

opinion/editorial

Safeguards against unrestrained spying needed

Increasing the power of the CIA to allow the intelligence agency to use break-ins, physical surveillance and infiltration of domestic groups would be a step backwards for the United States and its citizens.

The proposal reportedly being considered by the Reagan administration would allow the CIA much more freedom to conduct intelligence investigations than that agency now possesses. No longer would the CIA be required to have "probable cause to believe" an individual or corporation had committed crimes or was linked to questionable foreign powers, according to Associated Press reports.

The people of this country have suffered as was learned in the post-Vietnam period from the abuse of power by governmental agencies desiring to operate under a clandestine cloud. The secrecy, according to those who profess the importance of keeping Americans in the

dark concerning information-gathering activities, is all for the good of the nation.

Looking at the situation optimistically, that indeed may be the starting point for granting this unlimited authority to an intelligence agency. But precautions must be taken to ensure against abuse that could result from unrestrained CIA spying within the United States.

It would be naïve to assume intelligence operations are not necessary. However, it would be even more foolish not to safeguard against the possible atrocities to human and civil rights that would be made possible by such a system.

It certainly is not asking too much to require the CIA to have "probable cause to believe" crimes have been committed before the agency could become secretly involved with a group or corporation.

In fact, this is essential if the United States intends to guarantee its citizens freedom of ex-

pression and privacy. Otherwise, the path leading toward harassment and manipulation of U.S. citizens and groups will be paved by "Big Brother" himself.

The CIA should not be given an open-ended license to run rampant as it tries to gather information in hopes of ridding the world of communism and terrorism. Such a free rein could only translate into a reign of terror for domestic organizations and individuals as they watch their civil rights erode.

A CIA spokesman has cited the "changing world" as a reason to warrant lifting the limits on spying.

Undoubtedly, the world is changing. But any changes made concerning clandestine investigations should be improvements. Expanding the authority of the CIA would not be a change for the better.



Cheap battleground found for superpowers' next bout

The next confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union will take place, it can now be revealed, in the Rattdom of Phynkia. The Ratt, himself, has signed the lease making his country available to the two superpowers for the occasion.

Arthur Hoppe

The agreement brought a collective sigh of relief from delegates to the United Nations. It has long been recognized in the diplomatic community that the superpowers must constantly have confrontation in order to demonstrate to each other and the world that they are, indeed, superpowers. But there has been an ever-growing problem as to where these confrontations should be held.

Ever since the devastation of Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Angola, Afghanistan and sundry other spots, there has been an increasing reluctance among smaller nations to host confrontations. And the thought of a confrontation in a large country like Poland gives everyone the shudders.

"We don't care what tiny little country the superpowers have their next confrontation in," as the delegate from Mbonga

succinctly put it, "as long as it's somewhere else."

The Ratt's offer of Phynkia's facilities proved a godsend. At the time, the two superpowers were privately wrangling over the selection of El Salvador or a Persian Gulf state for the next event on the confrontation agenda.

Secretary Haig objected to the latter as being too distant from America's shores, while Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko similarly complained that El Salvador would give the U.S. the home team advantage. It appeared there might have to be two simultaneous confrontations in order to satisfy both sides a prospect that alarmed El Salvadorians and Persian Gulf residents alike.

Phynkia, however, is ideally located in the center of the Lesser Antilles Desert and is thus equally inaccessible from anywhere.

Its other major advantage is that all native Phynkians loathe Phynkia and have no objections whatsoever to its devastation although it may be difficult to determine when this has been accomplished. The Ratt, for example, has generously granted the superpowers permission to drop all the defoliants they wish, there not being a wisp of foliage in the country. Nor will the war much interfere with the Phynkian economy, which is based on sand mining and rock farming.

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Chips may fall to the right in domino games

Washington Johnny Carson made the State Department wince the other night when echoes of Vietnam crept into his monologue on El Salvador.

"We have an exciting show for you tonight," said Carson. "A little later on, Bob Hope will be out here to plug his Christmas show from El Salvador."

Indeed, the slightest coupling of Vietnam to El Salvador turns State Department spokesmen pale. In return for such unpatriotic inferences, one receives an emphatic denial that the United States plans to involve itself deeper in El Salvador.

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While they won't fess up to it publicly, Reagan's aides are using the old domino theory to rationalize our roughly \$150 million military and economic aid package to the tiny Central American nation.

Several key Reagan advisers contend that if El Salvador falls to the Marxist guerrillas, revolution will follow in Costa Rica, Honduras, Guatemala and possibly Mexico. Taken to its conclusion, millions of refugees might flood into the United States if El Salvador succumbs.

The intellectual trioka that dreamed up this scenario consists of United States Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, National Security Council member Roger Fontane and Pedro Sanjuan, resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute. All three served as foreign policy advisers on Reagan's presidential campaign and are convinced that the United States must regain its old influence in Central America.

"One has to put a stop to something somewhere and El Salvador is the bastion that needs to be identified," one of the three told us last week. "There is no point in allowing a small group of convinced Marxists to just carry the flag of social revolution throughout Central America."

Less cautious in his writings, Constantine C. Menges, another Reagan campaign adviser on Latin America, describes in greater detail how the dominoes will fall.

"Victory for the extreme left in El Salvador would greatly increase the probability that communist and radical left groups in Mexico, Honduras and perhaps Panama, with clandestine help from the revolutionary movements in Cuba and Central America, would begin a campaign of destabilization through political action and terror," wrote Menges in a paper delivered to the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

"The consequences would include pe-

sible interruptions in Mexican oil production and the Panama Canal. Large numbers of Mexican refugees, seeking safety in the United States, would swell the current tide of illegal immigrants by several millions if the violence approached the proportions experienced in El Salvador."

The White House has been carrying this warmed-over academic theory to Capitol Hill to elicit support for its increased aid package.

"It's the old domino theory all right, I don't care how they describe it," admitted Rep. Clarence Long, (D-Md.) chairman of the appropriations subcommittee on foreign operations.

Other academics are equally unwilling to use the domino theory to explain events in Central America.

"The domino theory is much less applicable in the case of Central America than it is to other countries," said Federico G. Gil, a Latin American scholar at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. "The main trouble with it is that it ignores the internal conditions of each of these countries."

John F. H. Pincell, a Latin American expert for Bankers Trust in New York, reports that "When you go to Mexico and talk about the domino theory, the Mexicans tune. It really upsets them because it assumes that they're just another feudal Central American state. . . ."

Ironically, increased U.S. military aid to El Salvador (\$35.4 million) could result in a self-fulfilling prophecy, a different domino effect might occur for the wrong reasons. More aid now for the rightist army could topple the moderate coalition government of Jose Napoleon Duarte within a year. A tougher, non-reformist military government should only help the leftist guerrillas win more support among the peasant population.

Most foreign policy experts we've spoken with say President Reagan made a safe bet in choosing El Salvador for his first foreign policy showdown. Military and economic aid to the Salvadoran junta should be adequate to quiet the leftist guerrillas if the government itself isn't toppled internally by the frustrated rightists.

"What worries me about this episode," says a former Latin American expert on President Carter's National Security Council, "is that President Reagan might think our aid to El Salvador was the difference in defeating the Marxists. That could encourage him to push his luck and involve the United States in a more dangerous situation in the future."

Dominoes can be an addictive game. (c) 1981, Field Enterprises, Inc.