

Reagan orders CIA inquiry

WASHINGTON — Pres. Ronald Reagan on Thursday ordered the CIA and his Intelligence Oversight Board to investigate "the possibility of improper conduct" in the spy agency's production of a psychological warfare manual

for Nicaraguan rebels.

Acting four days after the existence of the manual was reported by The Associated Press, the White House issued a statement saying the administration "has not advocated or condoned political assassination."

Until Thursday, administration officials had refused any comment on the manual.

Reagan's order came as the

manual, which suggests "selective violence" to "neutralize" some officials of Nicaragua's leftist government, emerged as a Democratic campaign issue, and House Speaker Tip O'Neill demanded the ouster of CIA Director William J. Casey.

Denouncing the manual as "nothing short of outrageous," O'Neill, D-Mass., said Casey "owes the Congress and the American people an immediate

explanation," and added: "I want him to get out of there."

The speaker further suggested that any in-house investigation by the CIA would be a "whitewash," and he said the matter should be investigated by the congressional General Accounting Office instead.

Casey, Reagan's close friend and a leading figure in the administration's Central America policies, has been under fire

before over his personal financial dealings and congressional complaints that he withheld information about the CIA's mining of Nicaragua's harbors earlier this year.

During a stopover in Seattle, Democratic vice presidential candidate Geraldine Ferraro cited the manual as an example of the administration's "moral blindness" on foreign policy.

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