

# A Short History of CIA Intervention in Sixteen Foreign Countries

In July, 1947, Congress passed one of the most significant pieces of legislation in the history of America in peacetime. The National Security Act of 1947 created The National Security Council, the Department of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the United States Air Force and, not least of all, the CIA. This act provided the Agency with five principal duties:

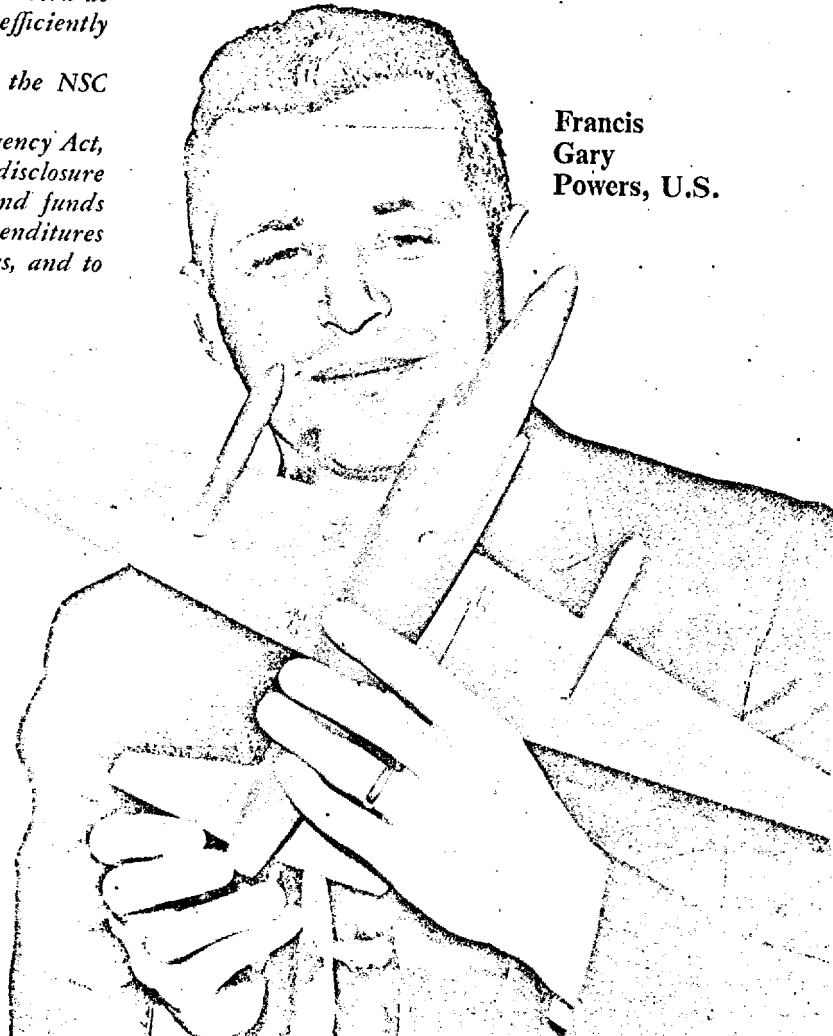
1. To advise the National Security Council on matters concerning intelligence.
2. To make recommendations for the coordination of such intelligence matters.
3. To correlate and evaluate intelligence relating to national security and disseminate it to other government departments.
4. To perform "such additional services of common concern as the National Security Council determines can be more efficiently accomplished centrally."
5. To perform "such other functions and duties as the NSC would direct."

In 1949 Congress passed the Central Intelligence Agency Act, allowing the agency to disregard laws that required disclosure of information concerning the organization, to expend funds without regard to laws and regulations governing expenditures with no other accounting than the Director's vouchers, and to make contracts and purchases without advertising.

With such unprecedented authority, with unlimited access to money, with liberty to act without regard to scrutiny or review by either civilian or governmental organizations, the CIA has become a self-contained state. One observer ranks the CIA as the fourth world power, after the U.S., Russia, and China.

Partly because of the CIA's special "secret" status and partly because of the laziness of the press, the total history of CIA intervention in foreign countries has never been reported. What you read instead are fragments—an attempted bribe in Mexico last July, an assassination in Africa last November.

