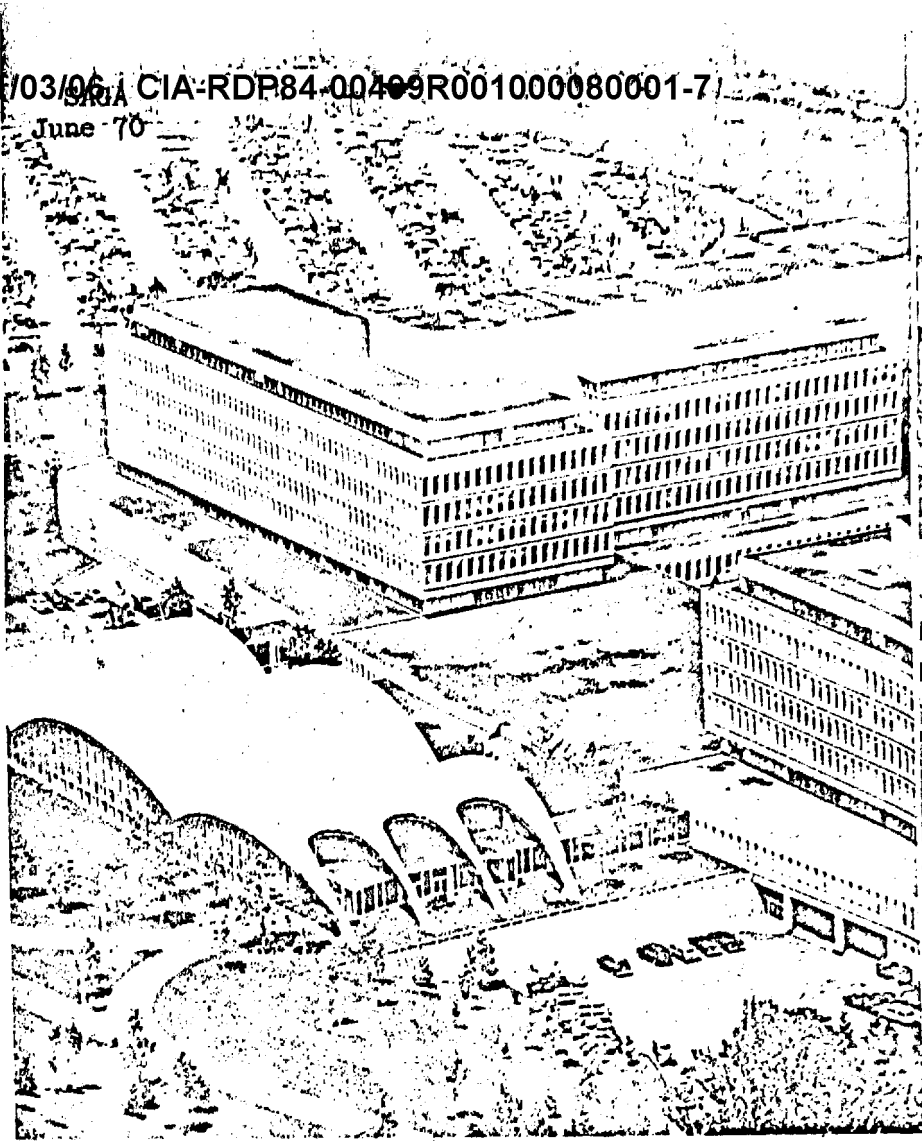


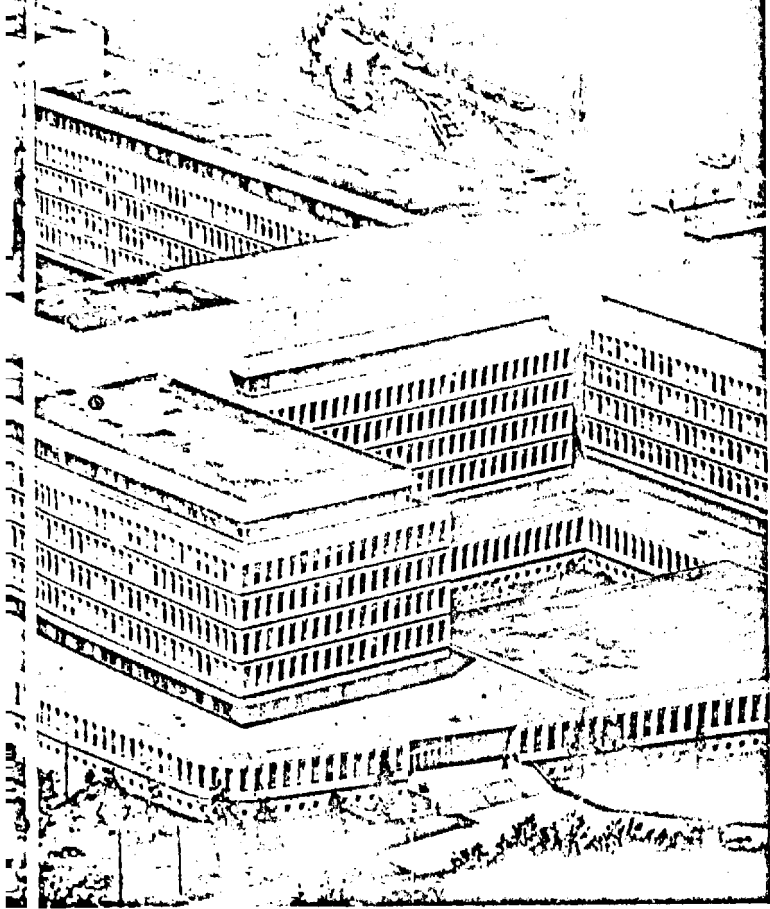
June 70

**SAGA** penetrates the veil of  
secret and gives you, for  
the first time anywhere,  
an inside look at



# THE CIA'S WORLDWIDE KILL SQUADS

By Roy Norton



Inside the vast, globe-girdling Central Intelligence Agency there is an obscure department known as "Staff D." The "D" could stand for "death" or "destroy" because this small band of professional assassins, equipped with the latest in weaponry and gadgetry, murder on order those persons considered a threat to the national security of the U.S.!

**M**r. G—was certainly not thinking of his own death as he hurried down the corridor to his hotel room in Guatemala. His mind swarmed with the details of smuggling rifles and machine guns to a band of Communist-backed revolutionists in Mexico. They had money to pay for weapons and wanted delivery at a secret point on Mexico's eastern coast. A fishing boat captain from Grand Isle, La., was to make the delivery.

Mr. G—was thinking of the sizable profits he would make from the deal and barely noticed a thin, well-dressed young man step out of a room down the hallway. The young man coughed, covering his face with a handkerchief.

The two men drew abreast.

"Are you an American?" the young man asked.

Mr. G—turned and his eyes widened with fright. He stared into the barrel of an eight-inch long aluminum tube. *Click!* A strange vapor spurted from the metal device, surrounding Mr. G's—face.

"What the hell—" he stammered, breathing the sour fumes into his lungs. He crumpled

to the floor, face turning purple. The young man placed the aluminum tube in his pocket and casually walked down the hall and stairway to the lobby.

It took exactly 72 seconds for Mr. G—to die. He died just as the young man walked out into the street. Several minutes later, a hotel maid found the body and screamed her alarm. It was another 20 minutes before an ambulance arrived. That evening, a death certificate was prepared.

Heart attack was the verdict.

The examining doctors knew nothing of a colorless, odorless poison carefully sealed in a thin capsule and shot out of a hermetically sealed aluminum tube. Bizarre poisons are seldom discussed at medical meetings. Few coroners know that such a capsule, fired no more than 24 inches from the victim's face, will produce almost instant death.

The deadly vapors are breathed into the lungs. Arteries that carry blood to the brain are paralyzed instantly. Within seconds, the victim begins to die. Within minutes, all traces of the poisonous vapor disappear, long before an autopsy can be performed.



