

PERSPECTIVE

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^{SEE}Examiner *This hysteria must stop*

says the spy who came in from the cold

'The CIA's enemies rejoice,
its credibility is nil,
its officers demoralized,
their sources frightened'

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By William Montalbano
Knight News Service

WASHINGTON — One of America's brightest young spies, an earnest, committed professional who says he ran clandestine operations on four continents in the past decade, has resigned in disgust from the CIA.

"The CIA is paralyzed," he charges. "They are laughing at us in Moscow and Havana. Even our friends don't trust us anymore. I quit because I could no longer do my job."

The spy is Mike Ackerman, a 34-year-old Miamian who writes commentaries on classical Judaism in his spare time and is "more afraid of the Soviet Union than anything else on earth."

He charges the CIA has been undermined by its own mistakes, by adventurist politicians, by a lack of cooperation on the part of other government agencies, by elements of the American press which have sacrificed national interest for sensationalism, and by an American public indifferent to the needs of a professional intelligence service.

"You can't run an intelligence agency in a goldfish bowl, it's as simple as that."

For four years, Ackerman says he traveled widely—mostly in Latin America—as a lone-wolf spy from a bachelor apartment in Miami.

Since 1964, he says, he has carried out clandestine operations in 20 countries—12 in the Western Hemisphere, three in Africa and five in Europe.

Ackerman says he had two specialties: Covert political action and the clandestine development of positive intelligence from Communist sources.

In collecting intelligence, he says, he was most often targeted against Russians and Cubans.

Ackerman resigned May 30 after 11 years as a case officer in the CIA's Clandestine Services. His rank, GS 14, is about equivalent to that of a lieutenant colonel. He was among the youngest officers in the CIA to hold it, according to an agency spokesman who confirmed his employment and resignation.

Ackerman has not gone public to tell stories out of school. He says he will not violate confidences. His goal is to make himself credible and to make credible his contention that a vital safeguard to American security is being destroyed by what he calls "a hostile political climate in the United States.

Ackerman says the CIA has lost its effectiveness.

"If I were a Russian today and had to talk to somebody I would go see MI-6 (British intelligence) or the Mossad (Israeli intelligence.) That would not have been true a few years ago."

In his frustration, Ackerman believes he speaks not only for himself but also for other professional intelligence officers of his generation whose personal circumstances do not allow them to speak publicly. He feels they are paying for mistakes made by another generation of intelligence officers.

In the trade, Ackerman was known as a "street man," slang for that small number of front-line spies who think on their feet, usually work alone and are at home in the back alley world where intelligence is bought and sold.

He will acknowledge by name only two countries where he served: the Dominican Republic and Guyana. His service there under embassy cover is recorded in government documents available to the general public.

Today's CIA can no longer effectively carry out either clandestine intelligence gathering or covert political action, he says.

"I decided to quit the day I met secretly with a Communist source who was risking his life to see me and I realized I could not guarantee his security.

"There was no way I could promise him that some irresponsible member of Congress or ex-employee wouldn't leak his information or that some reporter wouldn't blab it all over the front page.

"That is the recent record. And that is a national tragedy."

If, as someone once said, the best intelligence officer is an intellectual marine, Ackerman fits the description.

In a lengthy series of interviews he emerged as hawkish, articulate, intelligent, somewhat rigid, and entirely righteous in his convictions. He is both tense, and intense.

The son of an immigrant Russian Jew, he is profoundly religious. Ackerman's mother, now widowed, keeps a Kosher home in Miami.

Ackerman is a graduate of Dartmouth (magna cum laude) and earned a master's in political science at Columbia University before joining the CIA.

His future plans are uncertain. He has about \$10,000 in pension fund money recovered from the government, and some \$4,000 paid for unused leave time. Initially, at least, he will seek

public forums at which to make his views known.

Ackerman anticipates that he may have a credibility problem.

"The cynics will no doubt conclude that this is a CIA operation. It isn't. It's my operation. And anybody who listens to what I have to say will quickly discover there is nobody in the world who would sponsor bull-headed Mike Ackerman but me."

As avocations, Ackerman plays the stock market and writes about theology: Last winter he had a story published under a pseudonym in *The Jewish Spectator*.

Ackerman does not smoke, and he drinks little, although he is an expert handicapper of Miami singles' bars. In one of them he was once overwhelmed for the attentions of a girl by a competitor who told lurid stories of his career as a CIA agent.

He was born Emanuel C. Ackerman, but chose Mike as a preferred first name when he joined the CIA because Emanuel is too uncommon to use as an alias. Today, only his mother and a legion of aunts and uncles know him as Emanuel.

Ackerman's entire CIA career was spent in the clandestine Services, which is known officially as the Deputy Director of Operations, and is sometimes referred to by the media as the "Dirty Tricks Department."

The CS, as Ackerman calls it, runs covert operations and seeks intelligence from human sources. It is the most elite, the most secret and one of the smaller divisions of the CIA, most of whose work deals with intelligence analysis from inanimate sources such as technical journals and the products of electronic and photographic espionage.

"Bear" was the nickname

tagged on Ackerman by his colleagues.

"Because of my Russian ancestry, I suppose, and because I tend to be sloppy and clumsy." A colleague, once writing a physical description of Ackerman, noted playfully "apt to have ketchup stains on his tie and sleeves after lunch and dinner."

Keeping his tie straight is not one of those things that most concerns Ackerman.

"The greatest American intelligence officer who ever lived was a great, messy, shambling man who looked like Jackie Gleason with a mustache," he says.

The CIA spokesman who acknowledged Ackerman's service said he had left the service "in the highest repute."

"He was an extremely well thought of operations officer with an excellent record. He was one of the

youngest of his rank we've got here. It is unusual for an officer of his age to be so far ahead of the pack," the spokesman said.

A high CIA executive, who has been publicly identified as such but prefers to remain anonymous in this instance, evaluated Ackerman this way:

"He gets extremely high marks for intellect and imagination and high marks for dedication. I rank him in the top three per cent among his peers in performance and in the top 10 per cent overall."

Another CIA executive, now retired after 30 years in intelligence, was Miami station chief when Ackerman was based there.

"Ackerman was one of the most effective loners I ever had. He was a brilliant singleton operator," the retired officer said.

One of Ackerman's former supervisors, now working in Latin-America, said flatly:

"He is the best C.O. (Case Officer) I have ever met."

For the first part of his career, Ackerman says he was a specialist in covert action operations: He helped break Communist-led strikes, he funneled funds to the publisher of a moderate newspaper under attack; he helped a democratic faction ward off a Communist takeover of their political party.

Ackerman says his trademark was to work as a non-American. Once he posed as a hard-driving European fishing industry tycoon to penetrate a hostile embassy.

"My specialty was the fast pitch: to meet a source, try to establish a relationship and then pitch him, 'I am a representative of U.S. intelligence and I think there are compelling reasons why you should cooperate with us.'