What emerges here is an atlas of intrigue but not a grand design; on the contrary, the CIA's record is as erratic and contradictory as that of any bureaucracy in the Federal stable. But you do begin to comprehend the enormous size of the CIA and its ruthless behavior. The rules permit murder, defoliation and drug addiction for political ends. Look at the record:



Francis  
Gary  
Powers, U.S.

the Bolivian people and Army took the reins of power from the National Revolutionary Movement and appointed Antonio Arguedas as Minister of the Interior. Within two months he was approached by United States Air Force Colonel Edward Fox. Fox told Arguedas to resign his new post or economic aid to Bolivia would be suspended. Soon after his resignation Arguedas was approached by a known CIA operative and asked to co-operate with them in a secret mission, and in return the CIA, working behind the State Department's back, pledged to restore Arguedas as Minister of the Interior. When Arguedas was back in office the CIA requested that he exercise authority on an American mining claim. When Arguedas claimed that he could do nothing, the CIA attempted to frame him with pro-Castro/Guevera documents. Luckily Arguedas saw the ploy and related the entire story at a press conference held in Peru several days later.

**BOLIVIA: 1971** A CIA "Brain trust" was formed for the specific purpose of gathering together exiled leaders of several Latin American countries. Victor Paz Estenssoro, former President of Bolivia, was contacted by the Agency while residing in Lima, Peru. A revolt was arranged to return Paz to power. But the agency's plans went unexpectedly awry when Colonel Hugo Banzer took over the office just prior to Paz's triumphant return.

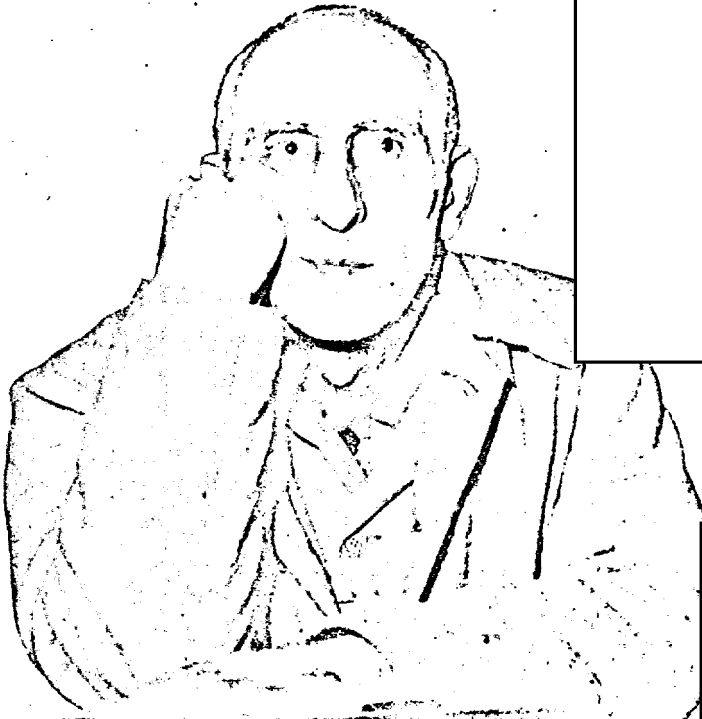
**BRITISH GUIANA: 1962-66** CIA operations in British Guiana revealed the extent to which the Agency has penetrated the mainstream of American life. Cheddi Jagan, the Marxist-oriented Premier of British Guiana was not trusted by the US. The CIA through operatives in AFL-CIO affiliated unions supported lengthy strikes in this small South American country in their eventually successful effort to overthrow Jagan. Approximately \$1,000,000 of American union and government money was channelled through the CIA-controlled affiliate unions.

**BRAZIL: 1965** Organized labor again became a tool of the CIA in its effort to break up the politically active labor unions of Brazil. Masquerading as the International Federation of Petroleum and Chemical Workers, the CIA funnelled \$30,000 into various Brazilian petroleum unions, persuading them to join with the Interamerican Regional Organization of Workers, an AFL-CIO affiliate. So far the CIA has been successful in its efforts.

**CHILE: 1970** With Marxist-leaning Salvador Allende as President, Chile is currently beyond the bounds of CIA activities. The policy of the agency is to "wait and see." The CIA hopes that Allende's socialization program will go sour with the peasants within the next year and a half, and that the country will be ripe for a takeover by Allende's predecessor, Eduardo Frei, a Christian Democrat.

