

U.S. Aide Is Killed In Greece

From News Dispatches

ATHENS, Dec. 23—Richard S. Welch, special assistant to the U.S. ambassador to Greece, was shot to death outside his suburban home here tonight, a U.S. embassy spokesman said.

Welch's name was among seven on a list of alleged U.S. Central Intelligence Agency agents working in Greece published recently by the English-language daily Athens News.

A police spokesman said Welch, 46, a first secretary at the embassy, was shot in front of his villa in the fashionable suburb of Palaion Psychiko, about eight miles from the Greek capital.

Three masked gunmen drew up in a car, one got out and shot Welch three times. He died soon after he was rushed to a hospital, the police spokesman said.

(According to intelligence sources in Washington Welch was CIA chief of station in Athens at the time of his murder. A CIA spokesman in Washington, asked about Welch's alleged undercover activities, replied: "The agency does not confirm employment, either past or present. It never has and never will." A State Department spokesman said he did not know if Welch worked for the CIA.)

Welch and his wife Kiki were apparently returning to their residence from a Christmas party given by U.S. Ambassador Jack B. Kubisch for hundreds of Greek and American guests. Mrs. Welch was reportedly unhurt in the shooting incident.

Welch was a career diplomat with previous overseas service at the U.S. embassies in Peru, Guatemala and Cyprus.

A 1951 graduate of Harvard, he spent nine years as an

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economic analyst for the Department of the Army before entering the Foreign Service in 1960. He was assigned to the embassy here about five months ago.

When it published the names of alleged CIA agents, the Athens Daily News said it had received the list from an organization calling itself "The Committee of Greeks and Greek-Americans."

The committee said in a letter that Welch's job was "to see that the government of Premier Constantine Karamanlis does not get out of control." It did not say how Welch did this.

A few days later another previously unknown organization calling itself "The Committee to Keep

Greece Greek" sent the Athens News a letter naming 10 alleged agents of the Soviet KGB, or secret police, working in Greece.

The News refused to publish the KGB list but foreign news agencies received a copy of it and published the story.

There has been some anti-American feeling in Greece, stemming from belief in some quarters that the United States supported the Turks in their invasion of Cyprus last year. Many Greeks also believe Washington propped up the military junta that ruled Greece for seven years before the Cyprus crisis.

Diplomat's Death Laid to Publicity

While President Ford expressed his shock and sorrow

at the murder in Athens of U.S. diplomat Richard S. Welch, a former CIA official said that such tragedies become "inevitable" because of recent exposures of CIA personnel.

David Phillips, president of the Association of Retired Intelligence Officers and a close personal friend of Welch said in Washington yesterday that his organization for several months "has expressed its concern for a number of American foreign service officers abroad because of their identification as CIA officers by a small group of ex-intelligence people who have been engaged in a program of exposing intelligence officers."

Phillips, who retired from the CIA in May of this year,

identified Philip Agee, another former CIA employee, as the main "protagonist" in the effort to identify CIA agents abroad. In a recent book Agee named more than a hundred CIA agents, both Americans and others of foreign nationalities.

Phillips said "our association believes that the murder of Welch in Athens represents the tragic kind of occurrence which becomes inevitable" through the practice of identifying CIA agents as practiced by Agee.

President Ford, vacationing in Vail, Colo., said he was "shocked and horrified by the terrorist murder" of Welch. The President said

"the hearts of all Americans go out to his family in sympathy and in gratitude."

Richard S. Welch

THE MURDER OF Richard S. Welch, CIA station chief in Athens, was the entirely predictable result of the disclosure tactics chosen by certain American critics of the agency as part of their effort to destroy it. His was one of the names published in a periodical called Counter-Spy; in a book, former CIA officer Philip Agee has also named names. Precisely because those using these tactics include experienced former CIA men, they would be in a position to know that public identification of Richard Welch was tantamount to an open invitation to kill him. The surprise is not that this happened to him, but rather that it had not happened previously to others. That none of the critics pulled the trigger is meaningless. There are enough potential killers at large around the world to spare the critics that chore.

"If anyone is to blame for Mr. Welch's death, it is the CIA," explained Tim Butz of Fifth Estate, the group here that publishes Counter-Spy. "We don't want to see anyone shot." One can understand why Mr. Butz does not wish to acknowledge that his group set Mr. Welch up for the hit. He no doubt believes every word he says. To blame the victim for the murder, however, is simply to flee one's own responsibility for contributing to it. What other result than killing did Mr. Butz and his colleagues

expect when they fingered Mr. Welch? The ironies are overwhelming. Here are some American foes of the CIA adopting the morality and even abetting the technique—indirect assassination—which they have so often described as characteristic of the agency itself. Here are critics of the CIA employing a disclosure tactic virtually certain to lead to assassination, just as the rest of the country comes to the view, which the government has already formally embraced, that assassination is an unacceptable abuse of power.

