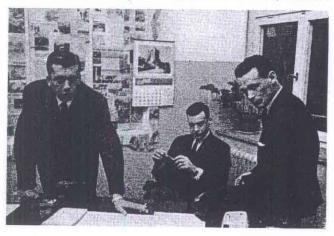
CONSPIRAC

Young radicals, soldiers at a U.S. Army office in Germany, set up a political conspiracy called CUSA. In 1962, three of the Inner Circle posed in civvies: "Security Chief" Larry Jones (at left), Treasurer Norman Baker and Director Larrie Schmidt, 28, who tells what they tried to do.



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AT MUNICH, GERMANY, in June, 1962, a tense young noncom typed out the six-page timetable for his plot to take control of politics in his homeland. He was Larrie Schmidt, specialist fourth-class U.S. Army. He had trained a small, disciplined band of soldier-conspirators to follow him stateside and do, he hoped, "whatever is necessary to accomplish our goal."

Schmidt's weapon was CUSA, code for Conservatism-USA, a secret organization he had put together under the noses of the military-security people. In fact, he signed up four zealots inside the Military Police and the Counter Intelligence Corps. His CUSA agents, in constant training for their mission, often used 'Army machinery for their own ends. When a corporal from U.S. Army, Europe, headquarters heat up a CUSA man, Schmidt claims, "the long arm of CUSA influence reached up to Heidelberg, got him busted and shipped out."

The young radicals reveled in their elaborate scheme, Once, afraid a high officer might investigate them, Schmidt had an aide seduce the officer's secretary. The grateful lady told her CUSA lover all her boss found out: nothing.

So the Munich-nuget investible, heistled.

CUSA lover all her boss found out: nothing.

So the Munich-made timetable bristled So the Munich-made innerable pristled with conspirator confidence. Starting that fall, when Director Schmidt would get his discharge, CUSA's schedule ran through logical-looking steps: Set up secret Conservatism-USA head-quarters in Dallas; infiltrate 200 Right-Wing outfits all over the U.S. and weld them into CUSA; infiltrate nonpolitical groups like the Jaycees; take grass-roots control of both political parties; nominate only true-believer Conservatives for public office. These tall chores would be financed not only by moneyed Rightists, but by CUSA's own business empire-to-be, AMBUS (code for American Businesses, Inc.). Schmidt had faith then, still has, that CUSA could build to the final item on his docket:

"20 Jan 1969: A conservative president is sitting in the White House. Congress is ruled by conservatives. OUR JOB IS DONE. What happens after 20 Jan 1969? Well, frankly, in our position, whatever the hell we want to happen at that time. We aren't thinking too much about then. After all, we'll be in control..."

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Schmidt arrived in Dallas on schedule. For a year, he cut quite a gray-flannel figure among Right-Wing groups, from the National Indignation Convention to Young Americans for Freedom and the John Birch Society. He was still going strong right up to the day John E Kennedy was shot. Schmidt had prepared for the Kennedy visit with a full-page ad to run in the Dallas Morning News. You may remember that black-bordered "Welcome" with its hints that the President of the United States was soft on communism. To Schmidt, the ad was a public. communism. To Schmidt, the ad was a public-relations device to promote himself-and newly arrived CUSA agent Bernard Weissman,

BY PATRICIA SWANK

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signed the ad—among the Conservatives.

"By having Bernie sign it instead of myself, we launched him in Dallas politics," Schmidt tells me. Always planning ahead, he hoped that Weisman's name would provoke anti-Semitic attacks (it did), which he could use to prove that the Right has no monopoly on bigotry. The only thing wrong with the ad scheme, he now feels, was that it coincided with a different scheme worked out by another young man. Lee Harvey Oswald.

other young man, Lee Harvey Oswald. Still, the furore over the ad helped, Schmidt thinks, "to increase my influence and widen my ower base." He got a job with a Dallas ad agency power base. He got a job with a Dallas ad agency that handles Conservative political campaigna, worked there as a paid staffer for Dallas Congress-man Bruce Alger, Senate aspirant Robert Morris and candidates for lesser offices. All lost, but not and candidates for lesser others. All fost, but not Schmidt. He did fine until the Warren Commission uncovered part of the cusa plot. "People who thought they had been using us," he explains, "found that we had been using them." "It's such a shame," mourns Schmidt. "It could have worked."

