

FRED LANDIS

## Georgetown's ivory tower for old spooks

THE GEORGETOWN CENTER for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) may not yet be a household word, but it is rapidly becoming the New Right's most sophisticated propaganda mill. Writers like Michael Ledeen, Edward Luttwak, Walter Laqueur, and Robert Moss—members or close associates of the center—nearly every month grace the pages of such influential political magazines as *National Review*, *Commentary*, *New Republic*, and *Harper's*, not to mention the more specialized publications on strategic affairs. And if the "line" that emerges from this common pool of strategic thinkers sounds suspiciously like that of the Pentagon and the CIA, it is no coincidence.

In the wake of recent congressional investigations, the CIA has been forced to back off from its regular practice of recruiting agents from within the working press. But its version of history is today as widely aired as ever, thanks in good measure to the Cold War intellectual elite at the Georgetown center. These articulate and sophisticated anti-Communists, many of them former "national security" officials, are the vanguard of a conservative movement to bury détente and revive the worldwide struggle against the Soviet Union. They are aided immeasurably in that task by the aura of respectability and scholarly detachment they draw from their association with Georgetown University, and by the prestige of the many national publications that now regularly carry their grim writings.

The CSIS is formally a branch of Georgetown University, but its offices,

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advisory board, and \$2.4 million budget (supplied mostly by foundations) are all independent of the administration or faculty of the university. David Abshire, a former assistant secretary of state for congressional affairs, is the center's chief executive officer and the person responsible for convincing Henry Kissinger and Ray Cline, former deputy director of the CIA, to come aboard. Kissinger, in residence along with an entourage of former National Security Council assistants and bodyguards, holds the title of counselor. Walter Laqueur, author of several books on the Middle East, guerrillas, and terrorism, chairs the research council. The senior research staff includes Penelope Hartland-Thunberg, formerly of the CIA's Board of National Estimates; Michael Ledeen, who writes on such subjects as Eurocommunism, terrorism, and CIA "moles"; William Hyland, former director of intelligence at the State Department; and Edward Luttwak, a consultant to the secretary of defense and an adviser to Senator Howard Baker on SALT.

The CSIS holds frequent seminars to keep its staff in touch with influential policy makers—like the time Rhodesian Prime Minister Ian Smith went over to talk with Kissinger and company. It also publishes a journal, edited by Ledeen, *The Washington Quarterly*, and sends free reports out to those likely to be most receptive to its political stance, including Jaswant Singh, editor of publications for the Indian armed forces; *The South African Digest*; the Argentine navy; and the American Petroleum Institute's *The Oil Daily*. Members of Congress also receive its reports regularly. But if you are just a student at Georgetown University, forget it. As the student newspaper once observed, "It is less familiar to most students than the terrain of the Sea of Tranquility. Few have heard about it and among those few, misconceptions abound." Students and the rest of the general public are welcome to see only a CSIS-produced film on the energy crisis "featuring the Flintstone cartoon characters with narration by Charlton Heston," according to the center's annual report.

For its select audience the CSIS strives to produce timely reports on major issues of international politics affecting national security. As Jon Vandracek, director of communications, explained, "What makes the Center unique is its emphasis on anticipating the nature of future problems. . . . That is the real story." CSIS publications have anticipated problems with regard to the

Soviet threat to Latin America, the terrorist threat to Latin America, the Soviet threat to the Caribbean, and other permutations of the same theme.

THESE CONCERNS AND PRE-occupations also permeated a CSIS-sponsored conference on the Communist threat to Italy, held three months before the 1976 Italian elections. Panel members included William E. Colby, Ray Cline, John Connally, Clare Booth Luce, and Claire Sterling. Colby and Cline had spent their careers at the CIA. Connally was then a member of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, the CIA's oversight panel. Clare Luce had been U.S. ambassador to Italy when Colby was CIA station chief in Rome. Claire Sterling, a free-lance journalist, had long been the correspondent in Italy for the *Reporter* magazine, a key voice of Cold War liberalism until it folded in 1968.

