

BERLIN — SPY CENTER OF THE WORLD

SHREWD MEN AND BEAUTIFUL WOMEN SCRAMBLE TO LEARN AND SELL SECRETS OF ALL NATIONS

*BY JOHN LEWIS CARVER

NOT long ago I saw a short, stocky, bespectacled man limp into the office of the ace Intelligence Officer in the British zone of Berlin. We may call the British officer Major David A. Roberts; that is one of the many assumed names by which "Robby" is known in the flourishing black market of Berlin spies. He is the product of Whitehall's fabulous MI-5, the splendid intelligence service which sees thrill and romance in espionage—and a short-cut to success in power politics.

Robby's address is one of the worst-kept secrets in Germany. Officially, the red-haired Major is "under cover." There is an aura of deliberate mystery about Robby and his trade. But if you have a military or political secret to peddle in Berlin today, you can learn Robby's address easily. And it doesn't greatly matter whether the secret is Russian, Roumanian, American, or French.

His address can be obtained from headwaiters in the darkened little bars along gaudy Joachimsthaler Strasse, from the peddlers of nylon hose and penicillin in the shadow of the burned-out Reichstag building, or from touts who sell a variety of assorted addresses at which one can practice either business or pleasure or both.

More often than not one has to pay for Robby's address. Espionage is big business in Berlin and has its painstaking, pecuniary bureaucracy. It is practiced by small fry (who are willing to procure for you anything from the latest deployment plan of the Red Army to a lock of Hitler's hair) and by big-time operators who deal nonchalantly and lucratively in international secrets.

Among the most successful big-time operators is a student from Chicago who went to Berlin to work his way through college. He now has a miniature castle in Zehlendorf, a chauffeur-driven car with ample supplies of black market gasoline, a butler, two Rembrandts. The one thing he hasn't got is the college degree he went to Berlin for.



British MP catches operatives peddling papers in Berlin bar frequented by black marketeers of post-war espionage. Man in center paid 3,000 marks for documents.



Landid camera in Berlin's swanky Cafe Femina, clearing house of spy secrets, catches Russian officers, blurs girl operative who moved to escape identification.

The limping character I saw entering Major Robby's office was fairly typical of his daily visitors. He was a man of rather dubious allegiance, his nationality as faded as the GI tunic he was wearing above a pair of cookie-pusher pants. His face was pockmarked, his nose flattened, his unkempt hair a yellowish blond. He had thick lips, blue eyes, dry skin hanging loosely on protruding cheek bones.

Robby's Sergeant Munster received him with the politeness British Intelligence reserves for professional spies, informers, *agents provocateurs*, and similar characters who make a living by peddling secrets.

"Yes," he asked in that inimitable tone of nasal condescension calculated to make the visitor unload his information and still keep his price down.

"What can I do for you, old man?"

The visitor answered in broken German. But as he spoke, he unfurled, like a tattered flag, a "tip" which, if true, was as big as the whole British zone of Berlin and half of the Ruhr thrown in for good measure.

"I 'ave friend," he said. "Russia man . . . Just come from other side, you know," and he swung his right arm eastward, to the immense land-mass behind Sergeant Munster's back, stretching from Berlin to Vladivostok.

Then he uttered the magic words: "Man know much about Adam bomb!"

This password opens the doors of all Intelligence Services. In Berlin it opens them on the double.

*EDITOR'S NOTE: John Lewis Carver is the pen-name of an American who spent more than four years in U. S. Naval Intelligence, specializing in German operations. He is the author of several service manuals and the originator of various Intelligence methods used effectively in World War II. He got his first-hand knowledge of the black market for spies in Berlin by serving in that city as liaison officer among the Intelligence organizations of the Big Four occupying powers.

A minute later the limping Lithuanian—that was his nationality before he displaced it—was standing before Robby himself, talking about a man—a young Russian chemist who had just escaped from the Russian zone—now hiding somewhere in the British zone—who professed to have first-hand information about a uranium pile the Russians were operating in the Altai Mountains—producing, believe it or not, honest to goodness plutonium.

Robby let the man talk without interruption, until the poor fellow was repeating himself. But at least he was telling the tale the way he had told it before. All the time Robby was sizing him up.