*Fidel Castro, shown here addressing the U.N. General Assembly in 1960, was target of CIA assassination plot that was cancelled because of "too many complications." Part of the Bay of Pigs invasion force study maps in a jungle outpost before the actual attack, which ended in disaster.*

**T**he poison was developed in a Russian laboratory in the late 1950s and brought to the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency in 1961 when Bogdam Stashinskiy defected to the West. Stashinskiy, a trained assassin for the KGB (*Kommissariat Gosudarstvennoi Bezopasnosti* or Soviet Committee for State Security), knew the vapor was an effective murder weapon. He had eliminated two anti-Soviet exile agents in West Germany before surrendering to U.S. counterspies.

Mr. G—was just one of many victims of the poison since then. A member of the shadowy world of international manipulators, he was a clever soldier of fortune who specialized in gunrunning, dope smuggling and political intrigue. Like his fellow entrepreneurs, he fed on revolt and revolution, hurrying to the world's hottest trouble spots in order to fatten his bank balance.

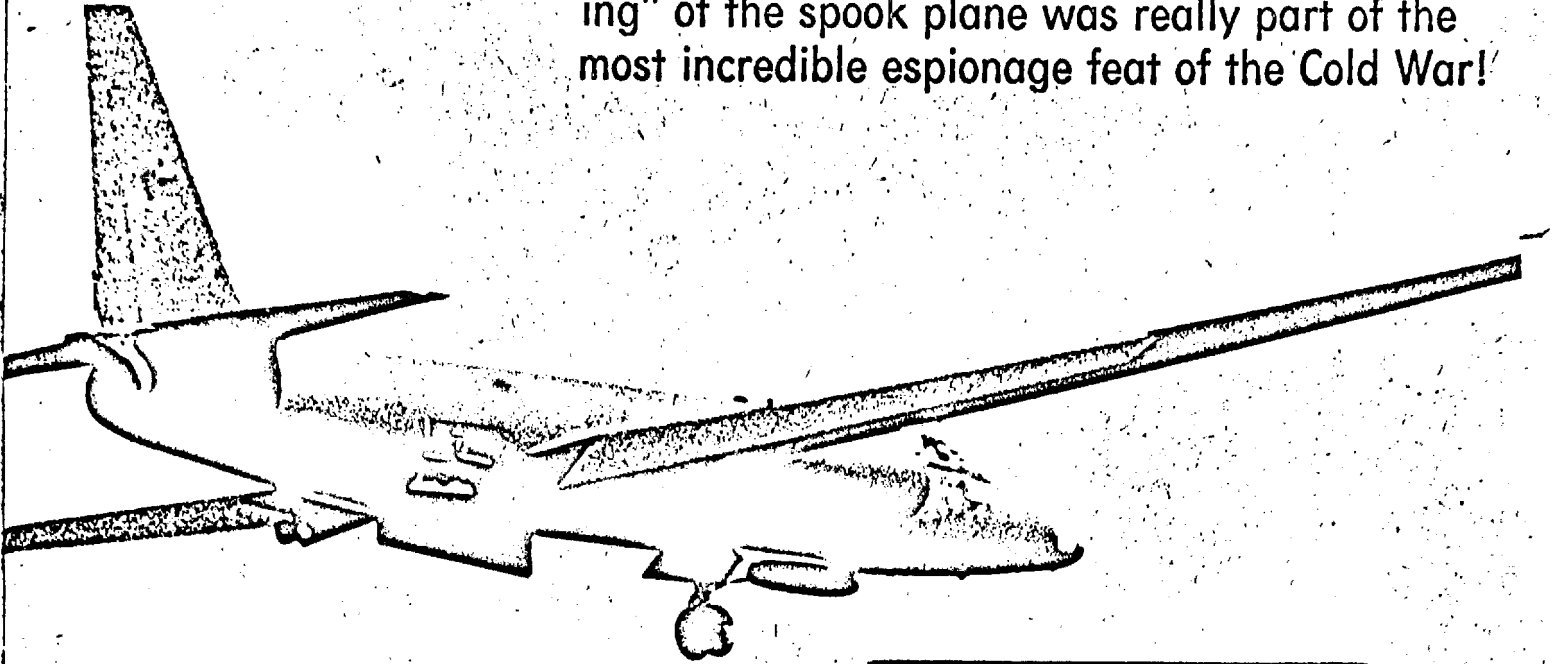
The assassin with the deadly aluminum tube was an illegal, or "black" agent in the "Plans" section of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. He is attached to "Staff D," an obscure department known inside the agency as the "Kill Squad." Equipped with the latest in weaponry and gadgetry, these agents kill the

