra forces fighting to overthrow the government of Nicaragua. According to Edgar Chamorro, a former contra leader, the contras "have been subject to manipulation by the Central Intelligence Agency, which has reduced it to a front organization."

The CIA has trained the contras to be a highly effective terrorist force. The contras based in Honduras and Costa Rica make regular runs into Nicaragua with the help of U.S. air support to destroy farm cooperatives, health care clinics, schools. Over 7,000 people have been killed by the Contras.

A Stansfield Turner, former director of the CIA, has said that "The people they're supporting down there are committing murders and terrorism and so on. The CIA is supporting terrorism in Nicaragua. The contras are

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doing things that I'm ashamed of hearing that the United States is doing."

In 1984, the CIA mined the harbors of Nicaragua. This action was in direct conflict with international laws. Edgar Chamorro recalls, "After the CIA mined Nicaragua's harbors, I was awakened at my "safe house" in Tegucigalpa, Honduras at 2 a.m. by an anxious CIA agent. He handed me a press release written in perfect Spanish by CIA officials.... Of course we had no role in mining the harbors."

The mining of the harbors, the murder of health care workers, the rape and murder of wedding parties, the constant threats of invasion have all been justified by the claim that the U.S. is trying to stop arms shipments from Nicaragua to El Salvador. These two countries have no common border and the bay that separates them is filled with U.S. warships.

A David MacMichael, a former CIA analyst who had access to all reports from the region in the time that these arms shipments supposedly occurred, recently testified to the World Court that these allegations were complete fabrications.

Why then is the United States so involved in the contra war? Stansfield Turner says, "There's no doubt about it in anybody's mind. All along, there's only been one objective — to overthrow the government of Nicaragua."

Overthrowing the democratically elected governments may seem like a strange thing for an "intelligence gathering" agency to be doing, but unfortunately the CIA has much practice in ousting democratic governments in favor of military dictatorships.

In 1954, the CIA brought about the overthrow of the government of Guatemala. A man named Arbenz had just been elected and he was "left-leaning." After he nationalized some land claimed by U.S. corporations, the CIA and the corporations worked together and brought about his overthrow. There have not been democratic elections since that time.

In 1972, the CIA led the coup which ousted Chilean president Salvador Allende. General Pinochet who took over the government still reigns today.

Of course the Bay of Pigs fiasco was a poor attempt by the CIA to overthrow Castro in Cuba. And in Iran, the Shah was put in power by the CIA in 1953.

The CIA also uses more subtle ways of affecting foreign affairs. In El Salvador, Jose Napoleon Duarte received hundreds of thousands of dollars in campaign contributions from the CIA. The CIA also subverts foreign labor unions, student groups, and political parties.

Of course as an "intelligence gathering" agency, the CIA has the obligation to share that information with our "friends." The CIA trained the South African secret police force, BOSS. In El Salvador and Guatemala, the CIA trained the right wing death squads which have killed thousands and "disappeared" 38,000 people in Guatemala alone. The CIA also has trained the secret police of South Korea, Taiwan, Chile, and other countries such as the Philippines.

During the Vietnam war, the CIA carried out the Phoenix program. The Phoenix program would identify key anti-government dissidents and then have them assassinated. This program alone brought about thousands of deaths. The CIA was also in Vietnam long before most of our troops were there. They were there as "advisors."

A According to Ralph McGehee, a CIA agent for 25 years, "The Agency forged documents, planted evidence of weapons shipments, and doctored documents to justify military intervention." Sound like Nicaragua?

Here in the United States, the CIA has illegally kept track of U.S. anti-government activists. Ralph McGehee says that the CIA's domestic programs often violated "U.S. law and the agency's own charter. The Agency also infiltrated labor, student, youth and religious groups: It had thousands of college professors and administrators working for it on hundreds of campuses."

One example of the CIA gathering intelligence was in one program they subjected U.S. citizens to mind altering drugs without their knowledge. According to the Church Commission, a mid-70s Senate committee investigating CIA abuses, the CIA opened over 28 million pieces of mail between 1953 and 1973. The CIA also has trained police forces across the United States in special tactics.

When the CIA comes to campus on October 22 and 23, people should realize that it is not an "intelligence gathering" agency coming to recruit librarians and analysts.

The CIA is the largest, best funded, best equipped, and most violent terrorist organization in the world. A terrorist organization which overthrows democratically elected governments and then claims innocence in the U.S. media. A terrorist organization which teaches torture techniques to the secret police of fascist regimes to protect "democracy." A terrorist organization which funds the murder, torture, and rape of people in Nicaragua. A terrorist organization which keeps files on you and me.

These are the practices that the CIA is ultimately recruiting employees for here at the University.