On that particular day, the Lithuanian was the Major's seventh visitor. One had come with "documents" on which the forger's ink was hardly dry. The sixth came with a "latest model range-finder from an *experimental* Soviet tank" (it turned out to be a battered German relic from the Battle of Stalingrad). Six of the day's seven visitors had been duds. The seventh, this limping Lithuanian, helped Robby to hit the jackpot.

A meeting with the escaped Russian chemist was arranged in an "apartment" frequented by ladies with transient friends. When Robby was alone with the Russian he put him through the preliminary works. He quickly decided that the "tip" was good enough to be developed into an A-1 "case."

A few hours later, the Russian was flying out of Berlin, to a secret interrogation center "somewhere in Germany" and then on to Britain for the "close-up." He proved to be worth his weight in gold—a former NKVD (Russian secret police) major who had actually been to the underground city of Atomgrad, the mountain hideout where Soviet physicists and engineers experiment with atomic energy.

This was an espionage scoop of the first order, the best information Berlin's spy black market had produced to date. Until Robby got hold of this talkative Russian, Atomgrad was thought to be a mere figment of a secret agent's imagination. But now the mystery center of Soviet atomic research emerged from his tale. It turned out there were two Russian cities by that eloquent name: Atomgrad I and Atomgrad II, both built underground, with huge laboratories and processing centers, Soviet replicas of our Oak Ridge and Hanford.

BERLIN IS SPIES' HAPPY HUNTING GROUND

The Lithuanian and his valuable Russian were just one pair in an army of spies. Berlin is an excellent place to obtain material for the Battle Order files which, kept by all the great powers, describe in detail the military organizations of the others. There new weapon designs are obtained under the table—a traitorous soldier may "forget" his new-type gun while taking leave of an acquaintance he never expects to see again. Not long ago a Berlin operative succeeded in acquiring the design of a new tank manufactured by the Czech Skoda Works for the USSR.

Even while Robby was talking to his limping visitor, his American, French, and Russian colleagues were interviewing other black marketeers of secret information. A German was showing an American captain a home-made map that purported to reveal the layout of the Soviet commander Rokossovsky's advanced headquarters at Liegnitz, in Soviet-occupied Germany. A Russian deserter was asking French Intelligence for \$10,000 for a report on Stalin's health (what Intelligence lingo calls A-1 information insists Stalin is as well as any man can be with angina pectoris). A Hungarian ex-Nazi was describing to a Russian intelligence officer an obviously improvised battle order of U. S. troops in Austria. A pseudo-Englishman was even offering British Intelligence officers data against their American ally—for here in Berlin every nation practices espionage on every other, and spies spy on spies.

The Allies split Berlin into four zones and established themselves with oversized Intelligence Services in each sector. In all four zones wartime methods of espionage are practiced on the largest possible scale by all "belligerents" of the Cold War between East and West. Captured documents pour into all Intelligence offices of the Big Three, France, Britain, and the U. S. Reports sent by specially sealed pouches to Paris, London, and Washington, bulging with "strategic and tactical data obtained through the interrogation of eastern escapees," testify to the quality and quantity of the Intelligence material thus acquired.

Americans and Britons have little difficulty in cornering the market. There is an overabundance of information, mostly from Russian deserters. They are crossing the East-West demarcation line in such great numbers that only a few can be properly interrogated with the personnel available to the American and British authorities.

To catch the big fish in the net, screening centers are maintained along the demarcation line. On a list of 331 "interrogated deserters" I discovered names of men well-known for scientific accomplishments far beyond the borders of the USSR.

One man was a physicist who played a prominent role in the Soviet's nuclear research up to 1943. Another was a physician who at one time acted as Stalin's personal doctor. A third was a prominent aircraft designer, a colonel in the Red Air Force, who received the coveted Lenin Order for his wartime work.

These men—and women—are not spies in the conventional sense of the term. They are what is known in Intelligence lingo as "confidential informants."



Russian secret policemen, agents of tierded MVD, examine photographs found on spy suspect, stopped during raid in Tiergarten, center of espionage black market.