Perhaps not, but his drive and zeal for power are not inhibited by the restraints many of us take for granted. "We expected a showdown between the Communists and Nazis on the one hand and CUSA on the other." he says. "On that day, I know that I would have the strength—if called on —to take a gun and shoot down, say, Gus Hall, the Communist, or George Lincoln Rockwell, the Nazi, because I believe they are traitors. We are at war, and you fight. Don't misunderstand, I'm no Oswald or Ruby. I have never harmed anyone. I'm a sane, rational, patriotic, law-abiding citizen."

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Schmidt may sound like a high-school boy cooking up a secret initiation, but he's dead serious. He once asked his Inner Circle to sign loyalty oaths to him "on pain of death." Two, he says, did. Elaborate schemes are a habit of the Far Right. In The Blue Book, Robert Welch exhorts Birchers to wage total political war, through fronts and infiltration, azainst "the Communists" at home—who, says Mr. Welch, hold 50 to 70 percent control in the U.S. CUSA's Inner Circle never shared this estimate, and even planned to shift shared this estimate, and even planned to shift Rightist thought toward a more moderate base,

Mightist thought toward a more moderate base, but their methods were those of conspiracy.

What makes a young man like this? Larrie Henry Schmidt had no reason to trust the world into which he was born. At age nine, he learned that "Morn" and "Dad" were only an aunt and uncle about to be divorced. He next lived in the basement of his grandparent's home in Lincoln, Nebr., with three unmarried "uncles." One was his Nebr., with inree unmarried "uncles." One was his real father, a neighbor later told him. Restless, bright, seeking an "identity of my own," he quit school, joined the Army.

He did two tours of duty in Germany. The first, 1955-57, thrust him among college graduates

and into a new, exciting world of books, manners and music. He finished high school, went on to the University of Miami, Fla., in 1957, worked on the student weekly. About to become managing editor, but not pleased with the modest office he would out not pieased with the modest office he would inherit, he grandly launched a drive—eventually successful—for a new student-union building, even though one had recently been built. Then, after a disastrous love affair, he fled to California with his education half done. He soon went back to the Army. He was ready to remake himself and, if need he, the world. "If I could not fit into society, I would make society fit me." (Today, he is writing a novel, The World-Changers.)

He became assistant public-relations director of the U.S. Armed Forces Recreation Center at Munich. There, at a beer and brandy restaurant, the Lukullus, he broke into the world of political talk stirred up by the 1960 election. The books in vogue were Barry Goldwater's Conscience of a vogue were barry Goldwarer's Conservation, Ayn Rand's Atlas Shrugged, a super-individualist romance, and Philip Wylle's Gener-ation of Vipers, a dated broadside against Moms. Schmidt, once liberal, bundled these three

Schmidt, once liberal, bundled these three elements into a philosophy of revolt. "We loved our parents," asserts a young man who never had a chance to. "We knew they were not ready for the Depression, and had embraced the welfare state because Franklin Roosevelt promised to take care of them. They sold their souls to the 'savior.' Conscience gave us a philosophy, Atlas gave us activism. We were a group of individualists who refused to lose our identity to a collectivist acciety."

Then came the "absolute crusher," the 1961

Then came the "absolute crusher," the 1961 Bay of Pigs fiasco, "I was so disgusted with our Government and so humiliated," he recalls, "Our German friends teased us. I was visiting a girl in her apartment, and she got tired of listening. She and, 'If you don't like got three or insteming. one said, 'If you don't like the damn world, why don't you change it?' And I said, 'By God, that's not a bad idea.' That's what really started cusa!'' Over beer at the Lukullus, he lined up re-

cruits. He teamed with Larry Jones, Signal Corps decoder, a muscular North Carolina ex-Corps decoder, a muscular North Carolina ex-trovert. As CESA grew, Jones became Schmidt's personal bodyguard and "chief of security." Schmidt signed up the civilian son of a major, even a bearded liberal as "insurance against CCSA going too far right." A company clerk in the MP's, Norman Baker, saw the need for money to play politics. He dreamed up AMBUS, through which the confident plotters expected to make money for CUSA. Baker, also resulted Bernard Weissend CUSA. Baker also recruited Bernard Weissi one of five Jews in cusa,