Institutionally the CIA has a good deal to account for over the years. It is, however, currently making an accounting in the only way acceptable in a democratic society: according to internal and congressional processes of review. That review must, of course, go on—with due vigilance against such perils to individuals as have been freshly dramatized in Athens. To think that any of the CIA's past excesses constitute a moral license for extra-legal punishment of its employees is just wrong. Richard Welch, after all, was not the agent of a hostile power. He was an American citizen serving his government, and he had been accused of no crime. We mourn his death.

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**GREEK GROUP SAYS
IT KILLED C.I.A. MAN**

ATHENS, Dec. 28 (Reuters)— A secret political group said today it assassinated Richard S. Welch, chief agent in Greece for the Central Intelligence Agency, to demonstrate that the Greek Government and army were under the control of United States imperialism.

Greek police officials said the group's statement, sent to foreign news agencies, could provide new clues for detectives investigating the Athens murder last Tuesday.

Mr. Welch, 46 years old, first secretary at the United States Embassy, was acknowledged by the White House as an operative of the C.I.A. He was gunned down by three masked men as he returned home from a Christmas party. The killers escaped.

The two-page statement was distributed for the "organization of 17 November," named after the 1973 student revolt on that date against the former military regime.

Fears for Other Agents' Lives

By Lou Cannon
Washington Post Staff Writer

VAIL, Colo., Dec. 27—President Ford believes the murder of Central Intelligence Agency station chief Richard S. Welch in Athens this week is partly the result of publication of Welch's name as a CIA agent shortly before he was killed, White House press secretary Ron Nessen said today.

Nessen also said the President is concerned about the lives of other agents "whose cover may have been blown."

The press secretary made these comments while answering reporters' questions soon after an announcement that the President has waived various restrictions so Welch can be buried in Arlington National Cemetery Friday.

Nessen announced that a government plane will be sent to Providence, R.I., to bring Welch's mother, sister and brother to the funeral. He said both of these measures had been recommended by Democratic Sens. Claiborne Pell of Rhode Island and Gary Hart of Colorado.

The President, as quoted by Nessen, said the reason he waived the military restrictions on burial at Arlington was that Welch "certainly died in the service of his country."

Welch, 46, who also was special assistant to the U.S. ambassador to Greece, was shot by three masked gunmen outside his suburban Athens home Tuesday after an American embassy Christmas party.

He had been identified as a CIA agent in a Washington-based publication, *Counterspy*, which is critical of U.S. intelligence activities, and also in the English-language Athens *Daily News*.

Nessen declined to single out any publication in his

briefing but both *Counterspy* and the Athens newspaper were mentioned in questions by reporters. When Nessen was asked if Mr. Ford thought the publication of Welch's name was responsible for his death, he answered: "Partly responsible, yes."

Nessen said in response to a question about congressional responsibility for Welch's death that he "did not mean for a minute to imply Congress had any responsibility in the matter. But he said Mr. Ford "emphatically" is concerned that publication of other names will put the lives of other CIA agents in jeopardy.

"During various negotiations and discussions with committees on the Hill which wanted to reveal names, I think the White House made very clear, and so did Secretary (of State Henry A.) Kissinger and (CIA Director) Bill Colby, that the publication of agents' names could jeopardize their lives," Nessen said.

Nessen was asked about progress Mr. Ford is making on his plan to make some changes in the CIA and other intelligence agencies.

He said that before Mr. Ford left Washington Tuesday for his eight-day skiing vacation, his staff gave the President "a very large book" of recommendations. Mr. Ford is studying it and is moving toward decisions, Nessen said.

On another matter, Nessen announced President Ford will speak Jan. 5 to a national convention of the American Farm Bureau Federation in St. Louis.

Ford Links Welch Death to Reports

Athens Halts Press Coverage

By Dusko Doder

Washington Post Foreign Service

ATHENS, Dec. 27—The Greek government today imposed a news blackout on the assassination of Robert Welch, the senior Central Intelligence Agency official in Greece, in a move suggesting growing official sensitivity about the incident.

The action, relayed by the Athens public prosecutor to the Greek media, prohibits publication here of any information surrounding the case. The ban does not affect foreign correspondents, however.

Welch's slaying continued to dominate public discussion here, and today's afternoon press was filled with speculation about the attackers' identity and their possible motives. The ban, the first instance of censorship since the restoration of democracy in Greece 18 months ago, was issued after the afternoon papers reached newsstands.

The government's move comes in the wake of widespread speculation here that the assassination was organized by extremist groups in an effort to embarrass Premier Constantine Karamanlis.

Police are reported to have raided the homes of an undisclosed number of anarchists, left-wing extremists and Greek Cypriots living here. The police drive reportedly has failed to turn up any clues about the attack.

Welch, 46, station chief for the CIA here, was one of the seven alleged CIA operatives in Greece whose names, addresses and phone numbers were published in the Athens press recently. Welch was gunned down Tuesday night in front of his suburban home by three men in what observers have described as a "professional job."

