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Britain 'turns blind eye to Gaddafi's ex-CIA agents'

By AMIT ROY

BBRITISH security forces have been "turning a blind eye" to the activities of former CIA agents who have used Britain as a base for procuring arms for Col. Gaddafi of Libya, it was alleged last night.

Claims were made on the BBC television programme, "Panorama," that in return for intelligence supplied to the British, these ex-CIA men had been allowed to move about reasonably freely.

The programme alleged that former agents may be working for Col. Gaddafi with the full knowledge and consent of senior officials of the Central Intelligence Agency in the United States.

In the 50-minute programme, Mr Jeremy Paxman, the presenter, added to the disclosures already made about the CIA's Libyan connections in the New York TIMES, TIME magazine, and THE DAILY TELEGRAPH.

Among other claims, it was stated that:

THE MAN who killed Lord Mountbatten in Co. Sligo in 1979 was trained in Libya.

FRANK TERPIL, a former CIA agent, was one of the key figures in obtaining weapons for Col Gaddafi and was helping to train Libyans to use them.

HE had an office on the second floor of the Libyan Embassy in London. There was even a nameplate, "Mr Frank," outside his door.

Timers from Scotland

FORMER CIA agents bought their way into a Scottish company, Hybrid Electronics, of Glenrothes, with about £80,000 and then arranged for the company to manufacture 50,000 timing devices for explosives. These went to Libya.

THE AGENTS first worked from an office in Hyde Park and now have a "front" company in Knox Street, Marlyebone. Such "sensitive equipment" as weapons and explosives bought in the United States for Col. Gaddafi had been taken through Heathrow as personal luggage on to Tripoli-bound flights.

On one occasion, two five-gallon tins of "binary explosives" — detonation is achieved by mixing two critical constituents — was hand-carried through Heathrow by John Henry Harper, a drunk former agent.

The tins contained enough explosives "to blow London off the face of the earth."

LIBYAN exiles opposed to Col. Gaddafi had been assassinated in London and other European cities, possibly using weapons bought by the former CIA agents.

EDWIN WILSON, another former agent, once came to London to undermine the activities of Jack Dash, the dockers' leader.

WILSON, who bought two Sussex farms, played a crucial role during the Libyan intervention in Chad by obtaining pilots, engineers and spare parts for Col. Gaddafi, mostly from Britain.

Now in Tripoli, Wilson refused to be interviewed by Mr. Paxman. He is now Col. Gaddafi's chief weapons procurement agent.

According to "Panorama," Wilson and Terpil gave information about Col Gaddafi to the CIA "in return for freedom to continue business as usual."

The claim that an attempt was made to establish a similar relationship with British intelligence was backed by Kevin Mulcahy, another former CIA agent.

"Frank was overtly soliciting the help of British intelligence. In doing so they were providing British intelligence with whatever bits of information they have found worthy of the Brits' knowledge."

Given immunity

Mulcahy, who said he thought he was working for the CIA, claimed he withdrew from the relationship with Wilson when he discovered he was really serving Col. Gaddafi.

He has now been given immunity from prosecution if he co-operates with a Justice Department investigation into the CIA's Libyan connection.

"Dirty tricks learnt at the CIA" are still being sold to Col. Gaddafi by former agents and ex-Green Berets.

According to "Panorama," there are six centres in Libya where Libyan recruits are taught terrorist techniques by the Americans who are naturally highly paid.