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Promoting Social Justice, Human Rights, and Peace

Secrets of the CIA

Written and directed by James Otis
Turner Original Productions, Inc., 1998
Transcript courtesy of John Bernhart

A frightening and true story, Secrets of the CIA draws on highly personal stories of numerous ex-CIA agents. Experience these personal accounts supported by photos from their albums, excerpts of explosive government reports, CIA training films and archival footage. These elements combine to tell a troubling story not only of the CIA's complicity in the overthrow of governments which led to the deaths of hundreds of thousands of innocent people, but the current and future uses of advanced spy technology on America's citizens. The Agents

Name: Ralph McGehee
Location: Southeast Asia
Assignment: Director of Covert Operations Thailand-Vietnam

Name: Verne Lyon
Location: Iowa State University; Havana, Cuba
Assignment: Domestic spying on antiwar demonstrators; economic sabotage

Name: Mary Embree
Location: CIA Headquarters, Washington, D.C.
Assignment: Audio surveillance division, research (bombing, torture, poison)

Name: Phil Agee
Location: Latin America
Assignment: Advisor to national police forces; destabilization and disinformation

Name: Phil Roettinger
Location: Guatemala; Mexico
Assignment: Overthrow of democratically elected government; surveillance of Castro

Introduction

Ronald Reagan: You, the men and women of the CIA, are the eyes and ears of the free world. You are the tripwire.

Verne Lyon: CIA is a state sponsored terrorist organization. You don't look at people as human beings. They're nothing but pieces on the chessboard.

Lyndon Johnson: Secrecy in this work is essential: achievements and triumphs can seldom be advertised; shortcomings and failures often are advertised.

Mary Embree: No one really knows all the things that CIA does. They pretty much have carte blanche, and they have an enormous amount of money.

Oliver North: Maybe I am overly na--ve but I don't see what would be wrong with that.

George Bush: We need more intelligence: not less. We must not diminish our intelligence.

Ralph McGehee: The CIA is not really an intelligence agency. It is a covert action agency.

Phil Agee: The CIA has been involved in assassination and torture behind the scenes all through its history.

Bill Clinton: The Cold War is over, but many new dangers have taken its place. The decisive advantage United States intelligence provides this country is therefore as important as it has ever been.

Narrator: December 1941. The attack on Pearl Harbor sinks the Pacific fleet. Military intelligence is in shambles. The dawn attack becomes the crucible on which the modern spy culture is born. Into the breach stepped a new generation of American soldiers: the spies and covert warriors of the Office of Strategic Services. They battled the Japanese and Germans behind the lines in an underworld of sabotage and psychological warfare. They trained and fought with local guerillas in unknown jungles with only one guiding command: don't get caught.

It was a simpler time when the nation's enemies were clear. Washington and Hollywood swept into action inventing the popular culture that has surrounded espionage for half a century: the mystery, the adventure, the romance, the simple stereotypes of the enemy, and the fearless hero.

Harry Truman: We had hoped that our wartime ally, the Soviet Union, would join in the efforts of the whole community of nations to build a peaceful world. Instead, the rulers of the Soviet Union have sought to extend the boundaries of their totalitarian control.

Narrator: The battlefields of the new Cold War seemed uniquely suited to the skills of spies and secret agents. President Truman pledged that the United States would never be caught by surprise again. The Central Intelligence Agency was born.

Mary Embree: It was considered "the Cadillac" of government agencies, and they mostly hired from Ivy League colleges.

John Kennedy: The cost of freedom is always high, but Americans have always paid it. And one path we shall never choose and that is the path of surrender or submission.

Narrator: The public embraced the cloak of secrecy that the CIA wrapped around itself.

Phil Roettinger: The government didn't know that I was working for the government.

Mary Embree: They told me not to tell anyone: not even my mother.

Ralph McGehee: I couldn't tell my children.

Phil Agee: My wife didn't even know what I was doing.

Narrator: Who were these agents and what were they doing in Guatemala and Iran? How did patriotic Americans from main street neighborhoods get caught up in the overthrow of foreign governments? What were they doing in places like Ecuador and Vietnam, where the CIA organized torture and assassination? These are the stories of former agents who dared to break away from the CIA.

Mary Embree: I was so disillusioned about my country because I believed, "it was my country right or wrong," but my country was wrong so much of the time.