enemy on order. Their victims are those persons considered a threat to the national security of the United States. In the example above, a Communist-inspired revolution south of the border would be a threat to the U.S., hence it was necessary to "eliminate" Mr. G—.

Members of the "Kill Squad" are the glamour boys of the CIA's 20,000-man spy organization. They are the true professionals in the back alley battles of cold war espionage. Cold-bloodedly, they can murder a double agent in Berlin, liquidate a person who may jeopardize U.S. security, or arrange for an assassination squad to kill the political leader of an unfriendly country.

Naturally, many of these projects are surrounded by the highest secrecy. There are stiff penalties to prevent present, or former, agents of the CIA from discussing their experiences. "I've been out of the 'Company' for two years," remarked an ex-agent. "However, if they knew I was talking, I could be taken into custody without a warrant, held indefinitely, and brought to a secret trial. More than one person has been whisked out to the 'Mansion' for interrogation after they talked in public."

Remember the famous U-2 incident involving Francis Gary Powers? Here are the never-before-published facts about this top-secret CIA operation and why the "downing" of the spook plane was really part of the most incredible espionage feat of the Cold War!



The "Mansion" is the CIA's top secret 65-acre private estate located a few miles from Oxford, Md., along the Chaptank River. The Mansion and grounds are protected by high, electrified fences, armed guards and a patrol of vicious German Shepherd dogs.

However, despite all this official secrecy, many persons in and out of the agency have become disenchanted with the CIA.

**O**thers seek power through office politics. Like any other bureaucratic group, there are cliques inside the CIA struggling for supremacy over the vast spy network. Some informants were recruited, trained, sent into the field and quickly became disillusioned by the realities of espionage. "It looks good only in the movies," remarked one source.

From interviews developed over a span of 14 months, considerable data on the CIA was obtained. Despite the secrecy, the agency constantly bubbles with wild stories and fantastic rumors; separating the fact from the fantastic was no easy task. Since this information cannot be verified officially, every effort has been made to insure accuracy within these limitations.

My information

(Continued on page 82)



*U-2 pilot Francis Gary Powers.*

continued

- includes:
  - An aborted assassination plot against Fidel Castro during his visit to New York for an appearance before the United Nations;
  - The formation and training of para-military assassination squads, staffed by Cubans and dedicated to killing Castro;
  - "Kill to protect" orders on the U-2 spy plane;
  - Persistent rumors concerning the possible murder of several U.S. citizens.
  - Details on the latest weaponry and gadgetry.

**Get Castro:** Like some ancient bearded demon, Fidel Castro is a satanic figure to CIA agents. "He is satan incarnate, a living reminder of the agency's failures in Cuba, the Bay of Pigs and other fiascoes," reported a former agent. "They've tried everything to get Castro. Nothing has worked."

Originally, the agency was lax in determining Castro's political beliefs. A CIA briefing to President Eisenhower's Board of Consultants on Foreign Intelligence Activities in late 1960 reported Castro as being a "political enigma." A still secret report declared that Castro did not become a Communist until after the Bay of Pigs. "Prior to that time, his public statements did not reflect Marxist directions," the report stated.

Nevertheless, there were those in the CIA who did not trust Castro, even in 1960. "If he walks, talks and acts like a Communist I say he is one," a crusty CIA official declared. Others agreed and, when Castro announced his intentions to visit the United Nations, an assassination plot was formed.

