

THE CIA'S SECRET WEAPONS SYSTEMS
by Andrew Stark

Exploding wine bottles, guns constructed out of pipes, bullets made of teeth, aspirin explosives: they sound like props from a second-rate spy story. Horrifyingly enough, they are real. The CIA has spent a great deal of its time--and your money--developing countless bizarre weapons for assassination, sabotage, and mass destruction. If that's news to you, it's because the CIA doesn't want these products, some of which are quite easy to put together, to fall into the "wrong hands." As for whether they are in the right hands now--judge for yourself.

The CIA has developed many exotic and sophisticated devices intended for use in interrogation, sabotage, and assassination. These weapons are necessary--if you grant that what the CIA itself does is necessary. If the CIA wants to eliminate a key KGB agent operating in Hungary, it faces certain problems. It would be virtually impossible to slip a deadly weapon, such as a gun or bomb, past Hungarian customs officials. Thus, the CIA assassin must assemble his weapon from commonly obtainable materials after he crosses the border.

The CIA agent might decide to construct a urea nitrate explosive, commonly known as a urine bomb. This weapon is quite deadly, easily exploded, and consists primarily of nitric acid and urine. The urine bomb is one of literally hundreds of murderous weapons in the CIA arsenal.

"The New York Times" of September 26, 1975 revealed the existence of guns that shoot cobra-venom darts. Then there was the shoe polish compound intended to make Fidel Castro's beard fall out, so that he would lose his "charisma." And CIA laboratories in Fort Monmouth, New Jersey developed the famous rifle that shoots around corners.

Some CIA weapons are designed to kill many people--deadly germs can be released in subways; others are intended to kill a single, specific individual--the Borgia ring contains deadly poison to be slipped into a victim's drink; and still others are standard weapons supplied for such missions as overthrowing the Allende government in Chile in 1973.

The information about CIA weapons that you will read in this article generally has not been made public before. It was not intended to be. But your tax dollars pay for these devices; it is your right to know about them.

There is a booklet, written in 1977 and distributed to a select group of U.S. mercenaries, titled "CIA Improvised Sabotage Devices." This instructional guidebook, part of "the Combat Bookshelf," was published by Desert Publications, P.O. Box 22005, Phoenix, Arizona 85028. If you want to know how the CIA turns a cigar box into an explosive that can destroy a 10,000-gallon capacity storage tank, then "CIA Improvised Sabotage Devices" is what you should read. You will need it if you want to build the "Water-Drip Electric Delay," a bomb that requires little more than wood scrap, a tin can, and a battery. The "Pocket Watch Electric Delay" requires little more than a watch, a screw, and a battery.

The "Mousetrap Electric Release" is another bomb, this one requiring a mousetrap, a trip wire, a battery, and little else. It is described as "an excellent device to use with bazooka rockets against trucks, tanks, or locomotives." The "Chemical Instantaneous Initiator" is made from a sugar-chlorate mix and is effective in sabotaging trains. The "Martini Glass Shaped Charge" is a bomb that also can be made out of a beer can. You might want to try to construct the "Vehicle Booby Trap." The "Potassium Chlorate and Sugar Igniter" and the "Sawdust, Moth Flakes, and Oil Incendiary" can be made with only what you see in their titles.

For these and more than fifty other CIA devices, step-by-step instructions on how to make them and illustrations of what they should look like when completed are given. Turn a wine bottle into a bomb. Build a land-mine rocket. Manufacture napalm in your basement. Even the simple how-tos of causing a dust explosion can be found in "CIA Improvised Sabotage Devices."

Why is the CIA so deeply involved in sabotage techniques? The CIA might think it is in this country's interest to delay scientific work being done by another nation. Or, the CIA might want to disrupt a nation's economy in the hope that the resulting chaos will lead to civil unrest and the overthrow of the existing government (some of this actually happened in Chile). The original John Rockefeller used such tactics against his competitors. He simply had their refineries blown up.

Another pamphlet the CIA would not like you to see is titled "How to Kill," written by John Minnery, edited by Robert Brown and Peder Lund, and published by Paladin Press, Box 1307, Boulder, Colorado 80306. The reason the CIA would prefer that you not see this eighty-eight-page pamphlet, which is unavailable at bookstores and newsstands, is because it contains a number of "ingenious" methods of doing what the title says. Also, Paladin Press, which published a book called "OSS Sabotage and Demolition Manual," is widely regarded by journalists as an organization with close ties to mercenary groups and the CIA. Paladin Press doesn't want you to know that, but how else could they have published the "OSS Sabotage and Demolition Manual?" The Office of Strategic Services was the precursor of today's CIA.