Verne Lyon: I've lost my first-class citizenship. I've lost the respect probably of a lot of friends. I've gained a lot of enemies.

Ralph McGehee: I think CIA ex-members, somewhat like myself, who leave and tell their stories, are [involved in] a very painful process, but I think they are feeling that they are doing a higher duty, if you will. They're not just quitting and leaving and being quiet. They're quitting and expressing their conscience [by saying,] "Here is something that we have done that is terrible, and here is something that must be stopped."

Ralph McGehee: I played four years of football at the University of Notre Dame, and we were undefeated for all four years (three national championships), and I was the first-team right tackle. So once when I was cut from the Green Bay Packers, I was recruited by the Agency, and I wondered why they recruited me, but when I got down to Washington, I found out that most of those in my class were rejects from the National Football League.

I went to an interview at the Chicago courthouse by a man who didn't identify himself or the agency he was recruiting for, and he said that what I would be doing would be involved in fighting communism.

Voiceover: 800 million people (one-third of mankind) exist under communist tyranny without the God-given rights of freedom and human dignity.

Ralph McGehee: Of course, at that particular period in 1952, this was so much a part of our every day life, and I said, "Yes, I very much want to be a part of it." I was very proud to be a part of it.

My career in the Agency began in 1952, and I stayed in the Agency through 1977. In the entire twenty-five years, I was in the Directorate of Operations, also known as "The Dirty Tricks Department." My second tour in Thailand was probably the most important, where I was assigned to work with the provincial police, which was a fifty-thousand-man national police force, in developing an effort to counter the growing insurgency and to gather intelligence on that insurgency, and the program there was to interview or interrogate everyone in a village over the age of twelve, and in the process, we found out that the Thai Communist Party was much larger, much more active, much more effective than had ever been reported before. My initial reports received glowing commendations from everyone, and then all of a sudden, the program was shut down and I was sent home and I couldn't understand this. I know now why they didn't want this information to be reported. Because if they acknowledged that the Communist Party in Thailand consisted of thousands of organized villagers, than they would have to have told the same truths about the communist movement in Vietnam, where the strength of the communist movement was in the millions, and if we had ever admitted that, there would have been only one solution to what was going on in Vietnam [and that] was to shut down the war and come home. We could not win.

Voiceover: Men of the 101st Airborne Division land in Camran Bay.

Ralph McGehee: Intelligence on Vietnam was doctored to support the ongoing war there, and I could see that the situation in doctoring intelligence was universal.

Voiceover: Now, these reinforcements head for where the action is supposed to be for according to current policy the emphasis is to be on direct combat rather than on advisory duty.

Ralph McGehee: Wherever the Agency had a covert action role or a policy role to implement, its intelligence was distorted, shaped, created to support that policy. It was in many, many cases nothing but fiction.

I think the worst thing I was involved in was the Phoenix Operation in Vietnam: a countrywide assassination program. I was part of it. This was a program started by the CIA, funded by the CIA, recruiting people for the operation, training them to go

out and kill or capture the Viet Cong. I came to realize later that we were shooting fish in a barrel. Most of the Vietnamese supported the other side, and we were the intruders, and the Vietnamese were fighting for their own liberation from foreign domination. I went out to Vietnam to help save Vietnam for democracy, and when I saw photographs of the children bombed and napalmed and burned by operations, this caused for me a tremendous trauma, and I for a number of months contemplated suicide as my only out. This, of course, I finally got over, and [I] thought that what I should do with my knowledge is try to bring this knowledge to the American people so that there won't be further Vietnams, there won't be further abuses, and since that time I've dedicated my life to exposing the Agency.

Casey Kasem: The CIA called him "an analyst with few peers," but upon leaving the CIA, this man wrote a book about it called *Deadly Deceits*, and now he has compiled a one of a kind database resource on the subject called *CIAbase*. Please: a big welcome for Ralph McGehee.

Ralph McGehee: I feel that I am doing what I should be doing, and in that sense I am happy. I am not happy in the sense that no amount of criticism of the Agency, no amount of revelation of its dirty deeds, no amount of exposure of the weaknesses of the Agency has weakened the CIA, but I do feel that at some point all of this is going to impact on the awareness of the American people, and at that time there will be an attack on the CIA.