"A visit to the U.S. by a foreign leader is a good opportunity to obtain information," explained a former agent. "The CIA almost always maintains a hospitality suite for the American policemen assigned to guard a visiting dignitary.

for free food and drinks. We debrief them through casual questioning. Surprisingly, we often pick up important intelligence dat.

"When Khrushchev visited the U.S. a few years ago, the police reported he was hitting the bottle," he said. "He was also abrupt and he treated his associates in a demeaning manner. This indicated a possible power struggle that ended when the old boy was ousted."

Castro came to New York in 1960 and the CIA opened a hospitality suite at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. Off-duty policemen assigned to guard Castro were offered the finest in food and drink, served and poured by CIA agents.

But the assassination plot was aborted. Why?

One agent said, "there were just too many complications."

Shortly after Castro's visit to New York, the CIA selected several Cuban exiles to staff CIA-financed assassination squads. "The idea was that a four-man team would return to Cuba, set up posts near Castro's headquarters and kill him in a cross fire from high-powered sniper rifles equipped with bullets that exploded on impact. Another team was assembled to 'hit' Castro when and if he made a public appearance. Still another team was trained to blow up his office, using powerful explosives."

The assassination squads were trained in the Florida Everglades, under the direction of a graduate of a WW II OSS assassination school. Marine officers, assigned to the CIA, assisted in the training. "Several squads were trained, but Castro's intelligence men learned of our intentions," an ex-agent said. "There are rumors of at least two attempts made on Castro's life. Both failed. I don't know if this was our CIA squads or some ordinary Cuban citizen."

What happened to the remaining assassins? "There is always work for a man schooled in murder," concluded my informant. "At least one of these men was at the Bay of Pigs. Later, he flew some of the old B-26 bombers for the CIA in the Congo rebellion. He got a bellyful in the Congo after being ordered to fly over native villages and indiscriminately fire on civilians. He dropped out of sight after that."

Some critics of the CIA, particularly those who dispute the "lone assassin" verdict in the death of Pres. John Kennedy, believe the CIA is responsible for the murders of several world leaders. Controversial New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison is the most vocal of those who claim a conspiracy exists. Garrison is convinced of CIA involvement in the Dallas assassination.

"I have absolutely no doubt that the murders of Pres. John Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr., were carried out by the Central Intelligence Agency," Garrison declared recently. He cited several similarities in the two murders: the professional marksmanship, announcements from the government that no conspiracy existed were made before the investigation, the use of scapegoats (Oswald and Ray), and allegedly misleading information surrounding the assassinations.

Many Negro leaders, particularly those in Memphis, Tennessee claim there are valid reasons to reopen the investigation of Dr. King's assassination.

A group of independent, self-financed investigators have been sifting the facts in several assassinations for more than a year. They are concerned with what are considered similarities in the deaths of Patrice Lumumba, Dag Hammarskjold, Sen. Robert Kennedy, Pres. John Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Negro leader Malcolm X. "There are certain patterns in these murders to warrant further investigation," one investigator declared.

Another investigator was more outspoken. "I am convinced that a clique within the Central Intelligence Agency, or a CIA-linked group, is responsible for several assassinations," he reported. "I just find it too incredible to believe an agency of the U.S. government would cold-bloodedly murder President Kennedy, or assassinate some of the best minds in the modern world simply because the victims did not believe in the Cold War."

However, these independent investigators are not overly optimistic about the results of their investigations. "If we had everything down in black and white, hard evidence, no one would believe it," one man concluded. The facts are few, the theories are numerous.

**The U-2 Murders:** "Intelligence flights over unfriendly countries started as early as 1952 or 1953, using the early U-2 planes under CIA jurisdiction," a former CIA agent revealed. "The U-2 flights have continued to this day, despite the photographs we obtain from Samos, the Satellite and Missile Observation System. Those 'spies in the sky' were launched in 1961.