All the panelists agreed on the need for U.S. action to prevent a Communist victory in Italy, frequently citing the Chilean example as a "successful" precedent. They discussed the Italian Communist party (PCI) not so much in its indigenous political context, but rather as a "national security" threat to the United States and all of NATO.

Back in the days when the United States was the undisputed leader of the

## Georgetown's center is in the vanguard of the movement to bury détente and revive containment.

"Free World," Colby was running the largest political action program in the history of the CIA. Colby tells about this 1950s Italian operation in his recent confessional, *My Life in the CIA*. Before crucial elections the CIA would encourage Italian-Americans to write letters to their relatives in Italy warning them not to vote Communist. One of the CIA's favorite propaganda themes, according to Colby, was the charge that the PCI received secret Russian funding through a complex of party-controlled import-export firms that engaged in trade with Soviet-bloc countries.

The CSIS conference on Italy ended

with the proposal that the 22 million Italian-Americans and 50 million American Catholics wage a letter writing campaign to influence the Italian election. In the following days full-page ads appeared in major U.S. newspapers calling on Americans to write "to friends or relatives you have in Italy to vote to maintain their freedom on June 20-21." Those ads were sponsored by the Citizens' Alliance for Mediterranean Freedom, a political action committee organized by several participants in the CSIS conference, most notably John Connally. The new group was ready and willing to take on the Communists in a propaganda war. Bill Gill, executive director of CAMF, warned journalists that news out of Italy was tainted: "Don't talk to anyone in the Italian wire services," he said. "All the Italian press has been infiltrated by the Communists." He suggested instead Claire Sterling and his "friend" Ray Cline as reliable interpreters of the Italian political scene.

The day after the CSIS conference, the *New Republic* published a lead article, "Italy's Russian Sugar Daddies," by Claire Sterling and Michael Ledeen. Their argument? That the PCI received secret Soviet funding through a complex of party-controlled import-export firms.

The *New Republic* was until recently published by Robert J. Myers, formerly a CIA officer in Indonesia and Cambodia. Myers served as an assistant to Colby and is a close friend of Ray Cline. When Cline made public appearances to promote his latest book, Myers accompanied him and introduced him to the audiences. Myers testified with Cline in January 1978 at congressional hearings on the CIA and the media, where he stated, "The reciprocal relationship between the CIA and the American press has been of value to both parties and often to the individuals themselves whose careers may have mutually benefited by such connections."

Just before the elections, "Italy's Russian Sugar Daddies" was reprinted in the *Rome Daily American* and in the magazine *Il Borghese*. Reporters newly arrived in Rome received unsolicited copies of the Sterling/Ledeen exposé, courtesy of the U.S. embassy.

The *Rome Daily American* is perhaps best known for its generous benefactor, the CIA. CIA support to the paper was originally requested by Ambassador Luce in the 1950s; Colby, then in charge of the Rome station, reluctantly went along. By the time Graham Martin be-

came ambassador, in 1969, control over the newspaper had slipped somewhat, so Martin ordered a new infusion of covert funds. Martin also gave \$800,000 in CIA funds to sponsor propaganda by the neofascist Movimento Sociala Italiano (MSI). *Il Borghese* is the official propaganda organ of the MSI.

Meanwhile, over at the American embassy, Bruno Scarfi at the U.S. Information Agency would hand reporters copies of "Italy's Russian Sugar Daddies," hoping to divert attention from the widely publicized "Pike report" of the House Select Committee on Intelligence, which exposed CIA intervention in Italian politics. "The Pike report," lamented Scarfi, "has destroyed the possibility of further cooperation by Italians with the CIA." Even so, he explained, the United States had other means of influencing events—such as the rapid production of news documentaries in Italy, flown by jet to Monte Carlo and beamed back at Italian TV viewers. Paid political ads were not permitted on Italian TV, but Monte Carlo's channel was com-



pletely commercial and could reach Italy. The United States could purchase a bloc of time on Monte Carlo TV and determine the programming.