Verne Lyon: I considered myself a good spy. I would be given a name of a student or a professor or a teaching assistant, and I would try to develop a relationship with this person and try to get him to say to me statements concerning the U.S. involvement in Vietnam and Southeast Asia. I was to infiltrate student groups to get copies of propaganda, meeting times, protest posters, [and] this kind of thing. [I was] your friendly spy on campus.

The excitement initially came when I was offered the job and told that I was very special, and that played to my patriotism, my ego, my manhood, the whole thing.

It was thirty years ago almost this month that I was a senior on the Iowa State University campus ready to my aerospace engineering degree and wondering what I was going to do in light of the nation's deepening involvement in the quagmire of Vietnam.

Voiceover: There were antiwar demonstrations on college campuses and in cities from Los Angeles to Washington. Draft card burnings became common, and the chant, "Hell no! We won't go!" was the theme of the protest generation.

Verne Lyon: It was then that the CIA appeared on campus, and it began the largest illegal domestic operation in history called "Chaos." The FBI and Hoover thought U.S. college student demonstration against the Vietnam War was being manipulated and funded from abroad. President Johnson didn't believe it, so he actually

authorized the CIA to start an illegal covert operation inside the country, and I became the eyes and ears of the CIA on the Iowa State University campus.

Voiceover: Iowa State University: the opportunities are here.

Verne Lyon: I initiated files on students of my own interest even without the CIA's knowledge. There was this young lady who caught my eye on campus, and I tried to date her and she refused, so I initiated a file on her, and that was personally for my own benefit.

I did that for my senior year and on graduation I thought my responsibilities to the Agency would end when I went to work for McDonald-Douglas in St. Louis, but it didn't work out that way, and eventually I was assigned to Canada posing as an anti-Vietnam War engineer. The Agency knew that Fidel had gone around the island and built all these small dams. He actually wanted two growing seasons a year. He needed someone to seed the clouds so it would rain and he could store the water, and that's where my expertise was having been an amateur rocketeer and an aerospace engineer and all this good stuff.

The Cubans were duped into believing the credentials I presented. There really was no other option of getting an American down there.

After the October Crisis of 1962, Kennedy said that we would never physically invade the island if Khrushchev would remove the ballistic missiles; so therefore, the United States was frozen into a policy of trying to bring Castro down from within which meant disrupting the average life of the Cuban citizen, doing whatever we could to sabotage the economy, to discredit the Revolution.

One way of doing that, of course, was to try to control the amount of food coming into Havana for distribution to the public, and if we could do that by puncturing tires on a truck loaded with tomatoes for the market or if we could cause a truckload of whatever (onions or fresh fruit or meat) to become putrid or be stolen or contaminated on the way into town, we would do that, and I remember one particular instance. A brand new secondary school that had opened up in the countryside was going to receive its week's supply of fresh milk and we bribed the driver of the truck. We knew where he stopped to have breakfast on his route. We wanted him to take a few extra minutes so we could put cement powder into the milk.

We declared war on school children! That shouldn't be the policy of the United States government! You don't win friends and influence people that way (declaring war on children and innocent civilians). [It was] a big mistake, but the U.S. government orders it and participates in it, and the CIA's goal eventually was to increase this frustration level to a point where there'd be a civil revolution within Cuba to bring him down.

I think from almost the outset I had reservations about what I was doing in Cuba, and that's because, just in general, I didn't enjoy harming people. I didn't know the Cubans at the time, so I would rationalize myself that "well, this was in the best interest of my country." But as I got to know the Cuban people personally and ended up getting married to a Cuban, I started to change my attitude toward them very quickly.

I think the most frightening thing that ever happened to me in Havana was when the Cuban counterintelligence people actually decided they had enough and they came to my house and detained me.

And eventually, I was arrested and accused of espionage (even given a fake firing squad), and in spite of all the training I'd had and all the instruction I'd had that you don't get shot (you may be tried, there'll be a lot of publicity, you may even be imprisoned for awhile but eventually you'll be released and exchanged), you forget that when you're actually facing those rifle barrels and you're in a foreign country with no diplomatic mission and nobody there to speak for you. Your knees tremble and you lose bladder control. It's very scary.