**CONGO:** The CIA, fearing Soviet influence on the new republic, chose to support Joseph Mobutu as their champion over Patrice Lumumba, whom the agency claimed was too much influenced by the Communists. Although there is no direct evidence there have been many implications that the CIA was instrumental in Lumumba's murder. Many of the CIA and State Department personnel were later moved nearly en masse from the Congo to Laos under the assumption that similar situations required similar solutions.

Mohammed Mossadegh, Iran



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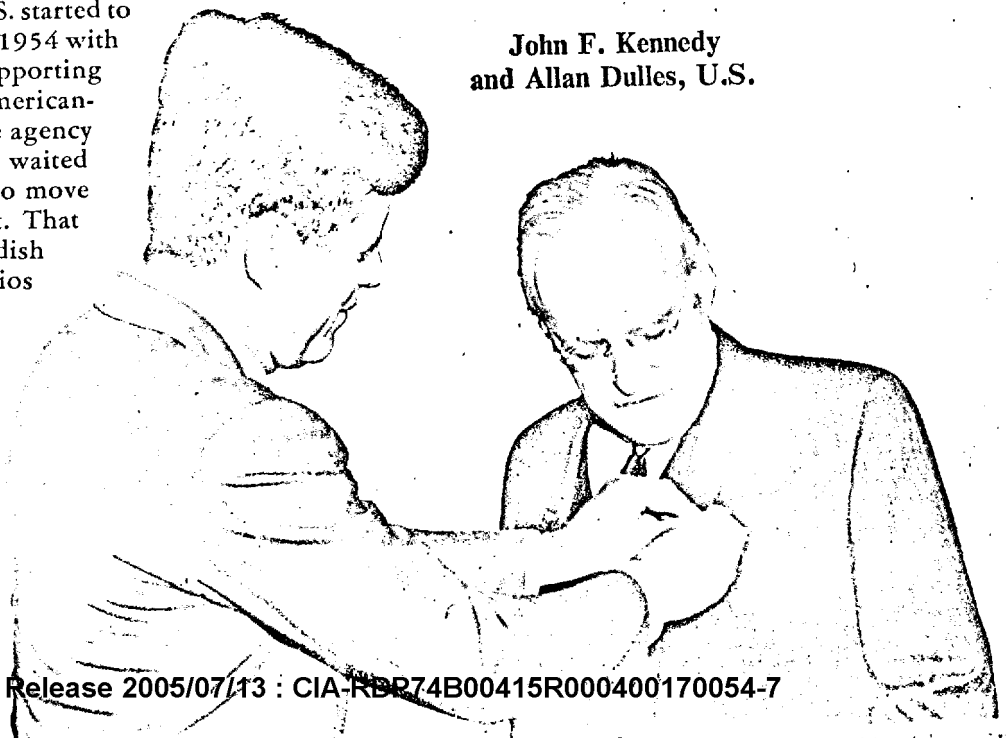
**COSTA RICA: 1954-56** Jose Figueres was a moderate socialist who became President of this small democratic country in an open election in 1953. His presence was particularly bothersome to the CIA because of Figueres' government policy allowing asylum to anyone who desired it. The CIA accordingly saw this as a strain upon their intelligence gathering and surveillance capabilities. To get rid of Figueres the CIA engineered a twofold plan; first, to create embarrassment within the Communist Party, and second to somehow link Figueres with the Communists. The first succeeded in creating confusion within the State Department, since the straight diplomats hadn't been informed of the plan; and the second failed entirely. The agency also managed to work at cross purposes with the US Ambassador, who at the same time had been urging President Eisenhower to invite Figueres to Washington in order to lend him a measure of prestige.

**DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: 1962** Through contacts with the CIA made by the American Consulate, two prominent landowners and former politicians conspired with the help of the CIA to assassinate Rafael Trujillo, the arrogant dictator of this small Caribbean nation.

**EGYPT: 1952** Seeing no advantage in supporting the decaying monarchy of King Farouk, the CIA played an important role in support of the revolt that placed General Naguib and Gamal Abdul Nasser at the head of the country. Nasser, though, proved to be more independent than the US government would have liked; so the State Department convinced President Eisenhower to refuse American aid in building the Aswan Dam.