The face of the Continental spy: typical of big-time operatives is Stocklin, Swiss agent, caught in Berlin. With him in court is Odette Poirier, his mistress.

The migration from East to West is not duplicated by one from West to East. Consequently, Soviet Intelligence Officers are so hard up for "prisoners" to be interrogated that they go out and actually hunt for them. There is open season on informers all the year around in Berlin.

KIDNAPINGS RUN INTO THE HUNDREDS

Up to the time of this writing, there were no fewer than 1,600 known cases of abduction and kidnaping. Men and women who are suspected of having some information considered of value to the USSR are spirited across the demarcation line. Some are persuaded to go voluntarily. Others are taken by force.

It is impossible to appraise the value of the information the Russians get by such methods. Their actions seem to indicate that quantity counts with them far more than quality.

If Intelligence officers assigned to this Battle of Espionage in Berlin produce more blunders than scoops, it is not always their fault. They are dealing with a shrewd, ruthless, callous, and unreliable crowd.

The limping Lithuanian happened to have the goods he promised to deliver, but even he didn't know the true value of his claim when he went to Robby. But Robby is not infallible. He is the first to admit that at least 99 per cent of his contacts are phony. "But I must accept them as genuine until proven otherwise," he says with a sigh.

The vast majority of the petty spies who turn up with information, maps, plans, documents, and, above all, "atomic bombs," peddle their wares for syndicates in the espionage business.

In the ruined basements of Berlin, these syndicates operate ultra-modern printing presses which produce all the official forms used by the occupation beaureaucracy, including the personal stationery of the commanding generals: Danish and Honduran passports; Canadian dollars; the famous grey certificates of identification which the Russians issue to their favored travellers; diplomas of the Frunze Military Academy, West Point of the USSR.

Virtually the first "authentic document" produced by these syndicates was the Battle Order of a Phantom Army—allegedly recruited from the men of the German Field Marshal Paulus who surrendered to the Russians at Stalingrad. This espionage "scoop" predicted an early arrival of the Paulus Army within Germany. That was in March 1946. The prediction, which sold to London-Polish intelligence for \$1,500, remains unfulfilled.

The syndicates, only one of which is operated by Germans, exploit to the full the deepening controversy between the East and the West. Their favorite subjects are the atomic bomb (which is always on the verge of being discovered by the Russians, but never is, since that would inexpediently remove this greatest attraction from the market); and poison gas (which, it is said, is being manufactured in unprecedented quantities on both sides of the Iron Curtain, though immense quantities of it are really being dumped into the North Sea in full view of those international spies who care to look.)



Last minutes of Josef Schoner, dangerous German spy despite youth, are caught by camera. Here, in Euskirchen, many spies ended careers before firing squads.

ESPIONAGE BLACK MARKET HAS BEST-SELLERS

Other fast-selling items are revolutions and/or general strikes and/or armed uprisings in France, Italy (and recently in virtually every republic south of the Rio Grande)—always predicted for the month just ahead; imminent recognition of Franco Spain by the West (in documents prepared for the East) or by the East (in documents prepared for the West); the arrival of Bolshevik agents in Palestine to aid the Jews (in documents prepared for British Intelligence) or the Arabs (in documents prepared for the Zionists, whose own Intelligence Service is second to none in Germany).

There is all the exclusiveness of a Model-T Ford in most of these documents. The result is that the once thriving syndicates are losing much of their trade.

Their business is slipping into the hands of enterprising free-lancers. Among them are a woman widely known as Lilli Marlene and a man referred to as Hugo.

If anyone expects Lilli Marlene to be a dashing young blonde, he is slated for disappointment. Some say she is in her 70's, a charge Lilli refutes by displaying a yellowed birth certificate, issued in Turkey when Istanbul was still called Constantinople. Since few can read the ancient Arabic of the birth certificate, most have to take Madame's word for it that she is 49.

GIRLS GO TO SPY SCHOOL IN THIS CITY

Lilli Marlene has been exploiting official curiosity for years. Long before the war she maintained a stable of cabaret girls in Alexandria, Egypt, farming them out to fashionable hot spots of the Near East. As a part of their contract, they agreed to refer information they gleaned from their customers back to the clearing house of Madame Leny, Lilli Marlene's real name.