Hindsight is something I think we all enjoy, and I just wish we could switch it around and use it as foresight, but in hindsight, if I could go back and change things, I'd have to go back thirty years to 1965 and my senior year and refuse the offer that was made to me by the CIA, and take my chances with the draft, and pursue my engineering career. It certainly would have been a better life than what I've had. I wouldn't have the memories that I have of the things that I have done to people and countries, and all of it in the name of the United States and under its flag.

Mary Embree: For many years, I didn't even tell my friends I worked for CIA because I was embarrassed. It's colored my life. It always will. It's like a shadow that falls over my life all the time. I still, if I say anything against them, turn around, wondering if I'm being followed.

I never even thought of joining the CIA. First of all, I thought I probably couldn't get in because it was considered the Cadillac of government agencies, and they mostly hired from Ivy League colleges. I was just out of high school and went to work for Veterans Administration. Actually, it was the typewriter repairman, who came in to repair my typewriter one day, and he said, "You shouldn't be working here. You should be working at a nicer place."

They test you a lot: huge testing. When you are put into this personnel pool, there're probably two or three weeks of tests where it's all day long, every single day. They are IQ tests and personality tests. The questions, which bothered me the most, were when I took the polygraph test. In the polygraph test, they ask you such incredibly personal questions. For instance, they asked me if I was a virgin, and I was eighteen and I thought, "What business is it of theirs whether I am or not?" I was rather

embarrassed to tell them that I was because I don't think any of my girlfriends were. I was raised very strict.

There were very few women at CIA who were other than secretaries. It was very sexist. It was the male establishment: the white male establishment. I asked a couple of times why it was that there were no blacks there and why there were no gay people there, although they did not call them gays in those days--I think they called them queers in those days--and they said because homosexuals could not be cleared because they could be blackmailed. They said that blacks couldn't be cleared because blacks were just still too primitive. They just weren't usually smart enough, and they didn't have the kind of background that white people had. I didn't think that much of it at the time because it was standard operating procedure, but when I think about it now, I'm really quite shocked how you probably would never get a job if you were black.

I was assigned as a secretary in the Audio Surveillance Division. They were experts on listening devices and hidden microphones and that sort of thing. I did also very often help the operatives get the documents that they needed. Once in a while, I'd have to make a quick trip to State Department to pick up their passports, and sometimes, if we couldn't get the passports in time, then I'd have to go over to Graphic Arts Reproduction Division so that they could forge one for them. Most of them were artists in there, but they were recruited from prisons because they were forgers and they were master forgers. They were people who knew how to forge money. They forged all kinds of things. That was how they made their living. FBI would arrest them and CIA would come and spring them.

Then I went to Technical Services where I was in charge of finding documents that you don't find in libraries like [sic] where you put explosives on a bridge. Where's the best place to put an explosive on a bridge and what kind of explosive do you have to get that goes under water without losing its effectiveness? Also, I had to find one time--they wanted me to find--if there was such a thing as a poison that was undetectable, especially one that seemed to mimic a heart attack, that would kill someone but it would appear that they had a heart attack. I did find such a thing.

Senator Frank Church: Does this pistol fire the dart?

CIA Director William Colby: Yes, it does, Mr. Chairman, and a special one was developed which potentially would be able to enter the target without perception.

Mary Embree: The poison was frozen into some sort of dart, and then it was shot at very high speed into the person. So when it reached the person, it would melt inside them, and the only thing would be like one little, tiny red dot on their body, which was hard to detect. There wouldn't be a needle left or anything like that in the person.

Senator Frank Church: But also the toxin itself would not appear in the autopsy?

CIA Director William Colby: Yes, so that there was no way of perceiving that the target was hit.

Mary Embree: I think the first time that I seriously questioned anything that was more than I just couldn't take it anymore was when I w came across this document. It was "Eyes Only," and it was to my boss, but he only had one hand and a hook on the other hand, so I always opened all of his mail and his packages and so forth. This one--he wasn't in the office--I opened it and read it. It said, "Eyes Only." I wanted to read it because I wasn't supposed to, probably, and it was a report about a mission where they had blown up a bridge in Asia somewhere, and they had killed a number of women and children who were on there way to market that morning. It was reported as though they were really proud: mission accomplished. That one bothered me a lot. When my boss came in, I gave him his mail, and I mentioned this and I said, "This is wrong. These women hadn't done anything. These children didn't deserve to die. Why did we do that?" He said, "That's the fortunes of war." And I said, "But we're not at war. We're certainly not at war on that country. Why did we do that? I don't understand it." He said, "Well, you're very young. When you get older, you'll understand those things."

