



The CIA and the Media

What's it all about?

by Charlie Clark (McGill Daily)
for Canadian University Press

The American press has spent the last year making a national sport of exposing the domestic crimes of its infamous CIA thus providing many a reporter with the thrill of sensational scoops while projecting an overall image of raging responsibility and rigid objectivity.

The CIA's massive domestic surveillance, violations of charter, LSD experiments and assassination attempts have all been bannered across the front page giving the celebrated investigative journalists a field day amidst an anxious post-Watergate dryspell.

But the end of the rampage is clearly in sight. American overseas interests have remained quite unaffected and we all must be reminded that beneath the newspaper's muck-raking headlines lies a history of CIA collaboration, co-optation and even direct manipulation of the press in the interests of the agency's public image and Cold War politics.

The two classic examples of press co-operation with the CIA both took place at the peak of the Cold War, an era when the mass media and the government harmoniously aligned their perspectives in "the interests of national security."

The famous U-2 incident of August, 1960, in which an American spy plane was shot down over the Soviet Union, produced mass fear of nuclear confrontation. Yet *Washington Post* newsman Chalmers Roberts can write, in retrospect, that he was aware of the spy missions undertaken throughout the fifties yet had remained silent. "We took the position that the national interest came before the story because we knew the United States very much needed to discover the secrets of Soviet missileery," Roberts explained.

Then came the Bay of Pigs invasion, organized and botched by the CIA, much to the dismay of the ambitious Kennedy cabinet. It is now fully documented that several publications were on to the story before the fiasco occurred. *The New Republic*, the voice of America's liberal elite, submitted the galleys of its Bay of Pigs scoop to President Kennedy and then complied with his request that it be withheld.

Tad Szulc of *The New York Times* had uncovered the plans for the entire operation and had prepared his story for a four-column, front-page layout until it was cut and toned down by the *Times* bureau chief "out of concern for the safety of the men who were preparing to offer their lives on the beaches of Cuba."

Think how different things might have been if the public had been informed of the United States' precarious spy adventures or its secret war on Cuba back in the early sixties. Why was the press so scared to let loose with it?

The problem lies in the fact that the people who run the news media are not mechanical teletype machines, but are human beings who share the same social life, outlook and attitudes as the political officials whom they write about. At the height of the Cold War, a phone call or friendly chat with the Commander-in-Chief could summon up patriotism in any newsman.

The logistics of the reporting process also provide a key. A reporter cannot alienate a contact or source, by publishing dangerous exposures. As John D. Marks and Victor Marchetti remark in *The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence*, all of the CIA and government officials operate through an "old-boy network" of journalists who are friendly to the CIA and who either agree with the idea of "national security" or as Timesman Tom Wicker puts it, "don't want to let an agent be killed in Timbuctoo."

This cozy press relationship also pervades the direct coverage of the CIA itself. When the CIA feels the need for a public relations uplift, it can always rely on *Time* magazine for a cover story that tells it just like the CIA wants it told. Former CIA director Richard Helms, himself a former journalist, encouraged *Newsweek* with an inside story on the agency which played up, according to plan, the CIA's overt enclave of liberal intellectuals when in reality, two-thirds of the CIA secret budget was going to the much sleazier covert operations.

The CIA can cater to its friendly journalists by baiting and rewarding them with scoops and exclusives. Hal Hendrix won a Pulitzer Prize in 1962 for his reporting of the Cuban missile crisis, based completely on CIA leaks.

The Agency also conducts close relations with certain publishing houses with often aim for the best-seller list with corrosive indictments of communism.

These are written by CIA produced defectors, whenever there is a need to remind the public of the "atrocities of Marxism."

On the international scene, the set-up is even more scandalous. CIA men often debrief returning foreign correspondents to fill in gaps in their intelligence reports. But even worse, the *Washington Star-News* reported that the CIA had up to forty full-time journalists around the world on its payroll. It seems that journalists can often penetrate places that are off-limits to agents masquerading as diplomats, businessmen, or military attaches.

The overseas journalists are actually part of a much larger network of CIA affiliates who, since the agency's inception in 1947, have worked to discredit communism by buying influence in labour organizations, charitable foundations, student groups and of course, the press. It takes a lot of money to buy the services of people at Reuters, Agence-France Presse, Tass, and Hsinhua, the Chinese news agency.