This writer's call to Colorado yielded the following conversation:

"How could you publish the "OSS Sabotage and Demolition Manual," I asked Peter Lund, editor and publisher of Paladin Press, "if your organization, at the least, was not dealing with former OSS agents? And what about "How to Kill?"

"I don't talk to journalists," Lund said.

"You're called the Paladin Press. You must publish books. Can I order them?"

"No."

"Why not? You're a publisher, aren't you?"

"We're afraid our publications might fall into the wrong hands."

"What are the right hands?" I asked.

"I don't talk to journalists."

"Have you ever heard of Desert Publications?" I asked.

"A fine outfit," Lund said. "If they recommend you, I'll send you our material."

"That's my problem," I said. "They don't seem to have a phone number."

"Well, they're a good group."
"Listen," I said, "wasn't your group, and Desert Publications besides, involved in CIA mercenary activity in Africa?"
"I don't know anything about that."
"Were you in the Special Forces?"
"July 1967 to July 1968 in Vietnam."
"Were you CIA?"
"I was MACV [Military Armed Forces Command Vietnam]."
"You weren't affiliated with CIA?"
"I didn't say that."
"What do you say?"
"We did joint operations with CIA on the Phoenix Program."
"Wasn't that a murder operation?"
"No. It was snatching people."

The Phoenix Program was designed for a job that the CIA euphemistically described as "eliminating the Viet Cong infrastructure." In reality, it was a rampant reign of terror run out of CIA headquarters at Langley, Virginia. Former CIA director William Colby later termed the program "effective." The Phoenix Program was a naked murder campaign, as proved by every realistic report, ranging from the Bertrand Russell Tribunal to the Dellums Committee to admissions by CIA agents themselves. The program killed--and *none* of these killings occurred in combat--18,000 people, mostly women and children.

But what about Peder Lund, editor and publisher of Paladin Press? The book he edited and published, "How to Kill," outlined a surfeit of murder methods, horrific techniques of causing people to die. For example:

"Without getting too deeply into the realm of the bizarre," wrote John Minnery, the author of "How to Kill" as he proceeded to just that, "a specially loaded bullet made from a human tooth (bicuspid) could be fired under the jaw or through the mouth into the head. The tooth is a very hard bone, and its enamel shell would allow it to penetrate into the brain. The intention here is also to hide the cause of death because the examiner in his search for a projectile will disregard bone fragments."

One last example from "How to Kill" should give you the flavor of the book:

Lesson Nine: Hot Wire

"Essentially, the weapon is an electrified grid in the urinal basin. This can take the form of a screen cover for the drain or a metal grill. If the urinal is completely porcelain, the screen must be added by the assassin. The drain cover is connected to the electrical system of the washroom by means of an insulated cord that is hidden behind the plumbing.

"What happens when the subject uses the urinal should be obvious now. The subject's urine, which is a salty liquid and a perfect conductor of electricity, makes contact with the charged grid, and the shock will kill him."

This reporter's investigation revealed that the "Hot Wire" was child's play compared to certain other CIA weapons devices. For instance, I was able to obtain Volumes One and Two of the "CIA Black Book" on improvised munitions, volumes that are stamped "for

official use only" on almost every page. It is obvious why the CIA would like these books to remain secret. With elaborate instructions, they describe how to make high explosives from aspirin, how to construct a nail grenade, and how to turn a Coke bottle into a bomb.

Described in detail in the "Black Book" is the previously mentioned urea nitrate explosive, or, as it is known to the pros, "the piss bomb." Instructions for the preparation of this weapon assure the maker that animal urine will do as well as human; the important thing is to have ten cups of it, boil it down to one cup, and mix it with the nitric acid.

Also described in the "Black Book" is how to construct a pipe pistol, which, as the name indicates, is a gun constructed out of a pipe. Other weapons include a cooking syringe filled with poison that can be stabbed into "the subject's" stomach; a cyanide gas pistol; a throat cutter gauntlet knife (razor sharp and only an inch or so in length); and a mixture of fertilizer and aluminum powder that can be made into a powerful bomb.

Why build murder weapons out of such weird material? Is the CIA insane?