The dream of images

With five Inner Circle and ten Outer Circle men, With twe inner circle and ten Outer Circle men, cusa became a visible group known as The Clan, "Like the Hollywood Clan," explains Schmidt. They took care of their own, helped arrange pro-motions for each other. The Clan also sold influmoutons for each other. The Ulan also sold influ-ence, for a fee, to other GP.3. If you wanted a three-day pass, CUSA might fix it—"\$5 to \$25," says Schmidt, "whatever the traffic would bear." Need a loan? A GI could get one from CUSA's treasury, at a "nice" rate of interest, Schmidt, the press agent, ingratiated himself with publicity-minded

occumanders and visiting VIP's.
"We were great believers in something called
The Image. We realized that the most powerful
element in our society was Madison Avenue and element in our society was Madison Avenue and what it stood for: that you can sell an American anything if you go about it right," declares Schmidt. "We practiced image building, improving our personalities, rehearsing how we would speak at the time of the big summit meeting." What summit? Why, the one on April 1, 1965, when Conservatism-USA would take over the Rightist organizations of America, destroy all that would not join. Schmidt occasionally suspected he might be birthing a monster. "But I've always had great self-confidence that I could keep it all under control." The wild dream enraptured him. "We are five young men who are like old men," he wrote. "Five young men who pace the floor, brows furrowed,

young men who pace the floor, brows furrowed, eyes anxious, too-old, too-soon lines beneath our

eyes. Five young men—ambitious, hungry, plotting their lives away to change the world. . . . Each day, things grow bigger, and each day, I must pull myself up to the task, present the proper image. I must play the role: Think like a man of action, act like a man of thought.

a man of thought.

Where would they strike first? Clipping newspapers, CUSA settled on Dallas. First target: the Right-Wing National Indignation Convention, a local garage owner's noisy protest movement against U.S. training of Yugoslav pilots. Schmidt hit town in October, 1962, got a job with United Press International. His dreams soon smocked up against ternational. His dreams soon smacked up against reality. Nic was well past its bloom; he would have to find another host organization for CUSA.

He went to the one Conservative he knew by reputation—Dr. Robert Morris, then head of Defenders of American Liberty. Morris, unaware of CUSA, held an at-home gathering of the faithful, let Schmidt make the pitch. "American boys are standing guard all over the world against commu-nism, and what are you doing? If not nothing, cer-tainly not enough!" This speech catapulted Schmidt into organizational activity as Southwestern executive-secretary of Young Americans for Freedom.

His Birch chapter vanished

He worked fiercely, raised money, put CUSA activism into YAF. But "those officers just didn't want to go as fast as I did. I was too advanced." He turned to other things. His brother Bob moved to Dallas, became ex-Gen. Edwin A. Walker's aide-decamp, to spy on him. Larry Jones checked in from Munich, With him, Schmidt tried to activate AMES; by promoting a private club, Fizzle. Jones van-ished. Schmidt kept busy with new friends such as oliman Joe Grinnan, Birch coordinator. In the fall of '63, Schmidt's name came into

In the fail of 0.5, Schmidt's name came into the public notice for the first time. He led 14 stu-dent pickets to protest a speech by UN Ambas-sador Adlai E. Stevenson. Schmidt's group behaved well, but some pickets spat at Stevenson, and one struck him. Schmidt, furious over press coverage, put out a statement. His reward was a deluge of angry phone calls and threats, but he endeared himself to the Rightists. Now, he might get cusa going. He telephoned Bernie Weissman to urge him and William Burley, another CUSA vet back from Ger-many, to come to Dallas and help prepare the next

step. It turned out to be the ad attacking Kennedy. Burley and Weissman arrived in early November. Bircher Joe Grinnan raised the \$1,463 for the ad, principally from three businessmen whose identity Schmidt did not know until the Warren Report: Edgar R. Crissey, H. R. Bright and Nelson Bunker Hunt, son of H. L.
Schmidt was driving with Grinnan when the

assassination news came over the radio. Grinnan crossed himself. "I said a silent prayer, that it wasn't true or wouldn't be serious," Schmidt recalls. "We knew there was going to be a tremendous witch-hunt. Normal procedure. I had a premonition that this was the end of cusa."

It was schmidt's chapter of the Birch Society, all cusa, suddenly had few members in town. Now alone, Schmidt reflects: "Everything we wanted to do still needs to be done. We'd have worked to get the FBI authorized to round up the worked to get the PSI authorized to round up the Communists—and the Nazis—and put them in detention camps. We're only paying lip service to freedom when we do nothing for the enslaved peoples of the world. If I had two good men and a little capital, even a few thousand dollars..."