I think probably all of us became addicted to the danger, to the intrigue. It was living a fantasy. It was actually living a fantasy and being on the inside and it was very hard to leave, even though I felt that they did wrong and I would never ever work for an agency like that now because I realize that it wasn't because I was a child or I was so young. It was because it was wrong. But at the time, it was really exciting. After that, there was no other job I could have ever again in my life that would be that exciting. I knew that.

Phil Agee: During this period in Ecuador, I got involved in all these different types of operations. I was running around here, running around there, working with the police intelligence and military intelligence, falsifying documents as provocations to get people landed in jail, running a surveillance team, which was a team that would follow people around on the streets and they had radio communications with vans. It was very exciting at first and you had--at 25, 26, 27 years old--you had this sense of power, which is intoxicating, really, for such a young person.

My motivation was partly the youthful, romantic aspect of it, which was the idea of secret work, of being abroad in strange cultures and communities, but patriotism was also a very strong motivation. It was a period in which we still had to do compulsory military service and the Draft was breathing down my neck and I had to do it one way or another and the CIA told me that, if I hadn't done my military service, I could do it within this secret program that they had with the Pentagon and I would become an officer and so forth. I thought that might be more interesting than washing dishes and peeling potatoes for a couple of years as a draftee.

I was sent down to Quito, Ecuador, where I worked for a period of three years.

Voiceover: Poverty breeds anger and despair. Anger and despair are ingredients of violence, of lawlessness, of revolt.

Phil Agee: And our job was to squelch or impede the influence of the Cuban Revolution throughout Latin America because the Cuban Revolution had such an impact in Latin America. And in practically every Latin American country, there were people who went into armed struggle at that period to emulate the Cubans, hoping that they too could overthrow the traditional, ruling power structure in their countries in which very few families controlled the land and the wealth and that meant that a very large proportion of the population was marginalized. They didn't count.

Voiceover: Here, as in so many other places on this troubled Earth, can be seen the conditions that give rise to conflict, to riot and revolution. Here can be found the familiar challenges that threaten the future of us all. We are here.

Phil Agee: When I was working in Uruguay, it was a complicated period. The trade unions and students were out in the streets all the time, and there was a state of siege imposed, and we wanted to stop these lightning demonstrations, which were making our police look bad. And so, one of the leaders of these squads of the Communist Party was Oscar Bonaudi, and I had him arrested. It was supposed to be simply preventive detention. But on that Sunday morning, I knew that he was under arrest, and I didn't know what was happening, but we were sitting in the room as the chief of police was reading a document I had written to attribute all this violence and unrest and strikes to the Soviets. It was false, but it was very credible the way I had written it. Then the sound began to come through the walls, and it was a low moaning sound, and I wondered to myself as it got louder and louder and the chief was embarrassed whether it was the guy whose name I had given, and he told me the story that, "Yes, it was Bonaudi," and that, "One of the most sadistic police officers had ordered his interrogation and torture that Sunday morning." But it was a horrible sound. I'll never forget it. It's just awful to hear that moaning and groaning, and screaming coming through the walls.

I began to question the work. The initial thrill of being on the inside, of having this secret power, of knowing things that individuals and governments try to hide, had faded. By the time I got to Mexico, I had already had all the political reasons to leave. I met an American woman who had lived in Mexico for many years. This would be October of 1967. At dinner, she suddenly went into a tirade about Che Guevara because he had just been killed. He had been captured and executed and it was just out in the papers that day. And so, she was furious. She went into this tirade about this horrible, stinking CIA that had murdered the best hope for Latin America in generations, and she loved Che Guevara. She thought he was the most wonderful man in the world, and I was in love with her and she was in love with me. And I thought to myself as I sat there at dinner, "Wow, what am I going to do?" And so,

the upshot is that she was the personal factor, which led me actually to say that, "I'm quitting now."

Voiceover: The case against the CIA has always lacked information on how precisely its officers set about their covert actions. Philip Agee, now living in Cornwall, was such an officer, and his diary, to be published by Penguin in the next few weeks, gives his version of what life is really like inside the Agency. He names every officer and agent he's ever met and describes the CIA man's work in daily detail.

