



New Spy Capital Of the World

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Washington

Last month the bloated body of a senior Central Intelligence Agency official, supposedly retired but until his death enjoying full access to vital defense information, was re-

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trieved from Chesapeake Bay, not far from Washington. Aboard his abandoned boat were cartons of top-secret CIA documents.

A few days before Christmas in 1975, a former Soviet naval officer who had defected to the United States and was used since 1966 as a double agent under CIA control, disappeared in Vienna, Austria, and has not been heard of since. The U.S. government line is that he was probably captured by the Russians.

Both men were victims of

Washington's escalating espionage wars.

Washington is the proud capital of the free world, but it is also acquiring the dubious honor of being the world's espionage center. Forget West Berlin, forget Hong Kong: Today much of the deadly serious business of espionage is transacted in Washington and its suburbs.

The city's government buildings, foreign embassies, newspaper offices, hotels, private dwellings, exclusive restaurants, shabby suburban bars, and even quiet public libraries are the scenes of endless and sometimes lethal intelligence games played on every imaginable level. This is the unseen world of Washington; a vast shadow play of spies and counterespies.

A special and new dimension in this play is the intense controversy now raging within the CIA and other intelligence

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agencies over their own internal security. There are also parallel disagreements about American ability to penetrate the KGB, the Soviet secret service.

Traces of this controversy appear in public only occasionally — most recently when the body of the CIA official washed up in the bay, and immediately before and during congressional investigations into the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

In September several retired CIA officials, including former Director Richard Helms, testified about the CIA's handling of Yuri I. Nosenko, a senior KGB defector who claimed that Lee Harvey Oswald had no ties to the KGB. After Nosenko spent almost three years in solitary confinement at Langley and another CIA facility in Virginia, undergoing the kind of psychological torture Americans normally associate with the Russians, he finally convinced the CIA of his truthfulness.

According to intelligence-community veterans, the CIA needed assurance of Nosenko's reliability because he was the only source available to the U.S. to corroborate the statement by "Fedora," a mysterious Soviet agent reporting to the Federal Bureau of Investigation in New York, that Oswald was not under Russian control. It was on the basis of Fedora's information that J. Edgar Hoover, then the FBI director, convinced the Warren Commission late in 1963 that Oswald had acted alone — although in a memo to the commission dated Dec. 28, 1964, Hoover said that Nosenko's reliability "has not as yet been established."

To this day, however, there are serious doubts about Nosenko among some present and former CIA officials, including the near-legendary James Jesus Angleton, former head of counterintelligence. These doubts raise the possibility that Oswald was a Soviet agent when he shot Kennedy, a possibility that Helms himself finally conceded in his recent congressional testimony: "No person familiar

with the facts finds Nosenko's statements about Oswald to be credible," said Helms.

Furthermore, the House Committee on Assassinations learned in September 1978 that as early as Feb. 24, 1964, an internal CIA memorandum acknowledged that 37 documents which should have been in Oswald's file simply weren't there. No explanation was ever offered.

Perhaps even more to the point, doubts about Nosenko raise doubts about the CIA's ability in general to distinguish between genuine defectors and KGB "plants."

Anatoly I. Golitsyn, a defector code-named "Stone" by the CIA, has always suspected Nosenko of being a double agent. Both men are now ostensibly connected with the CIA — Nosenko is a well-paid consultant, while Golitsyn lives in the Washington area under a cover supplied by the agency — but only one of them can be right.

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