

Denies Poison Was Shellfish Toxin

Post 9/18/75

Powers Now Helicopter Pilot

Former spy pilot Francis Gary Powers now flies a helicopter for a Los Angeles radio station, reporting on freeway traffic conditions for commuters.

The suicide poison he carried when his U-2 was shot down over the Soviet Union on May Day, 1960, wasn't shellfish toxin but curare, he says.

Curare, derived from a plant, is used by South

American Indians to kill game with blowgun darts.

Central Intelligence Agency Director William Colby told senators Tuesday that Powers had a tiny drill bit coated with a shellfish poison concealed in a silver dollar.

Powers says he threw away the silver dollar as he parachuted from his stricken plane, but kept the drill bit. When the Russians

injected the drill bit into a dog, it died in 10 seconds.

Powers was released in February, 1962, in exchange for convicted Soviet spy Rudolf Abel.

Senators are to hear more today about the shellfish toxin from government experts. The Senate committee's staff says the Public Health Service produced the poison by injecting clams with bacteria.