But Monte Carlo TV was not the only broadcast outlet for American propaganda, as millions of Italians learned while sitting glued to their sets on June 21, 1976, waiting for the election returns. The polls were still open when two obscure Americans appeared on Channel 1 to warn of the danger of a Communist victory. Michael Ledeen and Claire Sterling were members of a panel of commentators that remained

on the air from 4 P.M. until 2 A.M. the next morning. Channel 1 is controlled by the Christian Democratic party, which from 1948 to 1976 received the bulk of the \$75 million in covert funds the CIA sent to Italy, not including the \$6 million spent specifically for the 1976 elections.

**W**HILE THE HOUSE SELECT Committee on Intelligence (the Pike committee) told us a little about CIA propaganda activities in Italy, the Senate's intelligence committee, under Frank Church, blew the lid off CIA media activities in Chile. In two detailed reports the committee quoted CIA cables on propaganda guidance to the Santiago station, including details of "disinformation" directed at the Chilean armed forces to shake their loyalty to the Allende government. The committee reports specified the contents, direction, and cost of this propaganda war. The largest single recipient of CIA propaganda funds was the newspaper *El Mercurio*. In anticipation of the March 4, 1973, elections, the CIA gave an additional \$965,000 to *El Mercurio* and \$1,427,666 to opposition political parties.

In addition to the rumors and forged documents, the CIA's media campaign was reinforced by the planting in Chilean military journals and in *El Mercurio* of "studies" by James Theberge, director of Latin American studies at CSIS. On February 27, 1973, *El Mercurio* headlined, "Chile Gives Haven to Extremist Network." The article from the UPI wire began, "The Center for Strategic and International Studies of Georgetown University today pointed out . . ." followed by several standard propaganda themes favored by the CIA, quoted from a forthcoming book by Theberge. In particular, the article claimed to have uncovered a clandestine Korean Communist guerrilla training camp that had been moved from Havana to Santiago with the approval of President Allende. The article ended by asserting that the Chilean leftists trained at this phantom base "have intimidated the democratic opposition during the electoral campaign of March 1973."

Here was a preposterous situation: A Chilean newspaper was making sensational allegations concerning events supposedly taking place in Chile and attributing the story to an institute in Washington, D.C. But it served the CIA well to have such non-news circulated by a friendly "expert" and laundered through a reputable news organization like UPI. And the timing was ideal.

Although the CSIS only got around to publishing Theberge's entire work (*Russia in the Caribbean*) toward the end of 1973, the paragraph on the March elections had been planted in Chile's leading newspaper before the elections even took place.

The Theberge incident was far from unique. That same year, for instance, the CSIS published another book of similar title and content: *The Stability of the Caribbean*, edited by the British journalist Robert Moss. Moss's book was published jointly with the London-based Institute for the Study of Conflict, with financial support from the Tinker Foundation. Contributors to the book included James Theberge; Brian Crozier, head of the institute; and Moss himself, who was identified as the author of "the forthcoming book, *Chile's Marxist Experiment*."

Brian Crozier had previously been the "director-general" of Forum World Features, a feature news syndicate that reached at least thirty newspapers in America and hundreds abroad. FWF folded in April 1975, just prior to the disclosure in the British and American press of classified CIA documents proving that it had been a CIA operation all along. In a 1968 report to CIA director Richard Helms, the London station chief, Cord Meyer, noted that "FWF was created from the residue of Forum Service, an activity of the Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF), from which the CIA withdrew its support in 1966." Forum Service was in turn the outgrowth of Information Bulletin, Ltd., a CCF project whose "principal director" was Walter Laqueur, now with the CSIS in Washington. After 1966, the CIA controlled FWF through a Delaware corporation, Kern House Enterprises. Kern House also provided the initial funds for the Institute for the Study of Conflict, which Crozier founded in 1974 as an offshoot of FWF; Robert Moss was also a member.