**GUATEMALA: 1954** One of the most tragic examples of CIA intervention in foreign affairs was the Guatemalan Revolution of 1954. Jacobo Arbenz Guzman, the popularly elected socialist President of the small country was a man marked by the CIA. Guzman had become too friendly with the Soviet Union, and had committed the unpardonable sin of expropriating 225,000 acres of United Fruit Company holdings. The U.S. started to move against Guzman in June of 1954 with the CIA calling the shots. Supporting Carlos Castillo-Armas, an American-trained Guatemalan Colonel, the agency trained men in Honduras and waited patiently for the right moment to move against the Arbenz government. That moment came when a Swedish freighter docked at Puerto Barrios and prepared to unload 2,000 tons of Czechoslovakian armaments. The Arbenz government fell in ten days and Castillo-Armas' repressive regime took over, fully sanctioned by the CIA. One of the first actions of the new government was to appoint "defense committees" which could meet in secret and declare anyone a "Communist."

John F. Kennedy  
and Allan Dulles, U.S.



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**INDONESIA: 1958** Washington became annoyed at President Sukarno's leftist tendencies. He had become friendly with the Soviets, began expropriating huge tracts of former Dutch properties, and welcomed a Communist coalition into his Jakarta government. With the wild riches of the Indonesian Archipelago at stake, the CIA took to the air to strike at the Sukarno government. Once again the familiar scenario emerged: the State Department denied everything while the CIA flew its B-26 bombers out of the southern Philippines, raining bombs on the small islands populated by Indonesians partial to Sukarno. When one American pilot was shot down over Ambonia in the Spring of 1958, the State Department in Washington was left to answer for the CIA.

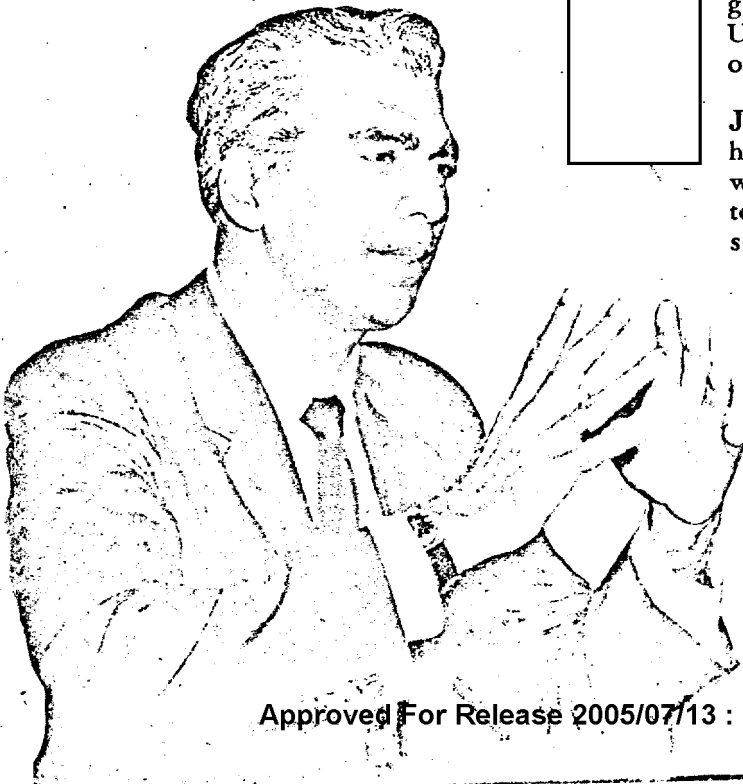
**IRAN: 1953** Mohammed Mossadegh, the Shah-appointed Premier of Iran, bowed to popular sentiment and nationalized the British-owned Anglo-Iranian Oil Company in 1953. The action spawned a boycott of Iranian oil and the economy began to falter. In the face of these conditions, the British and American governments decided that Mossadegh would be better done away with. Kermit (Kim) Roosevelt, the grandson of Teddy, illegally entered the country and began organizing CIA operatives to overthrow Mossadegh. Roosevelt did his job well. Mossadegh was promptly arrested and the Shah returned from unofficial exile in Rome. The incident also worked well for American business. The British lost their monopoly and a consortium of Gulf Oil, Standard Oil and Mobil Oil received 40 percent of the concession in a reorganization of the former company. Roosevelt later left the CIA officially to take a position with Gulf.