Phil Agee: Why should I be delicate with them? I don't expect any quarter in return because this is part of the conflict that is going on in the world right now. The CIA is enforcing American economic exploitation, and people are dying and people are starving because of this system.

In actual fact, what had happened is Henry Kissinger had intervened secretly with the British government to force them or pressure them to deport me and to cause me all these problems. Because not only was I deported from Great Britain, but also that was followed by a kidnapping and deportation by force from France, plus Holland and Italy and Germany and Norway would not let me in. And so, over a two-year period, they were constantly pressuring these governments, which had no provocation from me at all. So they tried very hard during a period of time in the 1970s to stop my work, but I just continued, got on with my life, and achieved stability in Germany. And now in the last seven or eight years, I've been coming frequently to the United States, and I think I've been in practically every nook and cranny of the country at hundreds of meetings, political rallies, and university lectures over these last eight years.

Phil Roettinger: When I was a kid, the American flag was something we absolutely marveled at; whenever the American flag went by in a parade, we took our hats off, put our hands over our hearts, and we really felt it because this is a symbol of the United States and the way that the United States should behave. We have to have something like that in order to hold ourselves together.

In those days, the Depression was really seriously affecting everybody and me, too. Along about that time, I began to travel to different shooting matches in the Midwest and I finally got to shooting against the U.S. Marine Corps Team, and I used to beat the Marines: every one of them. And the captain of the Marine team came to me and said, "Son, have you ever thought about enlisting in the Marine Corps?" And I said, "No, captain, I never have." And he said, "Well, I tell you what. If you were to enlist in the Marine Corps, when you're finished your training in Parris Island, I'll see to it that you're assigned to the Marine Corps Rifle and Pistol Team." [I thought,] "Jeez, you know, I'll be getting paid for shooting!" I was scared stiff, of course, and we went up there and went in the Commandant of the Marine Corps' office, and the captain said, "This young man is a specialist in marksman training, and I would like if we would commission him in the Marine Corps." I said,

"Commission! Oh my God!" The Commandant said, "We've never done anything like that before: commission a man." The captain said, "Well, sir, I think this is the time to do it." The Commandant scratched his head and said, "I think you're right. Young man, you're a Second Lieutenant in the Marine Corps." I said, "Oh my God! This is terrible!"

I went through World War II as an officer in the Marine Corps, came back, and one night the doorbell rang and I went [to the door] and here was this nattily dressed man in a nice suit and a snap-brim hat. And he said, "May I come in?" And I said, "Well, I think you had better identify yourself. Who are you?" "Well," he said, "I know who you are and you've been recommended very highly to our organization." I said, "What's your organization?" [He said,] "Well, I'm not at liberty to tell you what the organization is." And I said, "This is crazy! But I told him, "Come on in," [because] he was a little guy and I thought I could handle him pretty well. And he said, "You have been accepted in our organization, and we want you to go to Central America." And I said, "What? Central America? Come on!" So that's how it happened. I was to join this group that went to Central America and I found out that I was supposed to be in charge of overthrowing a government in Central America. "It doesn't sound right," and I said, "What's the government?" "Well," [he said,] we don't want to go into it too deeply here, yet." "Well," I said, "I think you'd better forget the whole thing." "Oh, no no no no! It's very important," and so finally he did let out that we were going to overthrow the government of Guatemala.

Well now, I had been to Guatemala before several years before that because I was a member of the U.S. Olympic team and we were requested to go down and help organize the Games, the Central American/Caribbean Games.

Voiceover: Doves are released: living symbols of the peace and friendship among the twenty-two nations represented.

Phil Roettinger: So I knew people down there. I knew this gentleman by the name of Arbenz, and the CIA was going to have me overthrow these friends of mine. Well, they explained to me that this is extremely important to the security of the United States. (When they pull that, you know there's something wrong because the United States is so secure that nobody is ever going to do anything to it.) Anyway, so I said, "Well, okay, I'll do it." And we organized a group of dissident Guatemalans, armed them and trained them minimally, and sent them off up to overthrow the government [Operation El Diablo].

