

How to Spot a Spook

by John Marks

Several times in the last few years, this magazine has suggested that the quickest single way to improve the conduct of American foreign policy would be to get rid of the covert agents and clandestine operators in the CIA. In the spirit of practicing what we preach, we present the following article, which tells how to identify a great number of the Agency's "secret" operators. Our purpose is to hasten the day when our intelligence organizations concentrate on their real work—collecting and analyzing information from open sources—and to cut the ground away from the James Bonds and the Gordon Liddys of the world before they get us all in any more trouble.

Both the Soviet and American intelligence establishments seem to share the obsession that the other side is always trying to bug them. Since the other side is, in fact, usually trying, our technicians and their technicians are constantly sweeping military installations and embassies to make sure no enemy, real or imagined, has succeeded. One night about ten years ago, a State Department security officer, prowling through the American embassy in Santiago, Chile, in search of communist microphones, found a listening device carefully hidden in the office of a senior "political officer." The security man,

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along with everyone else in the embassy, knew that this particular "political officer" was actually the Central Intelligence Agency's "station chief," or principal operative in Chile. Bugging his office would have indeed been a major coup for the opposition. Triumphantly, the security man ripped the microphone out of the wall—only to discover later that it had been installed by the CIA station chief himself.

The reason the CIA office was located in the embassy—as it is in most of the other countries in the world—is that by presidential order the State Department is responsible for hiding and housing the CIA. Like the intelligence services of most other countries, the CIA has been unwilling to set up foreign offices under its own name, so American embassies—and, less frequently, military bases—provide the needed cover. State confers respectability on the Agency's operatives, dressing them up with the same titles and calling cards that give legitimate diplomats entree into foreign government circles. Protected by diplomatic immunity, the operatives recruit local officials as CIA agents to supply secret intelligence and, especially in the Third World, to help in the Agency's manipulation of a country's internal affairs.

The CIA moves its men off the diplomatic lists only in Germany, Japan, and other countries where large numbers of American soldiers are

stationed. In those countries, the CIA's command post is still in the U.S. embassy, but most of the CIA personnel are under military cover. With nearly 500,000 U.S. troops scattered around the world, the CIA "units" buried among them do not attract undue attention.

In contrast, it is difficult for the CIA to dwell inconspicuously within the American diplomatic corps, since more than a quarter of the 5,435 employees who purportedly work for State overseas are actually with the CIA. In places such as Argentina, Bolivia, Burma, and Guyana, where the Agency has special interests and projects, there are about as many CIA operatives under cover of substantive embassy jobs as there are legitimate State employees. The CIA also places smaller contingents in the ranks of other U.S. government agencies which operate overseas, particularly AID's police training program in Latin America.

What is surprising is that the CIA even bothers to camouflage its agents, since they are still easily identifiable. Let us see why the embassy cover is so transparent:

The CIA usually has a separate set of offices in the embassy, often with an exotic-looking cipher lock on the outside door. In Madrid, for example, a State Department source reports that the Agency occupied the whole sixth floor of the embassy. About 30 people worked there; half were disguised as "Air Force personnel" and half as State "political officers." The source says that all the local Spanish employees knew who worked on what floor of the embassy and that visitors could figure out the same thing.

CIA personnel usually stick together. When they go to lunch or to a cocktail party or meet a plane from Washington, they are much more likely to go with each other than with legitimate diplomats. Once you have identified one, you can quickly figure out the rest.

The CIA has a different health

insurance plan from the State Department. The premium records, which are unclassified and usually available to local employees, are a dead giveaway.

The Agency operative is taught early in training that loud background sounds interfere with bugging. You can be pretty sure the CIA man in the embassy is the one who leaves his radio on all the time.

Ironically, despite the State Department's total refusal to comment on anything concerning the CIA, the Department regularly publishes two documents, the *Foreign Service List* and the *Biographic Register*, which, when cross-checked, yield the names of most CIA operatives under embassy cover. Here is how it works:

America's real diplomats have insisted on one thing in dealing with the CIA: that the corps of Foreign Service Officers (FSO) remain pure. Although there are rumors of exceptions, CIA personnel abroad are always given the cover rank of Foreign Service Reserve (FSR) or Staff (FSS) officers—not FSO. Of course, there are some legitimate officials from the State Department, AID, and USIA who hold FSR and FSS ratings, so care must be taken to avoid confusing these people with the spooks.

