

CIA—Who Else?—Is First With Buttons



By
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Leave it to the inscrutable wizards at the Central Intelligence Agency to be the first kids on the bureaucratic block with their own supply of WIN buttons.

President Ford, as you must know, hopes that all Americans eventually will be wearing the buttons (the initials stand for "Whip Inflation Now") in an appropriate spot to show their willingness to make sacrifices. The problem was, and is, that after Mr. Ford announced the exciting WIN button program it was learned that he had the only known model (a special, hand-made job) in existence.

The lack of WIN buttons threw some top political appointees for a loss, since they wanted to sport the initials to show they backed their leader and his program 1,000 per cent. They were perturbed when informed by staffers that if they wanted a

WIN button, they would have to sign a conservation pledge and send it in to the White House, like the rest of us.

Cabinet officials have been playing a high-level game of button, button, who's got the button? trying to borrow the precious White House-owned WIN insignia for press conferences and meetings.

All of the above may be a problem on this side of the Potomac, but over at the CIA's Langley headquarters, everything is smiles: They have WIN buttons, one-upping the world again.

Agency specialists, who can duplicate a Bulgarian Army uniform or reconstruct a set of Czech dentures on demand, have apparently turned their special talents toward the limited manufacture of WIN buttons.

The rare WIN slogans have already been worn overtly on trenchcoats by CIA chief William Colby and a handful of trusted aides at recent functions. When asked how they managed to get the WIN buttons, which even the White House had to contract-out, CIA officials just smile, and say they have ways of obtaining such material.

Agency for International Development workers are being

braced for an almost certain RIF (governmentese for layoff) next year. Both Congress and its watchdog General Accounting Office have been critical of AID staffing programs, part of the broader protest against foreign aid in general.

Observing the handwriting on the wall, AID brass are now making their own personnel vs. programs review, and insiders say it is certain to cost several hundred workers in Washington headquarters their jobs.

A directive to office managers at AID last week said "... although it may be some time before the details of the total reduction are fully worked out and individual employees who may be affected so advised, it is desirable that employees know the employment outlook well in advance so that they may make the best use of options available to them."

AID plans to continue its nearly airtight hiring freeze, but officials say that normal attrition will not be enough to meet new, lower, 1975-76 personnel ceilings. This means many older workers will be "encouraged" to retire by year's end, to take advantage of a minimum 5.3 per cent civil service pension bonus effective Jan. 1.

Shell-shocked AID workers

who feel they are treated like step-children by the State Department and Congress at least have something to be thankful for. They are being put on notice of hard times to come. Too many agencies delay announcing the word of pending RIFs to employees who must depend on the grapevine for news of their fate.

The Brothers Kalb: CBS correspondents Bernard and Marvin Kalb will hold forth Wednesday at the luncheon meeting of the Government Information Organization. The session is at the Flagship restaurant. Call 393-1454 for reservations.

Records Management Specialist: Interior needs one at the Grade 9 or 11 level. Call 343-2024.

Secretary: The U.S.-Canadian International Joint Commission has a Grade 6 job opening. Call 296-2142.

Veterans Day: Federal workers, bank employees and some private workers will get a second holiday this month. Despite legislation pending in Congress to return Veterans Day to November, the holiday this year will be celebrated on Monday, Oct. 28. If Congress okays a change-back, the holiday would not be switched back to November until 1975.