

Report from Bangkok by Sophie Tanapura

Whose side is Colby on?

The "retired" CIA director, meddling in Thailand affairs, is not even up to date on his briefings.

Retired from the post of director of the CIA, William Colby has found a second career, that of a "champion of free enterprise," with the New York-based Pacific Community Institute (PCI). Founded in 1982, the institute is headed by Lester Wolff, former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations and former chairman of the House Committee on Asian Affairs.

In Bangkok, Lester Wolff is remembered for his infamous policy under the Carter administration of dishing out U.S. dollars in the millions to drug kingpin Khun Sa for buying up the opium crop, with the argument that this would reduce the amount of drugs going onto the world market.

Last December, the Pacific Community Institute sponsored a U.S. congressional delegation of 10, headed by Lester Wolff and William Colby, on a supposedly goodwill Asian tour to explain the benefits of free-enterprise policy to countries that are, in fact, viewing themselves as victims of American protectionist policies! On Dec. 18, the delegation arrived in Bangkok to join a conference on "Trade as an Element of National Security."

In an exclusive interview with *EIR's* Thai-language monthly publication *Off the Record*, William Colby played down the problem of insurgency in Thailand and the Philippines as almost solved.

Colby profusely praised Thailand for having reduced the number of Communist insurgents from 13,000 to 1,000. For a former director of Central Intelligence, Colby is really behind on

his briefings on the problem of insurgency. The question now is not armed insurgency.

The Thais are much more worried now about Communists who have been amnestied but who, in reality, continue to operate for the party in urban areas, especially metropolitan Bangkok. These subversive activities do not take the form of urban terrorism. Rather, these still-active Communist cadres, pretending to repent, have succeeded over the past five to six years in slowly infiltrating the country's military and security apparatus. It is known that generals protecting these elements are hoping to be able to use them to an end other than that of the national interest.

Certain military Young Turks, known for their involvement in the April Fool's Day 1981 coup and the Sept. 9, 1985 coup attempt, are seen flirting with amnestied Communist militants.

It is a fact that Col. Manoon Roopkachorn, a prominent Young Turk who led a tank maneuver in the last aborted coup in 1985, has exiled himself in West Germany and enjoys today the protection of the Green Party, as well as of intellectuals around Hans Käng, the "dissident" crusader of the theology of liberation. During the past general elections, Col. Prachak Sawangchitr, another Young Turk, used a "former" Communist Party central committee member as campaign manager!

When asked whether the national security of Thailand was being threatened because amnestied Communist

Party members had won numerous seats in the Thai parliament, Colby replied straight-faced, "That's fine. The best way to take care of a guerrilla insurgency movement is to bring them into the system. So that, instead of using guns, they use votes. And then, that's better for everyone." Colby even went so far as to comment, "It's probably premature at the moment" to legalize the Communist Party, "but eventually, perhaps."

Is it any wonder then that, when asked to comment on insurgency in the Philippines, Colby categorically refused to recognize that the New People's Army (NPA), the military arm of the Communist Party of the Philippines, has grown into a sizeable army of some 23,000 men under the government of Corazon Aquino?

When confronted with a problem, it seems that Colby is all too eager to hoist a white flag. For him, the truce between the Aquino government and the NPA is sacred and represents "a step toward some kind of a settlement."

Whether it be "bringing them into the system" or "negotiating a truce," both policies imply legal recognition of the insurgents who have waged an internal irregular war against the state. This means state recognition that the insurgents' cause was legitimate. Therefore, by adopting such postures, the state government has already given in to the insurgents' blackmail. A settlement negotiated under the terms set by the enemy is guaranteed to be short-lived. Such a "negotiated" stability is temporary and will only allow the enemy of the state to buy time while preparing to launch the next phase of destabilization.

After this, what can be the credibility of William Colby, former director of the CIA? Whose side is he really on?