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*Dealing With Credibility*

In the Senate debate on the bill to protect the privacy of Government employes, Senator Sam J. Ervin alluded to the Central Intelligence Agency's "wobble seat." The wobble seat, it turned out, is a chair that is really a lie detector. Concealed inside its metal arms, padded back and cushioned seat are electrodes and sundry other equipment that can measure a person's emotional responses to questions he is asked.

The CIA has not explained why it is necessary to administer lie detector tests without telling the victim he is being tested. In the spy game, deception is so ingrained—witness the martini olive that is really a microphone and the cigarette lighter that is really a camera—that the question probably never came up. What could be more natural to the slouch hat and trench coat crowd than a chair that is not a chair? After all, CIA agents always pretend they are something else—tourists, students, labor leaders, a potted palm in a hotel lobby—so why shouldn't their office furniture?

As far as we know we have never sat in one of the CIA's non-chairs, but we would venture that they would not be complete unless they are equipped with an ejection device so that all prevaricators using them can be summarily catapulted from their seats, thereby exposing them unmistakably for what they are to everyone else in the room. If that is the case, we would caution the CIA against letting the chairs slip into the general furni-

ture pool for Government offices. Imagine the sight of half of official Washington sailing out of windows everywhere!

CPYRGHT