

Between Coups, Employes of C.I.A. Learn to Knit, Bowl and Play Softball

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LANGLEY, Va., Sept. 16—When they are not stealing secrets or considering coups d'état, employes of the Central Intelligence Agency indulge in such innocent pastimes as learning to knit, repair cars, bowl, play softball, collect coins and fly small planes.

These are among the popular endeavors sponsored by the Employe Activities Association of the C.I.A., which also maintains a credit union and an insurance agency for its spies and other employes.

Knitting classes, according to the bulletin board announcement, are held Wednesdays and Fridays at noon. For those with more martial inclinations, there are karate classes and training in rifle and pistol shooting. The C.I.A. softball league features teams calling themselves the Lollipops, the Cardinals and the Charlie Browns.

In the basement there is a rubber-covered track for joggers, a favorite of the former director, Richard Helms. In his day, the track rules prescribed: "Never talk to the director while he is doing his laps and never pass the director while he is doing his laps."

With a degree of pride, agency officials display their art, the work of the C.I.A. Fine Arts Commission, which has hung huge abstracts in corridors wide enough to play soccer. The ends of the corridors have been "color-coordinated" by the commission, with tints ranging from cool to warm and warm to cool.

The fine arts people have arranged for enormous photographic blowups of maps of the C.I.A.'s favorite foreign cities—London, Leningrad, Paris and Rome—pasted up on the elevator shafts.

Courtyard Flowers

They also watch over the agency's exquisite courtyard flower bed and its handsome stands of trees. The grounds outside are called "the campus."

Like factory workers, C.I.A. employes eat early and practice temperance, trying to get to the in-house Rendezvous Cafe before the noon rush. The strongest drink is iced tea and the serve-yourself meals cost \$1.80.

A visitor asking for an explanation of the 40-foot-wide corridors and the 15 glass doors of the entrance

to the 14-year-old building is told that the agency leadership wanted "airiness" instead of a close atmosphere.

Whatever the motivation, the effect has been to cause the agency's employes to walk three and four abreast when they move around the building.

Certain undercover habits persist, as in the C.I.A. car pool. If you want a ride to or from Langley, you fill in a card with all the particulars of office extension number, time and place, but only your first name or nickname and the request: "Call Fred."

C.I.A. people also indulge heavily in jargon, from the boss on down. They talk of "wiring diagrams" when they mean "organizational plans" and "patterned response" instead of "straight answer." But the new boss, and old C.I.A. man named William Colby—his car-pool request would read, "Call William"—has also picked up some current pop phraseology. He was recently heard saying, "I haven't got any hang-ups about . . ."

The C.I.A. also tends to use abbreviations and shorthand. The institution's house symphony orchestra is referred to as "symp orch."