Between 1930 and 1939, Signor Mussolini was her best customer. In 1940, she moved to Tangier, in Africa, a neutral spot of World War II which in espionage potentialities was second only to the Berlin of today. She never did business with the Nazis; most of her information was gladly picked up by British Intelligence.

Lilli tolerates no false romanticism or sentimental intrusions in her dangerous game. As in Africa, she relies heavily on a stable of pretty young women who feed alcohol to their uniformed escorts and extract whatever information they can from them.

She maintains a kind of school for these young women. "My girls are probably the cleverest women on earth," she is fond of saying. And it may be true. Certainly they know enough about aircraft design, for example, to recognize any improvement that may come along.

Madame Leny's ladies form what Berlin calls her Lipstick Brigade. Lilli would start a suit for slander against anyone who called them prostitutes; most of them are happily married. These young women are in a class by themselves. They are sufficiently frivolous to lead on a gullible suitor with a worthwhile secret, but prudish when he tries to collect for his revelations with embraces.

Best known member of the Lipstick Brigade is Nyura, a White Russian who went from the bordellos of the Middle East to the cabarets of Berlin. Nyura speaks 17 languages, including Pidgin English and Sanscrit.

ONE SECRET AGENT EVEN SPOKE SANSKRIT

One day she was picked up by a British counter-intelligence agent, a young man just out of Oxford, himself a specialist in languages. He alerted headquarters: "I've got something real hot here." But when he found out that Nyura spoke Sanscrit, he forgot duty and spent the rest of the night discussing poetry with her.

Madame's favorite is Madeleine, who insists she is from Brest. In reality she is from Brest Litovsk in Eastern Poland. Madeleine is the favorite of all Frenchmen in uniform. Engraved in her cigarette case is the motto: "The blondes keep what the redheads promise." When she is reminded of her motto, she answers with a shrug of her shoulders: "I'm only a bleached blonde!"

In contrast to Madame Leny's open shop, where major international secrets are virtually displayed in a show window, Hugo has a hole-in-the-wall business. He is a lone wolf who produces nothing but scoops. He specializes in political intelligence, providing information about the German Communist groups to *all* Intelligence agencies in Berlin.

Hugo disappeared recently and, for a while, nobody seemed to know what had happened to him. Then he was said to be in jail in the British zone in Germany. Bit by bit, the story came out.

It seems Hugo had produced a document that later became known as the mysterious "M-Plan." It purported to outline the revolutionary plan of German Communists to start strikes and uprisings in Germany's Western zones, preliminary to an overall coup in which the whole of Germany was to fall into the laps of the expectant Russians.

Hugo took the document to British Intelligence. Then it was taken to London and handed to the PID (Political Intelligence Division) of the Foreign Office. It was promptly brought to the attention of Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin, of the State Department in Washington and of the Quai d'Orsay in Paris.



This was the end of Richard Jarczyk, caught tampering with U. S. military installations. Secret agents are no longer shot. Spies are imprisoned; saboteurs hanged.

BERLIN SPY CENTER

The Communists labelled Hugo's document a "clumsy forgery." They were still protesting their innocence when British Intelligence received the visit of a peculiar stranger who threatened to expose the M-Plan as a forgery and said he himself had forged it.