CONSPIRACY USA

THE JOHN BIRCH Society's section leader in a well-to-do district of Los Angeles is a friendly, 44-year-old real-estate salesman with a happy laugh. His name is Edward John Golden, and he said right off, "Call me Ed." He called me Donald right off,

off, Call me Ed. He called me Donald right off, too, without my even suggesting it.

I'd heard that Ed was running for the state legislature on an anti-mental-health platform, and I asked him why. At once, his voice changed timbre. "Mental health is alien and Communist-in-

bre. "Mental health is alien and Communist-in-spired," he snapped.

In Wyoming, the state chapter of the Daugh-ters of the American Revolution passed a resolu-tion in 1960 charging that some psychiatrists use "drugs, shock and lobotomy" on persons with "cer-tain ideological beliefs." The chapter demanded that the legislature take action to protect individ-uals from "seedless or worseful invitionalizion".

uals from "needless or wroneful institutionalizing."
In Texas, a tract distributed by the ten thousands stated: "If you are a businessman, a doctor, a lawyer, a teacher, a politician, a minister or in any place of responsibility or authority . . . YOU ARE ON THE COMMUNISTS' LIST FOR RE-MOVAL AND DESTRUCTION."

There are always crackpots who make wild statements, and their ludicrous comments should not be taken seriously, some people have said to me. But the effects of this nationwide campaign against mental health are not funny. A horde of John Birchers and other members of the Radical Right descended upon the Wisconsin legislature last year, shouting that the mental-health move-ment in Wisconsin was a subversive plot. They

ment in Wisconsin was a subversive plot. They caused the defeat of some 20 mental-health measures that seemed certain of passage.

"We didn't know what hit us," said James Boullion, 'executive secretary of the Governor's Mental Health Advisory Committee.

Nor was the campaign laughable in Santa Monica, Calif. When the City Council voted funds to establish a mental-health center to provide outpatient care for mentally sick people, the extremists raised such a furore about Kremlin-directed brainwashing that the frightened Council rescinded its action. Today, in this city of 86,000, there are brainwashing that the frightened Council rescinded its action. Today, in this city of 86,000, there are no facilities to diagnose and treat mentally ill adults who haven't the funds to pay for private care, except for the limited services donated by a little group of psychiatrists at a Roman Catholic hospital.

The campaign of fear is responsible for some tragic deaths, according to Dr. Jack B. Lomas, clinical residences af parakies.

tractic deaus, according to Dr. Jack B. Lomas, clinical professor of psychiatry at the UCLA School of Medicine. "I have known a number of mentally sick men and women who were so frightened by anti-mental-health propaganda that they killed themselves rather than accept help from any psychiatrist." he told me.

chiatrist," he told me.

The Far Right's battle against mental health is being waged through public meetings, billboards, pamphlets, newspaper smears, snonymous phone pamphlets, newspaper smears, anonymous phone calls and poison-pen letters. By putting intense pressure on public officials and legislative bodies in more than 30 of the 50 states, extremists have halted or handicapped the fight against mental illness, the nation's No. 1 health problem.

Over 1,575,000 persons were treated in hospitals for mental sicknesses last year. More people with mental illness were in hospitals at any one moment than the combined total of those with cancer, heart trouble, pneumonia and every other kill-

cer, heart trouble, pneumonia and every other kill-ing and crippling disease. And that's only part of the story. On the basis of nationwide studies, the

ing and crippling disease. And that's only part of the story. On the basis of natiouwide studies, the National Association for Mental Health estimates that one out of every ten Americans—19,000,000 people in all—suffers from some sort of mental illness requiring psychiatric treatment.

Facilities for treating these millions are critically short. In all the United States, we have scarcely 1,900 outpatient clinies; we urgently need more than that number. Some of our 600 state mental hospitals are still "snake pits," where 50 percent of the patients receive little or no therapy for their conditions, often just custodial care.

The Radical Right denies that any problem exists. "This 'phony' concern about our so-called declining' mental health' has been planted by Communist agents, fronters and sympathizers for the purpose of demoralizing the American people and spreading defeatism, "Rightist Matt Cvetic charged. At a 1958 convention, the 11,000-member 17th District of the American Legion's California Department passed a resolution—unanimously—asserting, in part, that: "Certain forces dedicated to the overthrow of our form of government have distorted the magnitude of the problem of mental health out of true proportion." distorted the magnitude of the problem of mental health out of true proportion.

