

Former agent reveals secrets of CIA's agenda

By Sam Putinja

Former CIA operative John Stockwell, who predicted the Gulf war nine months before it happened as well as the invasions of Panama and Grenada, spoke in Toronto Oct. 22.

Up until his departure from the CIA in the late seventies, Stockwell was a high-ranking and distinguished member. In 1975-76, serving under then-CIA director George Bush, he conducted the United States' secret war in Angola. It was at this time that Stockwell called into question the CIA's activities and decided he had to get out.

"I came up eventually with the figure that six million people had died around the world as a result of CIA destabilization. These people would not have died if we had not been spending our money organizing these wars," said Stockwell.

"The six million people that were killed — and that's got to be a minimum figure over fifty years — were people of the Mitumba mountains of the Congo and the jungles of Southeast Asia and the hills of Nicaragua. They were people who had no capability of doing physical harm to the United States and didn't seem to want to hurt the United States in most cases."

During his lecture at University of Toronto's Convocation Hall, Stockwell provided the audience with shocking and sometimes gruesome details of the CIA's activities. Throughout the CIA's history it has undertaken up to thirteen thousand covert operations, ten thousand of which were considered minor according to its own classification. A minor operation could involve the assassination of a foreign head of state while a major operation constituted such actions as the destabilization campaign launched against Nicaragua in the 1980s.

Stockwell said he was never fully aware of the operations he was involved in. "I didn't know what we've been part of. There were lots of people better informed than I."

He maintains that most of the people who work for the CIA do not know what actually goes on and when



Former CIA operative John Stockwell says Fidel Castro's days may be numbered as George Bush prepares to covertly overthrow Cuba.

they do they have incredible ways to rationalize the agency's actions.

"Ninety per cent of the people in the CIA — the ones you meet and work with if you're inside the headquarters, inside the glamorous stations, inside the embassies — are very nice, decent people. They are hired and screened to be nice people. They believe in what they're doing. They do not see the evil of what they're doing."

"We human beings have an endless capacity to rationalize what we do to other people, especially people who are far away from us."

What was justified by the CIA as necessary to fight communism is almost too incredible to believe. "Every area of operations of the CIA — like southeast Asia, like Central America, like Afghanistan — has left behind a major drug cartel that has been built up with CIA aircraft," Stockwell said.

He also gave details of CIA programs in Latin America where local police and military forces were taught the techniques of population control, repression and torture. "CIA officers go to work with the police in Latin and Central America and Asia and Africa and literally give them equipment for torture and teach classes in the techniques of torture."

His descriptions of the CIA's domestic activities were also quite lurid. For instance, the CIA had various professors in the United States on its payroll to collect files on their students, as well as to have the CIA publish books full of propaganda in their own names.

But beyond the CIA dirt and international conspiracies, Stockwell's main focus was a look at post-Reagan America and its place in the New World Order. Carefully reviewing the Reagan era, Stockwell maintained that the economic problems of the United States provided the rationale for America to go to war in order to focus attention away from domestic issues.

Stockwell blamed the military-industrial complex for the current economic decline of the United States. Ronald Reagan's unprecedented military buildup put tremendous economic and social strains on the United States.

"The United States was the undisputed economic superpower at the end of World War Two, and the leaders have utterly squandered that advantage so that the United States is now a debtor nation with the largest debt in the history of the world," said Stockwell.

"The defense corporations, as we call them, are not U.S. companies. These are international, multinational corporations. They suck out of the United States and its allies these enormous profits and invest the money

overseas in other countries that are building trade goods — so they're bleeding us laterally through the trade deficits at the same time."

These economic problems provide American leaders with opportunities to shift the focus and go to war elsewhere. The recent war in the Gulf was a good example of this, as was the invasion of Panama. Was it a coincidence, Stockwell asked, that the bombing of Libya in 1986 occurred one week before the Tokyo economic summit where Reagan admitted for the first time that the United States was a debtor nation?

Stockwell indicated that American leaders get a lot of help from the American people when it is time for a war. "I submit to you that in this war-loving country, the United States, the conditioning for war begins at the age of two when we put our kids in front

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