To winnow out the spooks, you start by looking up in the *Foreign Service List* the country in question, for example, China. The letters in the third column from the left signify the man or woman's personnel status and the number denotes his or her rank. On the China list, David Bruce is an "R-1," or Reserve Officer of class 1, the highest rank. John Holdridge is a regular Foreign Service Officer (FSO) of the same grade, and secretary Barbara Brooks is a Staff Officer, class 4.

PEKING (U.S. LIAISON OFFICE) (LO)

Bruce David K E.....	chief USLO	R-1	5-73
Holdridge John H.....	dep chief USLO	O-1	5-73
Jenkins Alfred Les.....	dep chief USLO	R-1	
Brooks Barbara A.....	sec	S-4	5-73
McKinley Brunson.....	spec asst	O-6	5-73
Zaelit Lucille.....	sec	S-5	5-73
Anderson Donald M.....	pol off	O-4	6-73

Hunt Janice E.....	sec	S-8	12-73
Lilley James R.....	pol off	R-3	
Pascoe B Lynn.....	pol off	O-5	7-73
Horgwitz Herbert Eugene.....	econ/cml off	O-3	6-73
Morin Annabelle C.....	sec	S-7	7-73
Ropa William Frederick.....	econ/cml off	O-4	4-73
Blackburn Robert R Jr.....	adm off	O-3	4-73
Herrera Delia L.....	sec	S-6	5-73
Lambert William F.....	coms/rec off	R-6	2-74
Lucas Robert T.....	coms/rec off	S-2	7-73
Morin Emile F.....	gen ser off	O-6	3-72
Peterson Robert D.....	coms/rec off	R-6	7-73
Riley Albert D.....	coms/rec off	S-5	5-73

Now Holdridge almost certainly can be ruled out as an operative, simply because he is an FSO. Not much can be told one way or the other about FSS Brooks because, as is the case with most secretaries, the State Department does not publish much information about her. David Bruce might be suspect because of his "R" status, but a quick glance at the *Biographic Register*, which gives a brief curriculum vitae of all State Department personnel, shows him to be one of the high-level political appointees who have "R" status because they are not members of the regular Foreign Service. Similarly, the *Register* report on FSR Jenkins shows that he had a long career as an FSO before taking on the State Department's special assignment in Peking as an FSR:

Bruce, David KE_b Md 2/21/98, m (Evangeline Bell), Princeton U AB 19. Mem Md bar. US Army 17-19, 42-45 col overseas. PRIVEXPER priv law practice 21-26, mem State legis 24-26, 39-42, with bank-priv bus 28-40, chief rep Am Red Cross (England) 40-41. GOVTEXPER with Off Strategic Servs 41-45, asst sec of Com 47-48, ECA Paris R-1 chief of mission 5/48, STATE AEP to France 5/49, Dept under sec of state 2/52, consult to sec of state 1/53, Paris R-1 pol off-US observer to Interim Comm of EDC, also US repto European Coal-Steel Community (Luxembourg) 2/53, Dept consult to sec of state 1/55, Bonn AEP to Germany 3/57-11/59, London AEP to Great Britain 2/61-3/69, Dept R-1 pers rep of Pres with pers rank amb to hd US del at Paris meetings on Vietnam 7/70-4/71, Peking chief liaison off 3/73.

Jenkins, Alfred leSesne-b Ga 9/14/16, m, Emory U AB 38, Duke U MA 46, US Army 42-46 1st lt, PRIV EXPER prin-supt pub schs 40-42, STATE Dept FSO unclass 6/46, Peiping Chin lang-area trainee 9/46, O-6 11/46, Tientsin pol off 7/48, O-5 4/49, Hong Kong chief pol sect 7/49, Taipei pol off 7/50, O-4 6/51, Dept 3/52, O-3 9/54, Jidda couns, dep chief mission 2/55, Dept det Nat War Coll 8/57, O-2 2/58, dep dir Off of SE Asian Aff 6/58, reg plan ad Bu of Far E Aff 8/59, Stockholm

couns, dep chief mission 10/61, cons gen 3/62, O-1 3/63, Dept FS insp 8/65, det Nat Security Counc 7/66, FS insp 1/69, dir Off of Asian Communist Aff 7/70, superior honor award 71, dir for People's Rep of China, Mongolia, Hong Kong-Macao aff 2/73, Peking dep chief liaison off 4/73, Lang Ger. (w-Martha Lippiatt).

