

BOOKS AND THE ARTS

The Secret News That's Fit to Print

I - That Massive, Hidden Apparatus

by Gilbert A. Harrison

You can tell a CIA man; you can tell him off; and the authors of this book more or less do, though they don't tell him or us much that wasn't known before. David Wise, chief of the Washington Bureau of *The New York Herald-Tribune*, and Thomas B. Ross, a member of the Washington Bureau of *The Chicago Sun-Times*, have written no exposé. They peddle no secrets. Still

The Invisible Government
by David Wise & Thomas B. Ross
(Random House; \$5.95)

their book is not without surprises. The US Intelligence network, they report, has become a "massive, hidden apparatus, secretly employing about 200,000 persons, and spending several billion dollars a year." Congress provides money "without knowing how much it has appropriated or how much will be spent . . . [since CIA's] budget is concealed in other appropriations." They quote a Senate committee's judgment that the US ambassador's authority is a "polite fiction." (Secretary of State Rusk stated in June, 1961: "We expect our ambassadors abroad to take charge of the relations of the United States with the country in which they are posted, and if necessary to take charge of all the officials who are there working with them.") They claim that Intelligence activities are "never discussed in the [National Security] Council" but are "handled by a small directorate, the name of which is only whispered [the Special Group]."

They then offer a few case studies. The CIA (as every taxi driver in Beirut knows by now), directed and financed the Cuban invasion, and so secret was it that "many high officials of the government were not let in on it," includ-

ing CIA's Deputy Director for Intelligence and the Director of the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research. (And so secret was it that diligent newsmen were writing about it before it happened.) Despite a US pledge that no US armed forces and no Americans would be involved, "American CIA pilots were flying in the invasion and Navy jets were to screen them against attack." The same story is related in greater detail in *The Bay of Pigs*, reviewed in this issue by Mr. Fehrenbach.

It was the CIA, too, that provided men and equipment to the rebels who tried to overthrow President Sukarno in 1958; the CIA plotted to overthrow the government of Iran in 1953; the CIA secretly supported 12,000 Nationalist Chinese rebels in Burma a decade ago, much to the annoyance of the Burmese government; the CIA engineered a *coup d'état* in Guatemala in 1954; the CIA tried to "promote the ouster of José Figueres, the moderate Socialist who became President [of Costa Rica] in a fair and open election in 1953"; the CIA conceived of and ran the U-2 flights; the CIA "poured millions" after World War II into an espionage apparatus in West Germany headed by CIA-picked General Gehlen, a member of the General Staff under Hitler; the CIA (and the Pentagon) "at a cost of \$300 million" invented and propped up a right-wing military government in Laos, and when it was overthrown and succeeded by the government of "neutralist" Souvanna Phouma, the CIA continued to give substantial support to its original chosen instrument; the CIA organized an elite corps in Vietnam and supported it at a rate of \$3 million a year; the CIA got rid of the regime of President Jacobo Arbenz

Guzman in Guatemala. And so on.

The Agency has a home program too. Tax-free American foundations are used by CIA as "cover." Academic institutions receive CIA subsidies - for example, the Center for International Studies at MIT, founded by Walt Rostow, now Chief of the State Department's Policy Planning staff. Like General Motors, but less openly, the Agency recruits staff from the universities. It finances a number of refugee organizations: "For a decade a \$100 million fund was available for this type of activity." The CIA, Wise and Ross conclude, "is not simply an agency that gathers foreign intelligence for the United States in far off corners of the globe. It is deeply involved in many diverse, clandestine activities right here in the United States in at least 20 metropolitan areas. It can and does appear in many guises, and under many names - Zenith, Double-Chek, Gibraltar Steamship, and Vanguard in one city alone. On university campuses and in the great urban centers of America, the foundation, the cultural committee, the emigré group, the Cuban exile organization, the foreign affairs research center, the distinguished publishing house specializing in books about Russia, the steamship company, the freedom radio soliciting public contributions, the innocent-looking consulting firm - all may in reality be arms of the invisible government."

They tell us something about the CIA-run radio stations that beam propaganda around the world - Radio Free Europe; Radio SWAN in the Caribbean; Radio Liberation (now Radio Liberty), which "broadcast exclusively to the

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Soviet Union 24 hours a day, from 17 transmitters in West Germany, Spain, and Formosa."

I want to repeat, however, the authors' claim that their book contains only the news that someone, somewhere, has already seen fit to print. They do not (with one exception) describe any current "black" operations; they don't identify any agent whose name has not already been published. They could, of course, have accepted the line that nothing should be written about CIA of which CIA does not approve; in which case they would have been wasting their time and the readers'. Or they could have decided to tell all. But that, they clearly felt, would have opened them to the charge of something like treason. Even so, their circumspection has been cruelly rewarded by William F. Buckley, Jr., who believes that they "verge close to unpatriotism."

