

Editorial

What about Mr. Haig's ethics?

While Senator Harrison Williams was being railroaded out of the U.S. Senate between March 3 and 11 for "violations of ethics" he never committed, far graver questions arose about the ethics of an individual whose responsibilities and power in the United States may be second only to the President's.

Secretary of State Alexander Haig's name has appeared with increasing frequency in the widening Italian scandal of "persons above suspicion" implicated in the terrorist kidnaping last December of American NATO General James Dozier. As this week's Investigative Leads column documents, two top aides of Haig, Vernon Walters and Michael Ledeen, have now been named in the investigation of Propaganda 2, the secretive "Freemasonic lodge" that was set up after World War II as the Italian command center for international terrorism, dope, and gun-running.

One of the most shocking of the latest revelations is the testimony of Dozier's jailer, Red Brigader Antonio Savasta, that Haig aide Michael Ledeen—accused by the Italians of having been on the P-2 payroll—met twice with Luigi Scricciolo, the ultraleft trade unionist recently jailed as a Red Brigades terrorist.

The gravity of the charges is underlined by another report we publish this week, the special dossier proving that the "death squads" at work in Central America are run by P-2 and other elements in the international network we call Dope, Inc. For at this very moment, Alexander Haig is doing everything to embroil the United States in a reckless military adventure in Central America.

In an interview published March 4 in the *Los Angeles Times*, the Secretary of State summarily dismissed the "last-minute appeal" of Mexican President López Portillo to mediate between the United States and Cuba in pursuit of a political solution to the Central American conflict. The *L.A. Times* interview was taken by all observers as a particular slap in the face to Mexico. Haig predicted that Mexico itself would soon be swept up in the conflagration as it spread from El Salvador into Guatemala (a country where the P-2 linked death squads and insurgents

reacting to them butchered 13,000 civilians last year). Haig sprinkled his remarks with insults about López Portillo's "appeasing" of his opposition.

Haig simultaneously began a frantic media campaign to convince Americans that the Soviet presence in Nicaragua was a threat to American security. After the fiasco of photographs of "Sandinista atrocities" against the Miskito Indians released by Haig, which turned out to be atrocities committed by the Somoza dictatorship, on March 9 reporters were called to the State Department for a photographic display of "Soviet-model obstacle courses" in the Nicaraguan jungle, but still no evidence was produced to back Haig's assertion that Nicaragua and Cuba are arming the guerrillas in El Salvador.

But the next day word was leaked to the press that the President had authorized a CIA covert action option to fund and build a paramilitary force of up to 500 Latin Americans for commando operations against Nicaragua. Another report has it that Haig is considering deploying up to 60,000 American soldiers into El Salvador in a blitzkrieg maneuver. Troops in and troops out, the argument goes, should avoid the mire of a Vietnam.

Why does not Haig take the one action that would stop the bloodshed in Central America—cutting off at the source the flow of arms to both sides? Anyone familiar with Central America knows the weapons come mainly from *private* arms merchants linked to Israeli intelligence and Max Fisher's United Brands. And both right and left are increasingly being advised by Argentines linked to the P-2 lodge.

Could the "why" be linked to some loyalty other than to the United States—some loyalty such as to P-2? Even the aroma of ties to something involved in the filthiest aspects of the genocide being so cynically conducted in Central America, on the part of the U.S. Secretary of State, is a threat to our national security. Not only should the U.S. Senate, so attuned to "ethics" questions, quickly bring the matter under scrutiny, but other U.S. NATO allies besides Italy should find it in their vital interests to demand full clarification.