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THE CIA'S AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT COVERT ACTION

R474

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Senator: this is a first class bit of work which should be a committee print

Introduction

In 1974 the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) spent at least ²⁴ ~~20~~ million in countries ranging from ~~China~~ ¹¹ to ~~China~~ ¹¹ for "covert action." Covert action is secret action to influence events in foreign countries which is so designed that, if discovered, official U.S. government participation can be plausibly denied. In its attempts to influence events it is distinguishable from clandestine intelligence gathering -- often referred to as espionage.

WBM

What is the legal authority for the CIA to conduct covert actions? This paper is one of a series that will attempt to answer the question. It will first examine the predecessor agencies to the CIA in order that the establishment of the CIA may be placed in historical perspective. Next, it will set out the legislative history of the National Security Act of 1947, the basic charter of the CIA, and the National Security Council directives which instructed the CIA to conduct various forms of covert action. Finally, it will present a legal analysis of the 1947 Act. Other papers in the series will examine the impact on the CIA's authority to conduct covert action of Congressional provision of funds of the CIA,

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JC 22 Oct 93