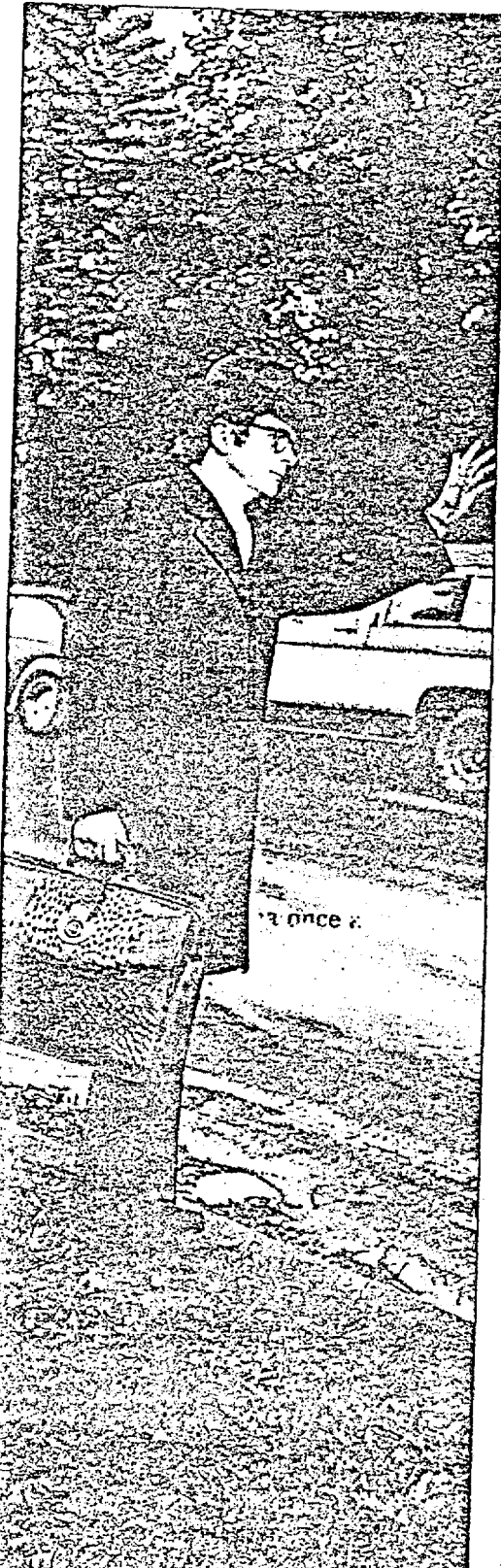
Note that there are no gaping holes in their career records, nor did either of these men serve long tours with nameless Pentagon agencies, nor did they regularly change their status from "R" to "S" to "GS" (civil service).

Now, for purposes of comparison, examine the record of the CIA's man in Peking, a "political officer" named James R. Lilley:

Lilley, James R-b China Am parents 1/15/28, m, Yale U BA 51, US Army 46-47, GOVT EXPER anal Dept of Army 51-58, STATE Manila R-6 7/58, Dept 10/60, Phnom Penh 9/61, R-5 3/63, Bangkok 4/63, Dept 8/64, Vientiane pol off 6/65, R-4 5/66, S-2 4/68, Hong Kong 5/68, R-4 5/69, Dept 7/70, GS-15 ign aff off 4/71, R-4 det lang trng FSI 7/72-4/73, Lang Fr, Rom. (w-Sally Booth).

The *Foreign Service List* provides another clue, in the form of diplomats' official assignments. Of all the jobs real State Department representatives perform, political reporting is generally considered to be the most important. Although *genuine* FSRs frequently hold administrative and consular slots, they are almost never given the important political jobs. So where an FSR *does* appear in the listing with a political job, it is most likely that the CIA is using the position for cover. There is an exception to this rule: a comparatively few minority-group members who have been brought into the Foreign Service as Reserve Officers under a special program. They are found exclusively in the junior ranks, and their biographic data is complete in the way the CIA people's is not.

Finally there is another almost certain tip-off. If an agent is listed in the *Biographic Register* as having been an "analyst" for the Department of the Army (or Navy or Air Force), you can bet that he or she is really working for the CIA. A search of



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hundreds of names found no legitimate State Department personnel listed as ever having held such a job.