Writing in the *Columbia Journalism Review*, Stuart Loory describes the CIA's process of "floating a story." A CIA agent, assigned to carry out a mission of shaming the Soviets as an irresponsible superpower, would enlist a Reuters man under CIA contract and give him a phony story (he may or may not be aware of the deception), describing a non-existent Soviet nuclear weapons test. The reporter would then pass the story on to a Stockholm correspondent, explaining that he had to protect the source by having the story emanate from the Swedish capital. Once the story is put on the wires, a competing wire service will often duplicate it and presto - the world reads fiction on page one.

The CIA has also maintained a controlling interest in numerous foreign publications, among them the West German *Der Monat*, the *Rome Daily American* and *Encounter*, published by the Congress for Cultural Freedom.

In light of recent revelations, it may seem that the CIA's manipulation of the press is a bygone phenomenon of the Cold War era, and that soon all the misdeeds will surface, restoring justice and morality. But the root of the problem has yet to be dealt with.

The recent CIA scandals stem from an era of U.S. - Soviet detente, an era when American society severely divided by the Vietnam war has lapsed into a confused complacency. It is a period in which the left over hawks of the Vietnam era, in the wake of Watergate are slowly fighting for political survival against a new wave of moderate liberal populists and water-down radicals.

In this framework, the press can report the crimes of the Central Intelligence Agency without threat to national security and without threatening its readers with the urgency of the need for change of America's role in world affairs.

But the conclusions drawn, and the lessons learned as reflected in the media result only in calls for a "curtailment of the CIA's budget - because it is dishonest and immoral to secretly overthrow foreign governments." Never mind asking why it was done in the first place.

Never could the press make mention of the United States' economic empire, which in order to dominate world capitalism, must suppress the rise of socialism in the Third World and at home. This key point, the root of American policy for which the CIA is only the cutting edge, is out of the domain of the commercial media, and yet remains the crucial point of contention.

While researching this article on the CIA and the press, Stuart Loory was begged by as many journalists as CIA officials not to publish the story. And these fine men and women of the North American "Free Press" will continue digging up their scoops, with the smug and proud assurance that the Chinese and Russian press is nothing but a mouthpiece for the government.



Who's cheap

Inuit pr

by Collin Gribbons
for Canadian University Press

OTTAWA (CUP) - The Inuit land settlement proposal, calling for native ownership of 250,000 square miles of land and the creation of a new Federal territory called Nunavut, was presented to Prime Minister Trudeau and his Cabinet February 27, by the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada.

In addition to the new territory and land ownership, the Inuit asked for exclusive hunting, fishing and trapping rights in their traditional lands north of the treeline, a 3 percent royalty on all subsurface and offshore resource extraction, a social and economic program and better planning and management of public lands.

"In our proposal, we ask for outright ownership of 250,000 square miles of land for the Inuit," said ITC President James Arvaluk, who made the presentation. "We didn't just pull that figure out of a hat to use it for an initial bargaining position. This represents the absolute minimum amount of land the Inuit require to preserve what is left of their culture, identity and way of life, and at the same time provide a fair means to enable the Inuit to integrate in to Canadian society as equal participants."

Prime Minister Trudeau promised to "study the proposal very attentively," but he refused to commit the government to a further meeting in three months to ratify an agreement in principle, as the ITC requested.

The Inuit requests are designed to help preserve Inuit identity and traditional lifestyle. But the ITC is also concerned that the Inuit be allowed to participate in the governing of the north and of all Canada on an equal footing with the rest of the population.

"We want to be self-sufficient rather than having to rely on the generosity of southern Canadians," Arvaluk told the Cabinet. "We are no longer satisfied to be colonial subjects. We want to handle our own affairs, just as the people in southern Canada do."

The Inuit settlement proposal also calls for compensation or benefits in exchange for extinguishment of Inuit claims, and measures to preserve the Arctic environment.



NEW TERRITORY

The creation of a new territory, which would be called "Nunavut" meaning "our land", is perhaps the most striking of the settlement proposals. "In brief," says the 61-page summary of the land settlement proposal given to the government, "the basic idea is to create a territory, the vast majority of people within which, will be Inuit. As such, this territory and its institutions will better reflect Inuit values and perspectives than the present Northwest Territories. The Inuit should have actual control through their voting power, at least for the foreseeable future."

Inuktitut, English and French would be the official languages in the Territory. And Commissioners would have to be fluent in Inuktitut and English. Commissioners would be chosen from the members of an Inuit community corporation, and would have to be acceptable to the majority of the community corporation.