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FOIAb6

*The subject who is truly loyal to the Chief Magistrate will neither
advise nor submit to arbitrary measures. — JUNIUS.*

CPYRGHT Good-by to Spooks

It is now non-U to be non-P in Asia. A non-P is any military gentleman out of uniform but still doing a job for Uncle Sam (or Uncle Ho or Mao or Nikita).

General ("The Prussian") John Arnold Heintges is non-P. He was listed in official U.S. Army Registers from 1936 through 1958. He vanished from official ken in 1959 and 1960, like George Orwell's non-persons who dropped out of Soviet encyclopedias when their existence proved embarrassing.

General Heintges became a non-person when he went to Laos. Under the Geneva truce accords, only France was permitted to have a military advisory group in Laos. A group of U.S. Army officers has been teaching the Royal Laotian Army to fight Communism.

All became non-persons, large as life but officially liquidated. Their chief, General Heintges, was known to every foreign correspondent who inquired about the United States military aid programs in South East Asia. With a discretion astonishing to those outside the trade, the correspondents kept the non-secret. Only Communist broadcasts from Peking, Hanoi and Moscow persisted in putting the finger on "The Prussian".

In fact, the only person kept in the dark about non-persons was the U.S. taxpayer until The New York Times blew the gaff this week. It even revealed that the duel-like scar on the General's cheek came from tripping into an empty swimming pool.

So many military secrets end in similar disclosure. In fact, modern security regulations seem more concerned with protecting the taxpayer's faith. At one time Asia swarmed with non-persons. The Anglo-Saxon public began to regard them with faint distaste after The Quiet American, a breach of security that doubtless prevented a deeper subsequent embarrassment.

Thus the reason General Heintges and his comrades became non-U was the embarrassment their discovery caused their employers. Like The Quiet American, and unlike their many Communist counterparts, they were never sufficiently non-P. "In casual slacks and sports jackets," reports The New York Times, "they were a familiar sight at army camps near Vientiane."

Only when Pravda and the Peking Peoples Daily publish similar confessions will it be wise to declare that our non-P's are truly non-existent.

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