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Washington Ways

House Work

The 'Hit Man' & the Old Libyan Embassy

By Donnie Radcliffe

The Libyan government has spent upwards of a half-million dollars getting its old embassy on Wyoming Avenue into shape as an official government guest house.

Now, in intelligence reports containing the names of an alleged Libyan "hit squad" being sent to the United States to target the president and other high government officials, the name of international terrorist "Carlos" — Carlos Ilich Ramirez Sanchez — has surfaced.

Attorney Richard Shadyac, spokesman for the Libyan government, jokes about the idea of Carlos coming to town. Raising the specter of the infamous Carlos is "a little shopworn," he chuckles. "But if Carlos comes to town he's a pretty fascinating character, so maybe we'll put him at the mansion."

Carlos wasn't exactly who the Libyans had in mind when they contracted with Georgetown Design Group to renovate the mansion.

"Before the American government told the Libyan diplomats here to

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leave last May, the Libyans were hoping it would be the ambassador's residence," says Shadyac.

Shadyac says he finds it ludicrous that Israeli intelligence is apparently furnishing the information so the United States can discredit Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi. He says the United States hopes Qaddafi won't become chairman of the Organization of African Unity, "but just the opposite is happening."

What Shadyac doesn't find ludicrous is how the sealed and locked former Libyan People's Bureau on 21st Street NW was "violated" this fall while it was under the "care, custody and control" of the U.S. government.

"Allegedly, the landlord broke into the place and violated the sanctity of the premises, and allegedly an inventory was taken," says Shadyac, who filed a letter of protest with the State Department. "The U.S. said it was very sorry and regretted the incident and has taken back control. Now the State Department wants me, as trustee of the Libyan government, to take over the premises and remove all the property."

Associate Chief of Protocol Richard Gookin says when the Libyans' lease ran out in mid-October, the building's owner, the Washington Circle Theater Corp., sent a letter to the secretary of state stating the need to enter the building and winterize it.

"The letter arrived late one Friday afternoon, but because it was addressed to the secretary of state, no one saw it until early in the following week," says Gookin. "In it, they said they wanted to enter the building the next morning, which they did."

It was Shadyac, though, who called it to the State Department's

attention when he noticed the front door standing open, though it had been sealed "ritualistically" with wax and the Libyan government seal last May.

Gookin says the building has since been resealed and the owner has agreed not to enter it without State Department permission. He also says the State Department is trying to work out a solution between the Libyans and the owners, who want to repossess it.

Part of the difficulty is that the Libyans have no "protecting power," or foreign government representing their interests here, says Gookin. But Shadyac says the Americans refuse to accept the country the Libyans designated, the United Arab Emirates, creating a kind of diplomatic Catch 22.

"The Americans," says Shadyac, "are playing very hard ball."

If well-heeled friends of Barbara and George Bush hadn't come through with \$187,000 in donations to redecorate the Vice President's House, the vice president was going to get stuck with the tab, says his wife.

They especially needed chairs, she told reporters invited in for a look at the results, which included new carpeting and upholstery. "So I just ordered as cheaply as possible." Two weeks later when a friend called to ask if she could help raise money to redo the house, Barbara Bush accepted, citing it as an example of what having "faith" can do.

"Otherwise," she said, chuckling, "it was all going to be charged to George Bush."

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Scratch Olivia de Havilland as the mysterious buyer of the Francis Biddle house in Georgetown that sold for \$800,000 at auction this fall. She seemed to fit one description of the anonymous buyer circulating around town — that she lived in France but was not French. Now from de Havilland, who in the past has considered settling here, comes the final word: She can't buy anything unless she first sells her house in Paris. And the way the wealthy social French are fleeing socialist France these days, there are plenty of those already on the market.

"You're where you deserve to be,"

on top of everything," said Nancy Thurmond, presenting packages to two of her and B.A. Bentsen's "favorite" Washington journalists during a coffee they gave at the Four Seasons Hotel.

"In case you all didn't know it, I'm an angel," said Betty Beale, peeking into her package to find a soft sculpture Christmas angel whose face was an embroidered caricature of Beale's (the needlework of public relations whiz Mary Pettus). "If you looked awful, if I didn't like the party or if there was hair in the soup," Beale continued, "I didn't mention it."

"I can't pretend to be quite as nice as Betty," said Ymelda Dixon, a colleague of Beale's on the now-defunct Washington Star. "In my book, I'm telling it not the way I wrote it, but the way it really was. Everybody in this room is excepted."

RADIO

Pop

Noon—WEEL-AM (1310) Lunchtime in the Country: the Best of Anne Murray.
12:45 p.m.—WAMU-FM (88.5) Play It Again, Ed: Ed Walker with swing and jazz music from the '30s and '40s.
3 p.m.—WPGC-FM (95.5) Top five countdown with host Bruce Kelly.
10 p.m.—WWDC-FM (101.1) Solid Rock Requests: Call 432-1101 till midnight.

Talk

6 a.m.—WHUR-FM (96.3) Morning Sound: News, music and interviews till 10 a.m.
11 a.m.—WAMU-FM (88.5) Kaleidoscope: Diane Rehm discusses "herpes" with guests Dr. Annamma Jacob, National Institutes of Health; Elizabeth Smolens, NOVA Women's Medical Center.
11 a.m.—WOL-AM (1450) Author Hugh Rawson talks about his book "Euphemisms & Other Doubletalk."

8 p.m.—WAMU-FM (88.5) Fred Fiske Show: Dr. John Kelly of the University of New Hampshire discusses whales.

12:05 a.m.—WTOP-AM (1500) Larry King Show: John A. Hoyt, president of the U.S. Humane Society, is guest.

Classics

10 a.m.—WETA-FM (90.9) Morning in Concert: Cathedral, Court and Country-side. Consort music of John Jenkins, performed by English Consort of Viols.

3 p.m.—WGMS (570 AM, 103.5 FM) The Renée Charney Show. Smetana: "The Bartered Bride Dances"; Walton: "Crown Imperial"; Saint-Saens: "My Heart at Thy Sweet Voice"; Tesserini: Sonata in D.

6:30 p.m.—WETA-FM (90.9) The Evening Program with Beth Hancock: Grieg: Holberg Suite, Op. 40; Svendsen: Quartet in A Minor, Op. 1; Nielsen: Flute Concerto.

8 p.m.—WETA-FM (90.9) Evening in Concert with French National Orchestra, Lorin Maazel, conductor; Margaret Price, soprano.

9 p.m.—WGMS (570 AM, 103.5 FM) Great Works in Music, with Paul Hume. Schubert: "Die Winterreise."

12:05 a.m.—WGMS (570 AM, 103.5 FM) After Hours. Beethoven's Mass in C.

Ann L. Trebbe