Voiceover: Fighting ends in Guatemala. These rebel troops backed by air power have compelled the ousting of Guatemala's pro-communist regime and have won a ceasefire from government forces. That red rule in Guatemala is over is grimly symbolized by the determination of the insurgents themselves and by this effigy of ex-president Arbenz who fled the country. The sign reads: "Go back to Russia."

Richard Nixon: You know there were some people during the Arbenz regime that said there was a question as to whether it was truly a communist regime and as to whether it was controlled by Moscow. Do we have here the proof that there was no question whatsoever?

1954 Guatemala Coup Spokesman: There was no doubt at all that Russia controlled all the communists here in Guatemala, sir.

Richard Nixon: In other words, the Arbenz regime was not a Guatemala government; it was a foreign government controlled by foreigners.

Phil Roettinger: What happened was that they went up there and caused great bloodshed and great damage, which have never been corrected even to this day. That started the whole thing in Guatemala and is why we're having all this trouble today.

The only thing that can be done, of course, is to work with our Congress because everything that happens in Latin America or any place else in the world begins in our Congress.

Now look: Are you in favor of killing somebody that you don't know? Are you in favor of torturing somebody? Are you in favor of locking people up in dungeons and things? Are you really in favor of that because I don't think that you are? And I think that I can get that across to you pretty well if I get a chance to talk to you like that.

Ralph McGehee: I feel that because of the problems that I went through, the realizations that I came to, the efforts that I've taken to counter--if I may call it this--this monster, that I am contributing so much now that I could not have contributed had I not joined the agency.

Verne Lyon: There's no way I can make amends, but certainly helping in this effort to expose the abuses of our intelligence services, perhaps, in some small way will help pay that debt.

Narrator: In an organization that celebrates loyalty and security, the public confessions of these former agents have been hard to swallow, but as revelations of the Agency's failures and deceit pile up, the courage to speak out has spread from one agent to another.

Phil Roettinger: I promise that I will do as much as I can for peace in Latin America. Thank you very much.

A number of us have organized this group of former U.S. intelligence people, and we are very serious because of the experience we have, we believe that we should have a certain amount of influence in the Congress and in the government.

Peter Kornbluh (Senior Analyst, National Security Archive): Frank Church, the late Chairman of the Senate Select Committee to Study Intelligence, concluded that covert operations was really a semantic disguise for blackmail, sabotage, assassination, whatever the United States wanted to do to influence other countries to do its will.

Narrator: In small ways, Congress has pressured the CIA to reform itself. Hundreds of individuals who smuggled drugs, tortured, and murdered in the name of the Agency, have recently been purged from its payroll and oversight committees have been created to monitor the Agency's activities.

Stansfield Turner (Admiral, Former Director of Central Intelligence): One of my biggest jobs was to get the CIA to understand that they could do their secret operations at the same time that we were keeping the Congress adequately informed. It wasn't easy to overcome that dichotomy because the CIA people just assumed that if you told the Congress it was all over the newspapers the next day. It wasn't really the case.

Peter Kornbluh: But it is similarly true that many of these Congressmen and Senators become members of a covert club. If they are given access to the information, then they consider themselves to be on the inside. They don't share it. So all too often, they are co-opted into a system of secrecy that contributes to a major intelligence scandal every five or six years or so.

Daniel Patrick Moynihan (Senator (D) New York): The great problem of the Central Intelligence Agency today is that it completely missed the end of the Cold War. For twenty-five years, it reported everything there was to know about the Soviet Union excepting the fact that it was collapsing. The great question is whether we should abolish it. Weapons intelligence: put it in defense. Political intelligence: put it with the State Department, which is where the president should be turning for that kind of advice. And economic information: well, that's open and public the world over.

Gene LaRocque (Rear Admiral, President of the Center for Defense Information): But until the American public know how much the CIA receives in money every year and know how many people they have and what they are doing all over the world, the CIA will continue to bumble along in some sort of romantic role that they ascribe to themselves and the American people attribute to the CIA because we know nothing about it.

Mary Embree: I believe that what is happening right now is that there is more and more information about CIA coming out with freedom of information and some of the things that have been released, declassified. We're finding out a lot of things. And I think that the American people are going to say, "No, we can't do that. It's immoral. It's wrong. It's against everything I believe in. It's not patriotic. It's not good. It's not good even for our country. It certainly is not good for the world."