"The U-2 planes flown over Russia were highly improved aircraft. Their range was tremendous and their altitude was quite high," he continued. "The CIA was charged with protecting these planes from any publicity and an English civilian was 'eliminated' when he attempted to take pictures of the U-2 at Lakenheath, England.

"I heard of another incident that allegedly occurred at Atsugi Airport, near Tokyo, in the fall of 1959. A Japanese teenager slipped onto the base and snapped a few pictures, which he hoped to sell to newspapers or magazines. Word got back to someone and, the next evening, the teenager drowned himself. Naturally, I assume he had very little choice and was probably held under the water by an agent," he concluded.

Are the assassinations of civilians cleared through channels? Must prior approval be obtained?

"Absolutely not! An agent in the 'black' section is trained, and charged, to make his own decisions," the informant said. "An agent may be out of contact with his superiors for long periods of time. If security is compromised, they will remember that dead men tell no tales. Also, a request for permission to kill indicates an agent may have slipped up somewhere along the line. Your superiors in the agency do not like mistakes. You do what you must do to protect the national security

and you do it well. An agent might request a professional assassin if he is confronted with a particularly complicated job. Then, the agency would send a pro or two out into the field."

It was essential that the U-2 project be protected by "kill" orders.

*Never published until now is the fact that the U-2 flights were a vital link in one of America's most awesome weapons systems.* Despite his braggart's shouts, Russian Premier Nikita Khrushchev and his predecessors knew the CIA pulled off an important coup in the Cold War.

The following information was obtained from a former U-2 pilot and was verified by other sources. "The U-2 was a beautiful plane," the pilot said. "There were several windows built into the bottom of the craft, designed to photograph enemy installations from high altitudes. This was an important function of the flights over Russia and China.

"However, there was another gadget in the plane and a system of pushing buttons at certain points along the flight," he continued. "These buttons activated a recording device that made a radar imprint on tape of the plane's flight over the earth. We obtained a flight pattern on the tape. After processing, the radar tape could be locked into an atomic missile. The missile guidance system is set up to follow the exact pattern on the tape, from launching until strikedown. The missile might deviate off course, but it has to come back and seek out the pattern on the tape.

"It is a foolproof system for directing an atomic missile directly on target without missing by an inch," he said. "Once that missile is launched, nothing other than a shoot-down can stop it from hitting directly on target. Scramble systems can foul up a computer-directed missile. The typography of the earth for several hundred miles need to be changed to stop a radar tape-directed missile. That's an impossibility so the missile is ready to hit directly on target!"

"When Francis Gary Powers crashed and Nikita Khrushchev discovered we had missiles homed in right on his head, he almost went nuts," the pilot continued. "He knew there was absolutely nothing he could do. We've been zeroed in for years on every important target in Russia and Red China."

Some intelligence people believe the crash of Powers' U-2 plane was no accident. "The whole thing has just never added up," the pilot concluded. "Things are never what they seem in espionage. A secret weapon is no good unless the enemy knows about it." If Powers did play such a role in a "set-up" crash inside Russia, it would be the most incredible espionage story in history.

The U-3, a shark-shaped, more powerful spy plane, is continuing to make flights over enemy territory. Today, pilot Powers tests the planes at the Burbank, Calif., plant of the Lockheed Aircraft Corp. Flights are regularly made over Red China, with Nationalist Chinese pilots from Formosa flying the planes. The planes continue to return with important photographs and radar tapes of Red China's strategic targets.

He was an idealist. Central Intelligence Agency trainees are called

JOTs. Junior Officer Trainees, during their extensive training program. Some trainees receive underwater and jungle warfare training at a secret CIA camp in a Southern swamp. Others are given training at a CIA base located near Las Vegas, Nev., on the travel-restricted area of the Atomic Energy Commission's Nevada Proving Grounds.