If we push on and ask ourselves what, precisely, the authors find defective in CIA and how they could correct it, visibility drops sharply. They don't question that the national interest requires lies and bribes (though officials ought not to be *caught* lying). They might have come to the opinion—some have—that the primary danger in so powerful, highly centralized and hidden an operation as CIA lies in the temptation it offers a few people to conduct their own foreign policy, irrespective of official policy. And although they do concede that "this accusation contains some truth," they're mindful that "there are procedures which call for the approval of any major special operation at a high level in the executive branch of the government." They say that "the CIA and other agencies of the invisible government are free to shape events in the field," but they give no proof. Instead, there are some illustrations of poor coordination, either by design or inadvertence: thus, in Costa Rica, "CIA officers did not see fit to inform the State Department when they planted a fake Communist document in a local newspaper." Nowhere do they suggest that large amounts of money have been wasted, or that the secret operations which they describe ought not to have been undertaken in the first place.

One trouble with this spy business seems to be that "major decisions involving peace or war are taking place

out of public view." And so they often are, and would be if there were no CIA. I cite in evidence, one report of a "news briefing" given last week by the White House press secretary, George Reedy. "After failing to obtain an elucidation of American policy in Southeast Asia," wrote Carroll Kilpatrick in *The Washington Post*,

"... a reporter asked whether the Administration had imposed a lid on such discussions. 'I don't know that there is any official lid, as such,' Reedy replied."

"Finally a reporter asked: 'George, is there any policy, procedural or operation question that you can comment on off the record, on the record, for background or deep background?'"

"I will just go back to what I have said before," Reedy replied."

"Reedy opened his morning briefing... by announcing that Alexander A. Matsas, the Greek Ambassador, was scheduled to see the President at 12:30. The following exchange took place:

"Q. 'Did he request the appointment?'"

"A. 'I am not certain who requested it.'"

"Q. 'What will they talk about?'"

"A. 'I don't have any comment on what they will talk about.'"

"Q. 'Is it fair to assume that Cyprus will come up?'"

"A. 'I would not want to be setting the rules of fair play.'"

Mr. Reedy deserves our sympathy, not our censure. "Invisible government" is a large part of government and setting the rules of fair play is far trickier in the field of Intelligence than elsewhere. When the authors report that "critics of the CIA have been hobbled by a lack of sure knowledge about its activities," they are on solid ground. But do they mean this in derogation or in approval of CIA? Probably the former, though we cannot be sure. For frequently in their book they seem to regret that the Secret Society isn't secret enough—which is essentially an allegation of inefficiency.

There has been discussion recently of whether CIA's two functions of Intelligence-gathering and "black" operations should reside in the same agency. The authors seem inclined to

think a separation of these functions would not be desirable: "If the CIA were to be prohibited from carrying out secret operational activity, and that task were to be turned over to another agency, it might be necessary to create another set of secret operatives in addition to the large number of CIA men already at work overseas. Such a situation would probably reduce efficiency, raise costs, and increase the danger of exposure."

CIA has "quasi-independent status," we are informed. Is that good or bad? I think Mr. Wise and Mr. Ross think it's bad. But if the Agency were less independent (more responsible to more outsiders) would there not inevitably be more "leaks," more danger of compromising the secret purposes for which CIA was established? Their recommendation that "if... it becomes necessary to undertake a secret operation, it is imperative that the long-range repercussions be weighed fully in advance" will be disputed by none.

Yes, our ambassadors abroad should know what's going on, should be in charge of their posts. The point was made firmly by Chester Bowles as he traveled about from embassy to embassy in the early days of the Kennedy Administration. President Kennedy and Secretary Rusk backed him up. Nevertheless, as Wise and Ross imply, things go on much as before. CIA agents "maintain communications and codes of their own"; they have money to spend, and they are not financially accountable to the ambassador. Is there any remedy for that—except the appointment of ambassadors who can spot foolishness when they see it, and who don't mind treading on toes, even the toes of CIA's powerful friends in key committees of Congress?

Perhaps funds for CIA should *not* be concealed in the appropriations of other departments, but if the amount and nature of these funds is to be kept secret, how can they be made more public in the Budget? And anyway, the present director of the international division of the Budget Bureau, under whom "all of the budgets [for Intelligence] are pulled together," is the former Deputy Director of CIA.

The authors argue plausibly for a joint, watchdog committee of Congress with lively, independent members who will spend more time looking more care-

fully into the details of Intelligence. But they stop short of outlining the rules under which such a committee would operate, the means by which it could learn any more than CIA wished to tell it.

