

# Assassination Test By Army Reported

Los Angeles

Army experts using "mock-killer chemicals" carried out a successful simulated assassination of President Nixon and Congress in 1969 and 1970, a former researcher claims.

Lowell Ponte, whose work was used until 1970 International Research and Technology Corp., a Washington "think tank" utilized by the Pentagon, said yesterday that both the White House and Capitol Hill are still vulnerable to this type of attack.

The army revealed Tuesday that it had conducted 239 open-air germ warfare tests between 1949 and 1969.

There was no immediate comment from the Army on Ponte's charges.

Ponte, writing in the April issue of Playgirl Magazine, said a team from the U.S. Army Chemical and Biological Warfare Research Center at Ft. Detrick, Md., "Penetrated both the Capitol and White House and released in both places

chemicals that could have been deadly germs or nerve gas."

The team, Ponte said, "Carried out simulated terrorist attacks on the air-conditioning systems of the White House and the Capitol and on the drinking water used in one major federal office building.

"The simulated attacks," Ponte said, "were successful... all demonstrated that a terrorist could easily kill the President and Congress by attacking the unguarded air and water systems of government buildings."

Ponte said he was not disclosing any details that a sophisticated terrorist would not already know. He urged authorities to develop better defense systems for federal buildings.

"Neither the Secret Service nor FBI nor Capitol Hill police knew that the Ft. Detrick penetration agent attacks were taking place," wrote Ponte. "Had the Army teams been real terrorists the President and entire Congress would have died."

*Associated Press*