While assassination is seldom discussed openly by the instructors, it is present in CIA classes by implication. A former agent told of an instructor's remarks to the class one afternoon during his training. "A U.S. citizen happened to stumble onto a base where the 'Company' was training Cubans for the Bay of Pigs invasion. He took several photographs of equipment with U.S. markings on the side," the instructor said. "This was before the markings were to be removed for the actual invasion. If the photographs were published, it would have been a very serious breach of security at the Bay of Pigs.

"He arrived in New York and was stopped and interrogated. Offers were made to purchase the pictures and buy him off. He was an idealist and refused to cooperate," the instructor said. "He was crossing a street when a truck veered out of control, struck and killed him. And, fellows, those pictures and negatives just plain disappeared during all the confusion."

Trainees also hear of an old, grizzled desert gold prospector who unknowingly wandered into a restricted military area with top secret installations. "The 'Company' man knew there was a 99 percent chance the old boy would keep his mouth shut," trainees were informed. "But no chance could be taken. The prospector was eliminated and buried in an unmarked grave."

The CIA's assassination squads in Vietnam are known as the Intelligence, Coordination and Exploitation unit. Trainees are told of ICE terrorists, trained by Special Forces and Green Berets, who have been successful in capturing, or killing, numerous Communist sympathizers. "CIA agents work very closely with the Green Berets and UDT teams in Vietnam," an informant said.

Almost every ex-agent has a story involving the death of a U.S. citizen who unknowingly jeopardized national security in one way or another. These stories frequently concern someone who stumbled onto a secret military base on U.S. soil. These unsubstantiated tales include stories of people who wandered into a Cuban training camp operated by the CIA in the Florida Everglades. "Those nuts in there are pretty darn trigger-happy," said an agent. "A few got into an argument between themselves a few months ago, ending with a shoot-out that brought the county sheriff into the brawl. It took some real fancy footwork to keep that incident off the front pages."

Mental instability, nervous breakdowns, and mental aberrations with paranoid tendencies are an occupational hazard for the CIA agent. "You get to be a bit paranoid if you're in this business for any length of time," admitted a former agent.

They were chasing their wives or girl friends with knives or guns. One poor soul took an

eight-inch butcher knife and decided to carve up his landlady. A larger than usual number of employees are arrested in Washington, D.C., or the neighboring communities in compromising situations involving morals charges.

"A dubious fringe benefit is a private sanitarium," he said. "Security might be compromised if an agent was treated by an outside psychiatrist. This sounds good, but it can backfire. A young analyst requested to be relieved of his duties; he felt the pressure was too much. The agency did not act. Finally, James Woodbury and his wife, Dorothy, made a suicide pact and leaped off a bridge down at Great Falls, Va. Our suicide rate is much higher than that for the average population."

What frightens this agent, and many others, is a nagging fear that an agent in the field may someday go berserk. "A single man with training in explosives, killing and every type of dirty warfare could disrupt an entire metropolitan city," he said. "Some day we may wake up and find such an incident on our front pages."

**Weaponry:** Like their fictional counterparts, the management at the CIA has a fascination for sophisticated weaponry. Very few of the bizarre items in their spy arsenal conform to the Geneva Conventions regarding modern armories; many are so secret that few people outside the CIA know about them.

One diabolical device is a candidate for the "ultimate weapon."

"This is an electronic gadget that changes the role of electrical insulators and conductors," I was told. "An insulator becomes a conductor and vice versa. The device can be attached to an automobile, a telephone, or an electrical appliance, and the victim is electrocuted."

At present, the device works only on a single appliance. "The labs hope to come up with a pyramiding system," the informant said. "The device could then be attached to a point in a city's electrical system. The entire city's electrical grid would be transformed from positive-negative to negative-positive. All the humans would be electrocuted, while the building and physical facilities would be unharmed."

There has also been considerable CIA-financed research into weapons using sound waves and vibrations. A ray gun now available will penetrate a brick wall with waves, or vibrations, and scramble the brain of any human in the structure.