Perhaps the best defense of CIA is that in this age of conspiracy, it does what no other group - public or private - can do, and that what it does is necessary; that only a clandestine elite, freed from the drag of public scrutiny or bureaucratic timidity can effectively counter Communist subversion abroad.

II - CIA and the Cuban Invasion

by T. R. Fehrenbach

This book too has annoyed certain individuals in the CIA - which is notoriously thin-skinned for an Intelligence service - and it will continue to reddens some military faces. There has been and will be more talk that some things revealed in *The Bay of Pigs*, however true, should be concealed in the national interest. This is hogwash, for one simple reason: the failures at-

The Bay of Pigs
by Haynes Johnson
(Norton; \$5.95)

tending the operation on Cochinos Bay were known, evaluated, and digested by the only possible enemy of the United States more than three years ago. They were indeed an "albatross" around President Kennedy's neck; they led to the deepening crisis of 1961-1962 and to the Cuban confrontation. But since the fall of 1962, the men in Moscow have had new, and rather different, data to work on. If the Administration in 1961 made serious mistakes - and it did - in the second Cuban crisis most of them were retrieved.

In this sense, *The Bay of Pigs* tells no national secrets, but does reveal some things the American people have a right to know. If it tells the reader without background very little about Cuba and Castro, it shows, through a dispassionate and quite fair piling of fact upon irrefutable fact, a great deal about the American Republic and the people for which it stands.

This is the story of the Cuban exile

Had Mr. Wise and Mr. Ross explored that proposition in depth, they would have deserved our gratitude. They deserve it anyway. Their dramatic story reminds us, again, of the need to keep this "dirty business" under wraps as well as under adequate control. Some will be alarmed by what they reveal; some will be annoyed. The Director and the Deputy Director of CIA some weeks ago personally contacted Random House, and let it be known that the book should be revised, or possibly withdrawn.

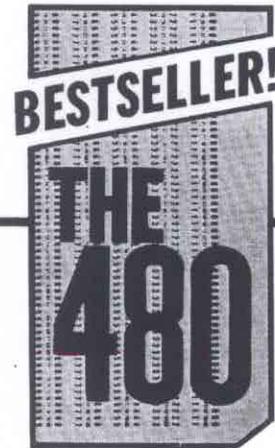
Brigada Asalto 2506 - the designation derived from the serial number of a member killed in training - which was organized first under the Eisenhower government in 1960 as an insurrectionary force, and then, while in training in friendly Central American republics, was made into a conventional military organization designed to attack and overthrow the Castro regime. The Brigade, wholly Cuban, was organized, trained, equipped, and paid by the United States government secretly through the CIA, and its battle plans and marching orders were drawn by the same agency. The end result was a complete and unmitigated disaster for the United States.

But not for the Cubans who served at *Playa Girón* in April 1961. For, as Haynes Johnson ably and effectively repeats their stories, it is soon evident that he is handling the stuff of legend, from ill-starred, almost unbelievable beginnings in the swamps of Florida and the mountains of Guatemala to the epic combat on the beaches to the even more heroic ordeal in Castro's prisons. It is not often that a defeated force gains stature, particularly when, unlike the Alamo, the sacrifice goes for nothing. The men of Brigade 2506, as Johnson is not reluctant to say, were not only heroes in the main but patriots, in an age when patriotism is becoming a very confusing thing.

Fidel Castro could not have been, and will not be, voted out of office any more than was Jefferson Davis or George III. Johnson has performed a

great service in removing from these Cuban exiles, who represented every class and color and almost every known 20th-Century ideology except Communism, the stigma of mercenary. Their story speaks for itself, not so much during the searing days and nights of heavy combat at *Playa Girón*, but through what happened afterward, at public trial and in prison. The Brigade hung together; it went ashore a partially-trained force, and it came out of combat and months of imprisonment a proud and disciplined body. There have been American troops who did not do so well.

For sheer drama, the mid-part of the book, the day by day and hour by hour account of what happened on the beaches at Cochinos Bay, is by far the best. This story has not been told before; until the Cuban leaders spoke it could not be. Johnson amassed enormous piles of notes in interviews, checking, rechecking. He was critical and fair. He has probably got at the truth, so far as it ever comes out of the remembrance of combat. Here is the bravery and brilliance of the Negro



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deputy commander Erneido Oliva, holding an advance position against overwhelming odds, and the professional calmness of brigade commander Pepe Pérez San Román, presiding over a growing debacle with high courage to the last. The commander's angry reaction to an unauthorized radio message from the beachhead begging for help is unforgettable: "If the Americans wanted to send anything, send it, and if they don't want to they can go to hell." The 2506 Brigade, to the last, did not plead.

