

CIA 5-0111

→ Pers: Truman, Harry S.
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CIA Government Unto Itself

A congressional watchdog committee for the Central Intelligence Agency would be in the national interest, for there is strong evidence to suggest that the CIA has become the master of American foreign policy, not its servant.

It is significant that a strong plea to rein in the CIA has come from former President Harry S. Truman, the man who created the cloak-and-dagger organization. Mr. Truman in a recent newspaper article pointed out that the CIA has long since departed from its intended function—the gathering of unvarnished and objective intelligence information for the nation's chief executive.

Many members of Congress have echoed Mr. Truman's plaint. Most recently, Sen. Eugene McCarthy, D-Minn., writing in the Saturday Evening Post, had this to say:

"It (the CIA) has taken on the character of an invisible government answering only to itself. This must stop. Wrapped in its cloak of secrecy, the CIA modestly hints it has overthrown foreign governments. The CIA must be made accountable for its activities, not only to the President but also to Congress."

It is well documented that the CIA has been at cross-purposes with the U.S. military and diplomatic missions in South Viet Nam. The cloak-and-dagger boys were caught short by the November coup, and they must share much of the blame for supplying the misinformation on which U.S. policy in that country has been built.

Certainly the watchdog committee works well with the Atomic Energy Commission. The AEC has functioned superbly in keeping Congress in instant touch with the U.S. nuclear program, and it has done so without any of the leakages of information which the CIA brass fears would result from a congressional group charged with overseeing their activities.

There is no sound reason why the CIA, alone of all federal agencies, should not be responsible to Congress. The Balkan-like chaos in which it operates is inexcusable. It exists because Congress has refused to insist on being told enough about CIA's operations so it can reach conclusions as to whether they are in the national interest.