Another device is humorously referred to as "the ultimate weapon to end war forever." A research technician in the laboratory of a musical instrument factory was testing sound waves and vibrations one afternoon. "He adjusted the machine to a certain point, snapped the switch on, and had a sizable and unexpected bowel movement," my informant said. "He snapped off the machine, cleaned himself, returned and had an instant replay of the same experience. By the end of the afternoon, executives concluded they had an awesome weapon to control rioters and looters in the streets." The device emitted a vibration that relaxed the sphincter muscle in the human body.

However, the machine company eventually gave their research findings to another

continued

firm. "They felt the device would hurt their image as a musical instrument manufacturer," I was told.

"This was back in 1967 and riot control weapons were needed by the police," continued the informant. "This gadget could be turned on and anyone within range would instantly be stopped in his tracks. Riot control officers in several cities tested the weapon. It immobilized anyone within range."

The "ultimate weapon" was discussed at a seminar at a convention of Chiefs of Police in Kansas City and a brief mention was published in the *Kansas City Star*. "A few of the Chiefs were asking about the tissue concession if the weapon was used," my informant said. "The cops were intelligent and realized that, while a mob could be stopped, the victims would also be driven underground. Hit-and-run guerrilla warfare would replace mass demonstrations."

However, the weapons technicians at the CIA had no worry about embarrassed victims. "We've tested the weapon in Vietnam," admitted the informant. "Diaper-clad helicopter pilots fly over Viet Cong bunkers, turn on the weapon, and the waves undoubtedly create considerable chaos in the tunnels."

The problem with the "ultimate weapon" is that anyone within range is affected by the sound waves. "The device doesn't recognize national origins," admitted the ex-agent. "However, on a widespread and larger use, such a weapon could conceiv-

ably immobilize an entire army in the field. Planes could fly over an advancing enemy, broadcasting an amplified signal. It could conceivably demoralize an army."

There are dozens of humorous, unsubstantiated stories surrounding the "ultimate weapon." One man allegedly stole the schematics, constructed a device, and built it onto his automobile. Clad in diapers, the man and a carload of friends "terrorized" an intersection filled with downtown shoppers one evening. They also raced through small towns after midnight gleefully beaming sound waves into the surrounding homes.

On the deadlier side, CIA chemists have developed a new nerve gas which contains two chemicals which are not poisonous themselves. However, when the chemicals are mixed with each other, a deadly nerve gas results. "These are common chemicals. They're stored in two separate compartments of a bottle which breaks on impact," my source said. "This makes it easy to carry a nerve gas, without danger."

Poison is a favorite weapon among the CIA's "black" agents. The most useful poisons are those of the curare family, a CIA favorite. Crystalline curare is extremely powerful; only 0.023 grams are required to kill a person. One gadget used by agents is a curare-tipped dart fired from a small blowgun, which resembles a cigarette; a cigarette lighter can also be used as a powerful mechanical dart gun, shooting a poisoned dart across a room.

One of the most diabolical devices in the CIA arsenal is a concave piece of steel fitted onto the top of a tin can containing plastics explosives. When exploded, the steel turns into a white-hot "cannon-ball." The occupants of a room would be blown to bits. When attached to the gasoline tank of a car or bus, the device tosses flaming gasoline over the interior and incinerates the occupants.

Other weapons include the traditional silencer-equipped machine guns, pistols and burp guns. These are usually equipped with custom-made ammunition that explodes on impact. "Whatever the dark side of man can conceive, we have in our arsenal," a former agent said.

What can we conclude about the CIA and the use of "Kill Squads"?

Although a newcomer to international espionage, the Central Intelligence Agency has become one of the world's leading—perhaps the best—intelligence gathering agencies. However, the basic weakness in any spy organization is that a reckless, untruthful, unscrupulous schemer makes the perfect agent. The perfect agent can always be dangerous to a democratic society, unless held in check. We have focused on a single aspect of the CIA; there are many achievements and several failures.

"Assassination squads? Certainly," remarked a former agent. "We're fighting an unscrupulous enemy. Ask the people of Poland, Hungary or East Germany. Ask the Czechs. Truly, the light of freedom is beautiful. We have to keep it that way."

★ THE END