

MAY 28?

# Government Agents Seize Arms Cache Near Clinton

CLINTON — Undercover agents have seized a stockpile of machine guns, flame-throwers, mortars and explosives and arrested a one-time leader of "The Minutemen" nationwide anti-Communist group.

U.S. Treasury agents, who posed for weeks as middlemen for an unnamed foreign weapons buyer, said they paid Rich-

ard Lauchli, 37, \$17,000 for the arms in an abandoned barn north of Clinton.

The truckload of guns and bombs was seized Tuesday after Lauchli wrote a letter offering to sell it to a Chicago man.

The man told Treasury agents

Lauchli and an associate, Donald Sturgis, 36, of Fairmount City drove away with the money, the agents said, and nearby Treasury agents were immediately alerted by radio.

Agents pursued the pair for five miles over rural roads at speeds up to 115 miles an hour. The men surrendered to converging agents when their car came to a skidding halt at a sharp intersection.

Assistant U.S. Atty. Leon Scroggins said Lauchli and Sturgis were charged Tuesday in a federal complaint in Springfield with possession of unregistered automatic weapons. He said Lauchli bought the weapons as unworkable scrap and reconditioned them.

Lauchli in 1961 led detachments of "The Minutemen" through guerrilla warfare maneuvers. He has been convicted once for illegal possession of automatic weapons, Scroggins said.

Lauchli, Sturgis and the arms were to be taken to Springfield by Treasury agents.

In Norborne, Mo., near Kansas City, Robert Bolivar De Pugh, head of "The Minutemen," could not be reached for comment on the arms seizure. It was not immediately learned if Lauchli was still a regional leader of the group.

De Pugh has described "The Minutemen" this way: "We're just loyal American citizens who are tired of being pushed around by the Communists."

## 2 Arraigned In Firearms Case

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Two men, believed to be members of a ring supplying arms to international military groups, were arraigned today before U.S. District Commissioner Edward Casey for violation of the federal firearms act.

Albert Lauchli, 37, of Collinsville, and Donald Louis Sturgis, 36, of Fairmount City, an East St. Louis suburb, were held under \$20,000 bond each in city prison on charges of illegal possession of 100 machine guns not registered with the commissioner of the U.S. Treasury Department.

The two men were arraigned at noon today following their capture Tuesday evening near Wapella in DeWitt County.

Authorities confiscated an arsenal of weapons, which filled two trucks, from a truck and a car driven by Lauchli and Sturgis and from Lauchli's home near Collinsville.

All of the goods, including \$17,000 worth of arms sold to an undercover agent of the Alcohol and Tax Division of the U.S. Treasury Department, were impounded in the basement of the Internal Revenue Service Building at 325 W. Adams St.

(Missouri) REGISTER