No. In its own way, the whole thing is perfectly logical.

The pamphlet "How to Kill" explained it all: "As most of these devices are homemade, this precludes the possibility of their being traced. They are, in effect, 'sanitized' and perfect for assassinations, where weapons are prohibited, or where customs in the hostile country are stringent, so these can be made from local materials."

Being a contract killer for the CIA is not all roses. You cannot kill in just any way. A number of attempts have been made on Fidel Castro's life--some with the CIA and the Mafia cooperating--and some of them may have failed because of restrictions imposed on the potential assassins. It would be unacceptable for Castro's murder to be laid at the door of the CIA. This would make Castro a martyr in the eyes of his countrymen. Thus, a method that would suggest death by natural causes must be found.

Abundant speculation and considerable evidence suggest that the CIA or some other government agency arranged for the "natural" deaths of David Ferrie, Jack Ruby, George De Mohrenschildt, and other potential witnesses into the assassination of John Kennedy. Some methods of killing, like the injection of an air bubble into the bloodstream, will often go unnoticed by medical examiners.

Another hard-to-trace method of killing is to mail a snake to the victim. This is known as killing by long distance. A disadvantage to this method is that the snake might bite an innocent third party who just happens to open the package. The advantage is that once the snake has struck, the evidence can simply slither away.

Sometimes, as the CIA knows, killing has to be done at close range. For this purpose, a valuable weapon is the ice pick with a blood arrester attached. The blood arrester is a cloth wrapped near the tip of the ice pick. When the pick is shoved into the victim, the spurting blood is absorbed by the blood arrester. People who see the victim fall will probably think he has had a heart attack. While the onlookers try to help the victim, the assassin uses this valuable ten or fifteen seconds to escape unnoticed.

Often it is advisable to use what is called in the trade a "quiet weapon." Silenced weapons can include pistols, rifles, and even machine guns.

Poison is a quiet killer. Here is a partial list of the poisons the CIA has become expert at administering: oil of bitter almonds; ant paste; cadmium, used in vapor form, and death is delayed four hours; radiator cleaner, also causing a delayed death; Cantharides (Spanish Fly); ethyl mercury; and freon, heated by a flame. These poisons and many others are listed in "How to Kill." The author then cautions the reader:

"Unless otherwise stated, these poisons are either to be injected into the subject, or taken orally by him by adding it to his food. Use common sense in the application of these potions and, if possible, double the O.D. necessary."

W.H. Bowart, in his book, "Operation Mind Control" described the CIA's use of drugs: "In 1953, the CIA made plans to purchase ten kilograms of LSD for use in `drug experiments with animals and human beings.' Since there are more than 10,000 doses in a gram, that meant the CIA wanted 100 million doses. The CIA obviously intended to `corner the market' on LSD so that other countries would not be ahead of the U.S. in their potential for `LSD warfare.'"

Dr. Albert Hoffman, an early researcher into the uses of LSD, was horrified by what the CIA was doing: "I had perfected LSD for medical use, not as a weapon. It can make you insane or even kill you if it is not properly used under medical supervision. In any case, the research should be done by medical people and not by soldiers or intelligence agencies."

Perhaps the most frightening weapon of all is the one that can be used to alter weather and climate. It was used with considerable success in Vietnam. It slowed troop movements with heavy rains, and it destroyed the rice crop, as well. The danger is that these climatological changes may become permanent, affecting not only enemies of the United States, but also the entire planet.

Finally, considerable evidence exists that the United States, through the CIA, employed germ warfare during the Korean War. A number of captured pilots testified that germ warfare was used, but their testimony was dismissed as brainwashing. A Marine Corps colonel named Frank H. Schwable signed a germ warfare confession and, according to W.H. Bowart, "named names, cited missions, described meetings and strategy conferences."

Schwable later repudiated his confession. But the charges of germ warfare were taken up in front of the United Nations, and a number of countries believed them.

The United States, incidentally, was later charged with using nerve gas in Vietnam.

What you have read on these pages is pretty revolting stuff. Yet, if the world ought to be saved from Communism, who can say it is not necessary? One danger, of course, is that these terrible weapons have been introduced into our body politic and have produced strange and terrible fruits on our own native soil. When assassination becomes government policy, when men are trained to kill in every conceivable way, when morality is set aside for a "higher good," can even the President of the United States consider himself safe?