In an embassy like the one in Santo Domingo, the spooks in the political section outnumber the real FSOs by at least seven to three:

Political Section		
Beyer Joel H.	pol off	R-5 7-72
Brugger Frederick A.	pol off	R-7 9-72
Bumpus James H.	pol off	O-4 7-72
Chafin Gary E.	pol off	O-6 8-73
Clayton Thomas A.	pol off	R-3 5-71
Dwiggins Joan H.	pol off	R-7 3-72
Fambrini Robert L.	pol off	S-2 6-73
Greig David N Jr.	pol off	R-5 8-71
Guell Janet E.	sec	S-8 12-73
Markoff Stephanie M.	sec	S-8 5-72
Merriam Geraldine C.	clk-typist	R-9 2-72
Mooney Robert C.	pol off	R-6 2-72
Morris Margaret A.	clk-typist	SI0 12-73
Pascoe Dorothy L.	sec	S-7 2-74
Ryan Donald G.	pol off	R-8 8-73
Williams Albert H.	pol off	O-3 7-73

While Donald Ryan is an "R" in the political section, there is not sufficient data published about him to verify his status.

It was by studying these documents that I learned that the CIA has sent an operative to Peking. For confirmation, I called the State Department's ranking China expert, Acting Assistant Secretary of State Arthur Hummel. After I identified myself as a reporter working on a magazine article and explained where I had gotten my information, Hummel shouted, "I know what you're up to and I don't want to contribute. Thank you very much!" and slammed down the phone.

Another State official confirmed that the decision to send an operative to Peking was made in early 1973, but declared that making public the operative's existence could "jeopardize" Chinese-American relations. Neither this official nor any of his colleagues seemed willing to consider the notion that the U.S. government was under no obligation to assign a CIA man there—or anywhere else for that matter. The first American mission to China since 1949 certainly could have been staffed exclusively with real diplomats if concern about damaging relations were so high. To

have excluded the Agency from Peking, however, you have gone against a basic axiom of the post-World War II foreign policy establishment: the CIA follows the flag into American embassies.

The Chinese government is presumably clever enough to identify the operative by sifting through the public documents available. In fact his arrival may well have been cleared with the Chinese, who probably wanted reciprocal privileges for their secret service in Washington. Such are the arrangements the world's spooks are so fond of working out with each other—the Soviet KGB and the CIA even exchange names of intelligence analysts assigned to the other's capital.

Sacrificing 'State'

Much to the alarm of a few high State Department officials, the proportion of CIA to State personnel abroad has been steadily rising in recent years. The precise figures are zealously guarded, but several State sources confirm the trend. They cite as the main reason for this tilt toward the CIA a series of government-wide cutbacks that have hit State proportionately harder than the CIA. What troubles State is not, as one career diplomat put it, "the principle" that State should provide the CIA with cover. That is unquestioned, he says. Rather, most legitimate diplomats do not like being a minority within their own profession or having the rest of the world confuse them with the CIA's dirty tricksters. They generally regard themselves as working at a higher calling.

While the State Department has been comparatively honest in accepting the personnel cuts ordered by the Johnson and Nixon administrations, two sources familiar with the CIA budget report that the Agency has done everything possible to escape the reductions. Traditionally, when outsiders—even Presidents—have tried to meddle with the Agency's personnel allotment, the CIA has resisted on "national security" grounds. And



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when that argument failed, the CIA resorted to bureaucratic ruses: cutting out a job and then replacing the person eliminated with a "contract" or "local" employee, who would not show up on the personnel roster; or sending home a clandestine support officer—a specialist in things like renting "safe houses," "laundering" money, and installing phone taps—and then having the same work done by experts sent out from Washington on "temporary duty."

Just this spring, the State Department took official, if secret, notice of its declining presence overseas compared to the CIA when Secretary Henry Kissinger authorized a high-level study of State-CIA staffing. The Department's top administrator, L. Dean Brown, who had urged the study be made in the first place, gave the job to Malcolm Toon, a career diplomat serving as U.S. ambassador to Yugoslavia. Toon returned to Washington to compile the top-secret report.

Asking not to be named and

Not only does the State Department provide the CIA with cover, but the Senate—and especially its Foreign Relations Committee—encourages the current practice of sending over 25 percent of our "diplomatic" corps abroad under false pretenses. Every year the Foreign Relations Committee routinely approves and sends to the full Senate for its advice and consent lists of "Foreign Service Reserve Officers to be consular officers and secretaries in the Diplomatic Service of the United States of America." In 1973, of the 121 names submitted by the State Department, more than 70 were CIA operatives. According to a knowledgeable source, the committee is informally told the number of CIA people on the lists but "not who they are." No senator in memory has publicly objected to being an accomplice to this cover-building for the CIA.

refusing to provide the specific figures, a source close to Kissinger says that Toon's report calls for a substantial reduction in the number of CIA operatives abroad under State cover. The source adds that Kissinger has not made up his mind on the issue.