There is more than one kind of morality in this world, as the men debating whether the US had a moral right to intervene or not in Cuba might have remembered.

But complete as they are, these are only the Cubans' stories. Johnson has had access to data from "undisclosed but irrefutable sources" concerning US actions and decisions during the drama, but until the CIA and quite a few other sources inside the US speak out, the entire story will not be known, and in its entirety, it probably never will be. However, Johnson does reveal a great many things with appalling clarity: the utter political confusion in Washington concerning a possible new Cuban government, the failure to alert the Cuban underground (Castro arrested 200,000 suspects in Havana after the invasion broke), the cynical decision not to inform Brigade leaders of contingency plans, the lies, however well-intentioned, told the Cubans during training and on the beachhead, the almost criminal inadequacy of the landing craft, the failure, at high levels, to estimate the capacity of Castro's T-33 jet trainers as fighters, and the enormous Intelligence failures from the lack of knowledge of what transpired inside Cuba to the condition of the coral off Girón beach. The highly-publicized—and as Johnson shows, fatal—lack of close air support and cover was merely one error of many. Johnson, fairly, does not lay it at the feet of the CIA; too many others were involved. But the recitation is heartbreaking.

It was not so much what the men in Washington, from President Kennedy on down did or did not do but the hazy manner in which the whole operation was approached and carried out which is frightening. And every failure, at

root, hinged upon the reluctance in Washington to become openly involved. The insistence upon "secrecy" and official uninvolvement forced continual compromises to protect American virtue, and the cumulative effect of these compromises was disastrous.

Moral doubts are perhaps the greatest strength of a truly free people, but they can be at times their greatest weakness. Moral doubts hamstringing the democracies against Hitler, delayed the adoption of the policy of containment, and seemingly were fatal in the critical months of confrontation with Fidel Castro. At the heart of the Bay of Pigs fiasco was not the UN situation, not the fear of Hispanic-American reaction, or of Russian pressures in Berlin or Laos—Johnson pays too much attention, perhaps, to these apologies—but the obsessive concern with the American image in a world of power. Both under the late Eisenhower and the early Kennedy, Truman's old "It is so ordered"—if what was ordered seemed in the vital interests of the United States—was sadly lacking. It took moral courage either to decide to do away with Fidel, or to accommodate

him. In Washington, then and now, both were missing.

Johnson quotes the comment made by a participant in the Bay of Pigs tragedy to Stewart Alsop: "The trouble was that we were acting like an old whore and trying to pretend that we were just the sweet young girl we used to be." All great powers in this untidy world have to keep CIAs and sometimes act like old whores; no realist argues the fact. But only the US seems determined to pretend an innocence no great order-keeping power may long possess.

This book should be read. It is a stirring account of brave men who tried and failed. The battle actions as the Brigade stood *cuerpo a cuerpo* with Castro's militia are worth its price. And while *Bay of Pigs* does not attempt to penetrate deeply into the whole Cuban problem or Cold War, the facts it reveals about Washington and the CIA may be priceless to this generation of Americans. This book, in its calm way, burns some horrifying realizations into you, and they don't go away. If *Bay of Pigs* makes the hot Washington summer hotter, in my opinion it will be all to the good.

Still No Connection

by Stanley Kauffmann

Just after we finished laughing at the sex-in-the-toilet scene in *Candy* (originally published in 1958), which was meant as a joke on pornography, we get a sex-in-the-toilet scene in Jack Gelber's new novel which is intended as startling evidence of depravity. This seems to me a pretty good *précis* of

On Ice
by Jack Gelber
(Macmillan; \$4.95)

Gelber as perceptor. As with his play *The Connection*, his novel seems laggard and imitative in moral probe, adolescent in its sententious admiration of life degraded.

It is a very readable book, which is not to say it is very interesting. Gelber's writing is swift, his dialogue is phonographic but pared. There are some funny characters and scenes.

What one cannot do with it—either in its humor or its gravity—is take it seriously.

Manny Fells is a drifter in New York in his twenties, very Beat or Hip or whatever term is OK in *The Village Voice* by the time this review appears. He lives in a cockroach-ridden loft below the Village (not *in* the Village, he insists). He gets occasional jobs in the square world to earn some money; but he really lives in the "other" world: of "turning on" with pot, sniffing heroin, copulating *en passant*. His room channels a stream of whites and Negroes, jazz players, oddball painters, "character" girls. The list, the author makes us feel, is scrupulously complete.

Manny cannot be called an anti-hero. He lacks the anti-social resolve of, for instance, *The Ginger Man*; there is no conviction of the reality of his unreality, as with Genet's *Darling*. He simply