

# CIA Saturated Embassies in '60s

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The Central Intelligence Agency built up such an undercover bureaucracy overseas that for a time it had almost as many employees abroad as the State Department's Foreign Service, according to informed sources.

Shortly after the advent of the Kennedy administration, sources said, the CIA had 3,700 employees operating under diplomatic or other official U.S. titles overseas while the State Department had 3,900 bona fide employees working abroad.

The CIA officials were known in U.S. government circles as "CAS"—Controlled American Sources. Their proportions in U.S. embassies abroad were sometimes startling.

Some 15 years ago, one source said, for example, 16 out of 20 people in the political section of the embassy in Vienna really belonged to the CIA.

In recent years, another source said, the CIA contingent abroad has been drastically reduced, partly because of the 1961 Bay of Pigs

fiasco, but also because of the growing clout of the multi-billion-dollar National Security Agency, whose technological eyes and ears are considered more reliable.

"You'd be surprised at how few people the CIA has overseas these days," this source said. Although the figure can sometimes jump dramatically with the inception of new covert operations, this source said the current total was "less than half" of the 3,700 officials reported on the CIA's secret roster in mid-1961.

Shortly after the CIA was established in 1947, a special study group headed by then deputy CIA director Allen Dulles warned in a still secret report against using State Department cover as an answer to all its problems.

The report, sources said, indicated that the CIA even then had been making what the State Department considered excessive demands for official slots. The study group reportedly recommended that the CIA develop more "outside cover" for its

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personnel overseas, such as that which could be provided by private business.

The CIA, however, steadily increased its requisitioning of official government positions, sources said, because it was easier, quicker, provided more security and offered more perquisites for its personnel.

By 1961 as a consequence, according to sources, the spy agency had some 1,500 people abroad under State Department cover and another 2,200 under other official U.S. covers, such as Defense Department civilian personnel.

In some U.S. missions so-called "CAS" personnel outnumbered the regular State Department complements. At the embassy in Chile, for instance, 11 of 13 officials in the political section in 1961 were from the CIA. Almost half of the political officers in American embassies throughout the world were under cover for the CIA.

The result, sources said, was often a serious encroachment on State Department policymaking. In some countries, CIA station chiefs were able to command more influence than the ambassadors and at times pursued different policies. At the Paris embassy, where the CIA occupied the top floor and in 1961 had more than 125 people, the spy agency even took over much of the overt political reporting on French politics normally done by the State Department.

Although there are reportedly far fewer CIA officials operating abroad today, there are indications that the agency still relies heavily on official U.S. cover for the overseas personnel that it does have.

At the CIA's inception 28 years ago, according to one knowledgeable source, the use of State Department cover was supposed to be "strictly limited and temporary."

But in an affidavit this month that was prompted by a freedom-of-information lawsuit in U.S. District Court here, officials of the National Security Council claimed that disclosure of initial 1948 plans for coordinating secret operations with other U.S. agencies could, even today, "prompt attacks on our diplomatic personnel overseas as being spies and covert operators."