

25 Aug 69

Our Man Hoppe

 41

The Green Berets Are Amateurs



Arthur Hoppe

CHARGES that some Green Berets fitted a suspected stool pigeon with a cement overcoat and dumped him in the briny have outraged the Nation.

Patriots are outraged the Army would even consider trying our fighting men for murder in a murder case like this.

The press is outraged that the Army doesn't want to talk about it.

The CIA is outraged by all the free publicity.

And a few Americans somewhere may be outraged by the notion that our Government has a policy of murdering suspects without a trial. But if so, they haven't spoken up.

Most outraged of all, however, is Mr. Joseph T. (Joe Parsnips) Parsnipicoli, a national respected business leader. Mr. Parsnipicoli, a national executive of Cosa Nostra Enterprises, is outraged by what he feels is a clear-cut case of unwarranted Government competition in the private sector.

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I READ IT in the papers, said Mr. Parsnipicoli, angrily waving a large cigar. "It says where this gang by the name of the Green Berets — a real tough bunch of boys — has got this little stoolie working for them, see? Feeding them the inside stuff, casing their jobs. Only they catch him in the old double cross. He's ratting to the other side.

"Well, naturally, they put the snatch to him, take him to their hideout and give him the third degree. It don't say what they use but take my word for it, lighted matches work best.

"Anyway, I guess the stoolie finally sings. So they send word up to the masterminds, who give the matter a lot of careful thought and issue a contract to hit the stoolie. 'Terminate with extreme prejudice,' they say. How do you like that? It may not beat the kiss of death, but it's got class.

"Now once they get the contract, it says here the Green Beret gang knocks off the stoolie, puts him in a sack with some concrete for company and dumps him in the ocean. Neat, you know what I mean?"

Mr. Parsnipicoli flicked an ash from his cigar. "Now, I'm not putting the knock on our boys out there in Vietnam," he said. "If the story's true, they done a real good job for amateurs. And I'm as proud of them as the next man.

"But what I want to know is what the hell the Government's doing taking bread out of the mouths of honest American working men?"

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MR. PARSNIPICOLI said if the Government was going to issue contracts to rub out civilians, it should issue them to independent contractors, such as himself.

"We got the tools, the know-how and the concrete," he said. "And some of our boys haven't had a job in months. Next thing you know, the Government will be taking over the numbers racket, pinball games and running dope.

"Let us never forget," said Mr. Parsnipicoli, placing his snap-brimmed fedora over the lapel of his pin-striped suit, "that it's the free enterprise system that made this country great."

Merry-Go-Round