In January 1977, the *Guardian* (London) and the *New York Times* identified *Chile's Marxist Experiment* as one of the propaganda books produced by the CIA. These articles also revealed that the entire second printing of Moss's book had been purchased by the Chilean military junta at a cost of £55,000, to be given away as part of a propaganda package.

**T**HE DETAILS OF HOW *Chile's Marxist Experiment* came to be published show that the CIA does not merely subsidize right-wing hacks to do their own work; rather, it

directs the production of propaganda at every stage. Correspondence between David & Charles, Ltd., the publisher, and Forum World Features and the Institute for the Study of Conflict shows that the CIA first selected the title and then went searching for an author. It rejected the first candidate (Michael Field of the *Daily Telegraph*), then settled on Moss, paid him in advance to write the book, and supervised the content

The same technique was used against Allende on January 7, 1973, while he was visiting the Soviet Union. *El Mercurio* ran a whole page under the masthead and cyrillic letters of *Pravda*. The fake headline had Allende calling the USSR "Our Big Brother." *El Mercurio's* own Soviet correspondent, who had nothing to do with this trick, cabled a correction that the head office ignored.

Appropriately enough, Theberge's

## **"That first amendment is only an amendment, you know," Ray Cline told Congress.**

and progress of his manuscript over several years.

Such CIA-sponsored propaganda was directed as much at English-speaking as Spanish-speaking audiences; like the Chilean junta's CIA-prepared "White Paper" on the coup, it was meant to convince Americans of the dangers of Marxism in Latin America. CSIS members saw to it that Congress heard the message. Thus in 1974, when James Theberge was about to become ambassador to Nicaragua, he read his article "Kremlin's Hand in Allende's Chile" into the record of the House Subcommittee on Inter-American Affairs hearings on "The U.S. and Chile During the Allende Years, 1970-1973." Theberge had prepared the article for a conference on Chile held at the CSIS a short time earlier. Theberge decided to bring his fellow conference participant Robert Moss to the hearings so that Congress could benefit from the knowledge of both these scholars.

The first line of Theberge's article, inserted in the hearing record, quotes "Eudocio Ravines, the brilliant Peruvian Communist." Now it just so happens that Ravines is known to have been on the CIA payroll since 1950. In his autobiography, *Undercover*, E. Howard Hunt recounts how, as the CIA's station chief in Mexico City, he worked with Ravines and future *National Review* publisher William F. Buckley on propaganda campaigns. One of the tricks they pulled was to print up copies of a fake Peking newspaper during the visit of a local Mexican Communist to China. The phony newspaper headlined an insult against Mexico allegedly made by the Mexican. Copies of the CIA-concocted newspaper were then passed around the country to discredit him.

article treats *El Mercurio's* account as gospel truth, citing President Allende's description of the USSR as Chile's "Big Brother."

With colleagues like Theberge around, it is no wonder that Ray Cline finds the Georgetown center such a congenial place to work. Currently director of world power studies at CSIS, Cline has called for a strengthening of ties among journalists, academics, and his old boss, the CIA. In testimony before the House Select Committee on Intelligence, Cline went even further than the CIA's present and former directors, Stansfield Turner and William Colby, in defending CIA manipulation of the press—everything from planting black propaganda to passing covert funds to journalists. "You know," he observed, "that first amendment is only an amendment." And in a study of CIA reorganization sponsored by the CSIS Cline wrote, "I think links between our best intelligence analysts and the academic research people with expertise on subjects under study in Washington should be built up far more than has been possible because of fears that exchanging information and views with CIA is somehow a corrupting process."

Most CSIS members, as Cline appreciates, rarely harbor any such fears. Despite their guise of academic objectivity, these Cold War intellectuals have cast aside their independence and volunteered to serve the state. Other academics and intellectuals, during the Vietnam War, finally realized that too cozy a relationship with official power could threaten their integrity. But these new Georgetown mandarins, untroubled by such doubts, welcome the chance to join and to aggrandize the national-security establishment. □