**IRAQ: 1958** The CIA was less successful in Iraq than it was in Iran in 1953. The revolution killed King Feisal but the new government was faced with a series of revolts from various tribal factions who were angered at the murder of Feisal. This instability was encouraged by the CIA, who actively supported the tribes. Because of the oil companies, it was mandatory to maintain a friendly pro-Western government in Iraq, so the CIA worked to offset the Arab Unity cries beaming from Radio Cairo by setting up many of their own clandestine stations.

**JORDAN: 1958** King Hussein's pro-Western sentiments had shackled pro-Arab factions within the country and weakened the all-Arab alliance. The CIA stayed in Jordan to protect these sentiments and successfully repulsed two separate rebellions against the crown.

**LAOS: 1960-present** Since the French withdrawal from Indo-China in 1954, Laos has been in turmoil. The CIA has been involved in every aspect of espionage activity over the past 20 years in Laos. In December, 1959, the high-living right-wing military leader, Phoumi Nosouvan, was assisted by the CIA in overthrowing the US State Department-supported government of Phoui Sananikone. Using rigged elections in April 1960, the CIA was able to keep Nosouvan in power. When Nosouvan himself was overthrown by a determined young paratrooper, the CIA assisted Nosouvan in setting up his military government further down the Mekong in the province of Savannaket. The State Department sided with the paratrooper, Kong Le.

Cheddi Jagan, British Guiana



With the North Vietnamese incursions onto Laotian territory, the CIA has been actively trying to organize the hilltribe people who are scattered throughout the mountains of Indochina.

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**PORTUGUESE ANGOLA AND MOZAMBIQUE:**

**1965** A number of planes were flown from the United States to Portugal for use against black liberation movements in these countries. During a rather bizarre trial, the two men apprehended openly admitted, just as Francis Gary Powers had before them, that they worked for the CIA and that the planes were flown across the United States and through Customs with the full knowledge of a number of government agencies. Seven planes eventually reached Africa.

**URUGUAY: 1969-71** Using martial law to quell the student and worker disturbances in this bankrupt country, President Jorge Pacheco Areco, with the assistance of in-country CIA operatives, is pressing for an amendment to the Uruguayan constitution which would allow him to run again for President.

**VIETNAM: 1955-present** The CIA has been involved in a myriad of activities since the CIA's predecessor—the Office of Secret Services—left the Indochinese theater soon after WW II. The Agency's influence has permeated the entire range of US policy in Vietnam. It was the CIA which at first developed the "intimate" relationship between President Diem and Madame Nhu. It was also the CIA which plotted with the Buddhists several years later to have Diem assassinated.

The CIA was designed to collect intelligence, but as the scope of the war expanded, so did the agency. The CIA originated the "pacification effort" and agents were given carte blanche to make it work. With CIA funds they formed Revolutionary Development Cadre teams assigned to perform "good deeds" for the villagers. But their real function was to collect intelligence and serve as militia.

The Agency also set up the Vietnamese FBI and works closely with the USAID people to co-ordinate police activities at the village level. They were previously involved with the training of Montagnards in the Highlands of Central Viet-Nam but have since turned that responsibility over to the Special Forces. The CIA organized intelligence collection systems which could be co-ordinated with mobile CIA troops (The Provincial Recon Unit—PRU).

*This short history of CIA activities defines three characteristics of the Agency's operations: 1) That the CIA will use any means to achieve its goals; 2) that its goals are contradictory and often only self-interested; 3) and that in pursuing the goals, the agency frequently contracts alliances that are, even in terms of the real politic that dominates CIA thinking, self-defeating to the United States.*

*The game goes on, because we allow it to. In the past, perhaps our acquiescence has been based on a feeling that it only happens over there, that CIA subversion has had no material effect at home. But in the light of recent research by Peter Scott [see pages 35 to 42] and others, it begins to look like the CIA is also a crucial force in the subversion of American culture. The means?*

*Heroin addiction. The CIA's natural ally? The National Crime Syndicate. The goal? Who knows?*

—Victor Bedoian.



Ngo Dinh Diem, Vietnam

