

WED MAY 20 1964

Agents Act as Foreign Buyers; Two Arrested

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Of the Herald Staff

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A truckload of automatic weapons was seized, and two men arrested today by U. S. Treasury agents posing as arms buyers for a foreign power.

An incomplete inventory of the seized weapons included 101 Thompson submachine guns, four mortars, a .75 mm. recoilless rifle, a quantity of smaller weapons and plenty of ammunition.

Arrested after a high speed chase were Richard Lanchill, 31, of Collinsville, and Donald Sargis, 38, of Fairmount City.

Authorities said Lanchill was

the same man who in 1961 was a regional leader of an anti-Communist group which called itself the Minutemen. The group used surplus weapons in carrying out guerrilla warfare maneuvers in preparation for a possible Communist invasion.

Reports said the agents of the Treasury's Alcohol and Tobacco Tax Unit had posed as arms buyers for a foreign power. Cecil M. Wolfe of Almhurst, chief investigator for the Chicago region, said his undercover agent was of Latin extraction, but refused further comment.

The agents said they paid \$17,000 in market bills for the arms which they first testified to a recent date owned by Arthur Cooper, 58, miles east of Wapella.

The purchase was completed and the two men were allowed to drive away while radio messages were quickly made to 20 other agents stationed in the area.

The agents were lined in a chase through back country roads that reached speeds of 125 miles an hour. The pair were seized at an intersection when their car became surrounded by officers.

The two men were taken to Springfield tonight where Asst. U. S. Atty. Gen. Scroggins said they were charged in a federal complaint with possession of unregistered automatic weapons.

Scroggins said Treasury agents also raided Lanchill's home in Collinsville and seized sub-machine guns and a flame-thrower.

The arrests came after agents had worked for two to three months to set up the fake purchase after Lanchill contacted a man in Chicago to offer to sell him the arms cache.

That unidentified man, a government informant, told the Treasury agents of the offer. The agents would not elaborate further, and it is not known how Wapella was chosen as the site to transfer the weapons.

Wolfe said the seized weapons allegedly had been scrapped some time ago, and that Lanchill purchased them for reasons that are not known. The federal government is not sure if the weapons are still usable.

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Engineers Talk Set

The Petroleum Engineers Club of Dallas will meet at 7:30 p.m. for a special meeting on "Geophysical Fundamentals and Geologic Interpretations" at the club's weekly lunch.

The meeting is the 100th anniversary of the Texas Petroleum Engineers Club, which was founded in 1893. The club is now one of the largest and most active in the state.

The club's activities are aimed at promoting the interests of the petroleum engineering profession. The club's main objective is to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and information among its members.

Lanchill allegedly then had the weapons mailed back together before the sale. The sale came after two agents helped load the weapons aboard a rented truck in Collinsville today. They then drove to the Wapella farm where the transfer was made.

David Eaton, a Denton County deputy sheriff, said local police did not act in the arrest because they were not familiar with identification of the Treasury agents and may have exchanged status with them if shooting had become necessary.