During the past two years a number of U.S. embassy employees have been subjected to attacks such as car bombings. But no American diplomat was hurt in these incidents, which reflected a tide of anti-American feelings grounded in the widespread conviction that the United States, and the CIA in particular, had installed, supported and maintained the military government that ruled Greece for seven years until July 1974.

The CIA has been deeply involved in Greek affairs since the time of the Greek civil war. It helped establish the Greek intelligence agency, known as KYP, and the intimate contacts between the two organizations were reported to have been the principal channel of communication between the two governments during one period of the military dictatorship here.

The CIA is also accused of helping to organize a coup in July, 1974, against Cypriot President Makarios. The subsequent Turkish invasion of Cyprus and Greece's inability to challenge it has been a source of deep national humiliation.

Anti-American feelings, and specifically denunciations of the CIA, have been stimulated by a steady stream of disclosures of CIA misdeeds in Washington. According to some political observers, the congressional investigations of the agency have helped create a climate here in which the assassination of a CIA station chief had become a desirable objective of some extremist groups.

The Greek press has been at pains to suggest that the murder was not committed by Greeks. Some newspapers have suggested that the assassination of Welch was done by the Turks, Greece's traditional enemy. Others said Welch was a victim of interagency struggle. The Daily Kathimerini strongly suggested that Welch had been assassinated by Americans.

Welch had served in Athens in the 1950s, under a different cover. He spent the period of 1960-64 in Cyprus and, before his assignment to Athens last summer, he served 11 years in Latin American countries.

Greek government leaders, including Premier Karamanlis, have gone out of their way to express regrets for Welch's death and it seems unlikely that the relations between the two countries would be affected by the incident. However, it has focused public attention on the CIA's large presence in Greece and raised questions about the future scope and form of its operations here.

The body of Welch is at an American airbase near Athens, awaiting the arrival of his 19-year-old son, who will accompany the body to

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The Washington Star

Ford Sets Burial In Arlington for Slain CIA Agent

VAIL, Colo. (UPI) — President Ford yesterday authorized burial of Richard S. Welch in Arlington National Cemetery, and a spokesman said Ford believes published reports identifying Welch as a CIA agent were "partly responsible" for his assassination in Greece.

Press Secretary Ronald Nessen, in disclosing Ford's decision, also said the President felt Welch was entitled to a burial at Arlington because "he certainly died in the service of his country."

Nessen said that Ford feared other CIA agents might be in danger if their "cover" was disclosed in a similar way.

Welch, 46, was slain by Greek terrorists last Tuesday as he was returning to his Athens home from a Christmas party. An English-language newspaper, the Athens News, and other publications had reported a short time earlier that he was an agent of the Central Intelligence Agency, although he served officially as a special assistant at the U.S. Embassy.

ASKED IF Ford thought disclosure of Welch's identity in the press was a cause of his death, Nessen said the President thought it was "partly responsible." And, asked if Ford was worried now about the safety of other CIA agents who might find themselves in a similar situation, he said, "The answer is yes, emphatically — he does have some concern."

Nessen said Welch would be buried next Friday at Arlington and that Ford had ordered a military jet to go to Providence, R.I., to bring Welch's brother, sister and mother to the funeral.

He said Ford decided to waive restrictions limiting burial at Arlington to military veterans and to provide transportation for the Welch family at the request of Democratic Sens. Claiborne Pell of Rhode Island and Gary Hart of Colorado.

Asked if Ford had taken any action to try to prevent

similar problems for other CIA agents, Nessen recalled that the President objected when the Senate Intelligence Committee decided to identify former CIA agents in its report on assassination plots against foreign leaders — but said he did not mean to connect the committee's action and Welch's death.

IN RESPONSE to questions, Nessen said Ford was now studying "a large book of recommendations" from U.S. intelligence agencies to try to determine steps possible to make sure American agents do not again become involved in activities described by the Senate committee.

Nessen said Ford received the material just before leaving Washington for his holiday at Vail last Tuesday, and the President was moving toward adoption of his long-awaited proposals, but he could not say how soon they would be announced.

As Nessen was meeting with reporters, Ford was heading for another round of skiing at the Rocky Mountain resort. New snow fell through the night and was still coming down heavily in late morning as the President set out, carrying his ski boots.

Ford, who invited three members of the White House press corps to join him, arranged to ski for a couple of hours despite low visibility in the falling snow. Asked if it would make skiing harder, he said, "It sure will but it's sure fun."

The President expressed delight over his skiing progress after sharing the slopes Friday with members of the U.S. Olympic ski team. He took a fall at one point.

"It was really great except for that stupid fall," Ford said later. "It was pure stupid carelessness."

Nessen announced that the President will fly to St. Louis on Jan. 5 to deliver an address to the national convention of the American Farm Bureau Federation.

"It is a speech in his role as president," Nessen said.