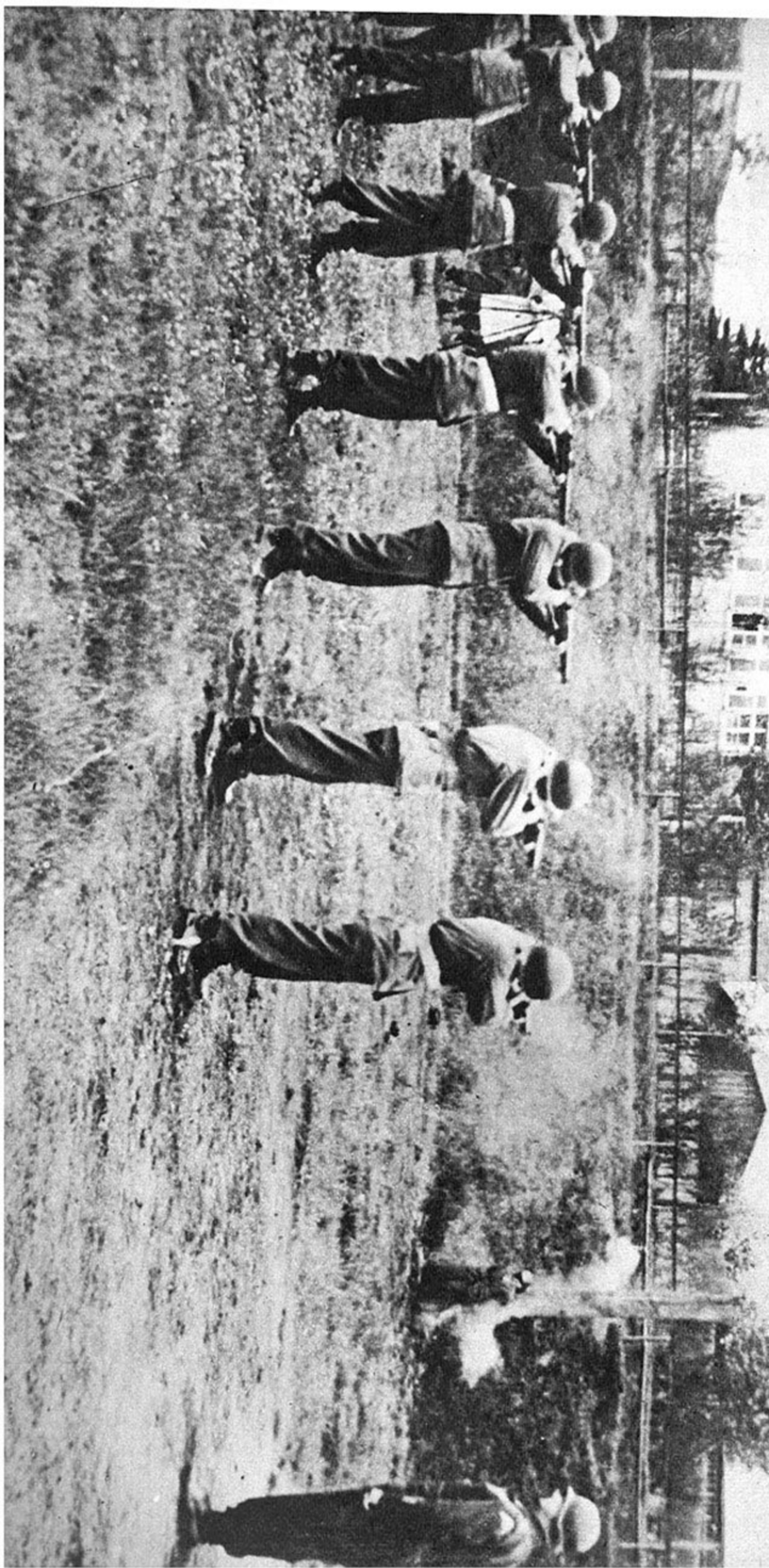
Hugo was arrested and admitted that his M-Plan was, indeed, a forgery.

ESPIONAGE BLACK MARKET CARRY ON

What started out as a scoop threatened to become a boomerang. Shortly afterward, in the House of Commons, Minister of State Hector McNeil admitted that there was doubt about the M-Plan's authenticity.

In normal times such an admission might have rocked cabinets. This time it brought merely a shrug of shoulders. That was what the spies of Berlin had hoped for. Since not even the exposure of the M-Plan could ruin its business, the secret underworld happily turns to the concoction of new and salable scoops for tomorrow. It is a great comfort to these spies to reflect that their scoops need not be genuine as long as they sell.

RICHARD JARCZYK, A SMALL-FRY GERMAN TRAINED TO SABOTAGE U. S. MILITARY EQUIPMENT, WAS THE FIRST GERMAN SPY TRIED AND EXECUTED WHEN THE ALLIES ENTERED GERMANY



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VOL. 7 No 5

SEPTEMBER, 1948

OldMagazineArticles.com