



EARTH The CIA put your brother in Vietnam.
CIA heroin traffic turned him on to smack.
You are paying the CIA
\$6 billion a year for these social services.
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His curiosity piqued by Sunset Strip billboard, Diehl investigated the charges with expert on spies, Ladislav Farago.

BOOK TALK

Sniffing Around U.S. Spy Network

BY DIGBY DIEHL

● A sensational billboard on Sunset Strip a few weeks ago caused me to look into the March issue of **EARTH** magazine with considerable interest—and great skepticism. Another attack on our government within the government, the Central Intelligence Agency, was leveled in a message 48 feet long, heralding an article by Berkeley professor Peter Dale Scott about CIA involvement in heroin traffic in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.

Although Scott does not "prove" his charges conclusively, his research is impressive and the bulk of circumstantial evidence as well as peculiar coincidence would certainly lead me, if I were a congressman, to ask just what the CIA is up to running Air America, the largest airline in Southeast Asia, and being inconspicuously conspicuous around the opium triangle. **EARTH**'s editor, Jim Goode, says, "All this is terrifying. It has to be stopped and the only way to stop it is to make the CIA—specifically, its secret unauthorized war in Laos—accountable to the public. When a 'secret' agency is allowed to operate beyond the reach of the law, it becomes a criminal agency."

Goode sounds shrill and unrealistic until you recall weird scenes like the Bay of Pigs and read a few more facts. The CIA employs 18,000 people "directly," only we don't know exactly what 6,000 of them do because they're involved in Clandestine Services. The \$6 billion annual budget of this organization is spent in ways mainly unknown by the American taxpayer . . . unknown, for that matter, by chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee Allan Ellender who says, "It never dawned on me to ask about it."

My curiosity piqued, I talked to the foremost civilian expert on secret intelligence operations, Ladislav Farago, who is also the author of the current best-seller, **THE GAME OF FOXES** (McKay; \$11.95). Farago has spent most of his life working in American intelligence services and studying espionage.

"The spying operations of the CIA are a big silly joke; they're all playing Alice in Wonderland games," he says, roaring with laughter like a Hungarian Santa Claus.

"We're spending something like \$2.9 billion bribing prime ministers in Asia and buying armies in Burma and it's all nonsense. Counterinsurgency is not the business of the United States. Nixon would be better served by getting the facts than by the CIA overthrowing governments."

Actually, according to Farago, the CIA and other intelligence operations do have valuable information-gathering services, mostly run by civilian scholars. "These are useful and necessary services; mainly reading newspapers and official reports from other countries. But the rest could be canned. The United States could have a very adequate intelligence operation for under \$100 million. To be informed would be cheap; to play games is expensive."

A comic aspect of the intelligence problem is that even when a spy does come up with information, who knows if he can be trusted? "As I point out in 'The Game of Foxes,' the Germans and the Allies had so completely penetrated each other's information lines with double agents that no one knew what was really happening. Hitler's own men invariably gave him false information because they didn't like him. Of course, they couldn't have known for sure what they were giving him since the British were running the German spy network in England. Then again, the Roosevelt-Churchill hotline was tapped. Sure, a spy can be important—but you never know to how many people."

History proves over and over that the spy game is a waste of time and money, says Farago. "When I worked in naval intelligence in 1935-37, the information published in the New York Times was superior to what was coming through our office. The Korean invasion of June, 1950, wasn't announced to President Truman by our vast spy network; it came over the Associated Press wire. And, of course, the CIA's 'secret' Bay of Pigs was one long farce. Eisenhower turned down the idea in September, 1960, but Allen Dulles (then CIA head) and Richard Bissell (then chief of staff) sold it to Kennedy. It was so cleverly planned that virtually every major news source from the New York Times to the Nation knew about it in advance."

In 1943, Ian Fleming (who was then with British Intelligence and went on to write the James Bond

spy novels) had a desk in Farago's Washington office. "Fleming used to rush in and set up shop periodically, always very hurried. But he carried a little sign with him on every journey that he would hang on the wall that I think tells the whole story of espionage: 'Never in the course of human history was so much known about so little by so many.'"