Kissinger has always acted very carefully where the CIA is concerned. One of his former aides notes that the Secretary has regularly treated the Agency with great deference at government meetings although he has often been privately scornful of it afterwards. In any case, Kissinger is unquestionably a believer in the need for the CIA to intervene covertly in other countries' internal affairs—he was the prime mover behind the Agency's work against Salvador Allende in Chile. The question of how much cover State should provide the CIA, however, is chiefly a bureaucratic one, and is not basic to Kissinger's foreign policy. The Secretary therefore will probably not take a definite position until he sees how much opposition the CIA will be able to stir up in the White House and in the congressional subcommittees that supposedly oversee the Agency.

The CIA has lost no time in launching its counteroffensive. At a July 19 off-the-record session with key Democratic congressional aides, Carl Duckett, the CIA's Deputy Director for Intelligence, complained about the reductions recommended by the Toon report. According to a source who was present, Duckett said that even without further embassy cuts, the CIA now doesn't have enough people overseas.

CIA officials must be especially concerned about Toon's recommendations, since in countries where there are no U.S. military bases, the only alternative to embassy cover is "deep," or non-official, cover. American corporations operating overseas have long cooperated in making jobs available to the CIA and would probably continue to do so. Also, the Agency would probably have to make

more use of smaller firms where fewer people would know of the clandestine connection. Two examples of this type are:

* Robert Mullen and Company, the Washington-based public relations concern for which E. Howard Hunt worked after he left the CIA and before the break-in at Democratic National Headquarters. Mullen provided CIA operatives with cover in Stockholm, Mexico City, and Singapore, and in 1971 set up a subsidiary in cooperation with the CIA called Interprogres, Ltd. According to a secret Agency document released with the House Judiciary Committee's impeachment evidence, "At least two [CIA] overseas assets have tangential tasks of promoting the acceptance of this company as a Mullen subsidiary."

* Psychological Assessment Associates, Inc., a Washington psychological consulting firm specializing in behavioral research and analysis. By the admission of its president John Gittinger, most of the company's business since it was founded in 1957 by three ex-CIA psychologists has come from Agency contracts. The firm had two "representatives" in Hong Kong, at least until June of this year.

Unless their cover is blown, companies of this sort and operatives who work for them cannot be linked to the U.S. government. But the Agency has learned over the years that it is much more difficult and expensive to set up an operative as a businessman (or as a missionary or newsman) than to put him in an embassy. As a "private" citizen, the operative is not automatically exposed to the host country's key officials and to foreign diplomats, nor does he have direct access to the CIA communications and support facilities which are normally housed in embassies. Moreover, as an ex-CIA official explains, "The deep cover guy has no mobility. He doesn't have the right passport. He is subject to local laws and has to pay local taxes. If you try to put him in an influential business job, you've got to go through all the arrangements with

the company."

Who Needs Gunshoes?

Everything argues for having the intelligence agent in the embassy—everything, that is except the need to keep his existence secret. The question then becomes whether it is really that important to keep his existence secret—which, in turn, depends on how important his clandestine activities are.

Could any rational person, after surveying the history of the last 20 years, from Guatemala to Cuba to Vietnam—and now Chile—contend that the CIA's clandestine activities have yielded anything but a steady stream of disaster? The time has come to abolish them. Most of the military and economic intelligence we need we can get from our satellites and sensors (which already provide nearly all our information about Russia's nuclear weaponry) and from reading the newspapers and the superabundant files of open reports. As for political intelligence—which is actually an assessment of the intentions of foreign leaders—we don't really need this kind of information from Third World countries unless we intend to muck about in their internal affairs. With the Soviet Union or China—countries powerful enough to really threaten our national security—timely political intelligence could be a great help. But for the past 25 years we have relied on open sources and machine-collected intelligence because our agents have proven incapable of penetrating these closed societies. There is not enough practical benefit gained from the CIA's espionage activities to compensate for our nation's moral and legal liability in maintaining thousands of highly trained bribers, subverters, and burglars overseas as "representatives" of our government. The problem of getting good, accurate, reliable information from abroad is a complicated one, beyond the scope of this article, but, to paraphrase Mae West, covert has nothing to do with it. ■