

# Roosevelt's Veto Credited With Banning Poison Gas

By **FREDERICK H. TREESH**  
United Press International

New York (UPI)—It is a widely held notion that, for humanitarian reasons, poison gas was not used in World War II—a sort of gentlemen's agreement on both sides.

But a high-ranking official of the wartime Office of Strategic Services (OSS) came forward this week with a surprising story that the American military command planned to saturate the Japanese island fortress of Iwo Jima with nerve gas, fired from Navy ships. Only a personal veto by President Franklin D. Roosevelt spared the Pacific island which cost 20,000 American casualties to take by conventional means, said Stanley P. Lovell, former director of research and development for the OSS.

Lovell also quoted Nazi Marshal Hermann Goering as saying at the time of his war crimes trial, that the allied invasion force at Normandy was spared a gas attack because the Germans feared the gas would disrupt their own horse-oriented supply system. Goering said the Nazis needed all available gasoline for their mechanized Panzer divisions and Air Force, so material on the ground was horse-drawn.

**Gas Viewed**  
"I tell you, you would have won the war years ago if you had used gas—not on our soldiers but on our transportation system," Goering was quoted as telling OSS Chief William J. (Wild Bill) Donovan.

These and other heretofore unpublished tales of the supersecret spy and sabotage agency were made known by Lovell in a new book, "Of Spies and Stratagems," published this week by Prentice-Hall. Lovell said he was pledged to secrecy for 20 years after he became the OSS' "Dr. Moriarty" (Sherlock Holmes' sinister adversary) in 1942.

One thing Lovell claims the OSS tried early in World War II was to neutralize Hitler by injecting female sex hormones into his Berchtesgaden vegetable garden. The Führer was suspected of being close to the male-female line and a heavy dose of hormones might have further unsettled him.

"Since he survived, I can only assume that the gardener took our money and threw the syringes and medications into the nearest thicket," said Lovell.

**Plot Approved**  
Lovell said the plot to use gas on Iwo Jima, the little known "Lethbridge Report," was approved by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Pacific Theater Naval commander, Adm. Chester W. Nimitz.

It was, Lovell said, a diabolical scheme to leak to the Japanese phoney radio messages about a newly invented "death ray," allow the Iwo Jima garrison to relay the report to Tokyo and then annihilate the defenders with gas. American Marines then could take the island without a shot being fired and, hopefully, the Japanese at home would be terror-struck by the enemy's ghastly death ray weapon which, in fact, never existed.

The plan was returned to the OSS marked "All prior endorsements denied—Frank-

lin D. Roosevelt, commander-in-chief," Lovell said.

"Admiral Nimitz probably would deny he ever approved that plan," Lovell told United Press International. "But not one word—so help me God—not one word in that book is not the truth!" Lovell now heads his own chemical firm in Watertown, Mass., working, among other things, on a way to develop cement that hardens more slowly and is more waterproof.

Perhaps as far out a plan as the OSS ever dreamt up was the plot to blind Hitler and Mussolini at a secret war

conference in northern Italy. A waiter at the meeting place was to drop into a flower vase a liquid that would, with water, vaporize into nitrogen-mustard gas—colorless, odorless but permanently blinding.

Unfortunately, the ever-alert Nazi security changed the meeting place at the last minute and the plot failed, Lovell wrote.

Thus Lovell admits, some of the OSS' most grandiose schemes failed. But he told also of devices and stratagems that did work—lumps of "coal" that exploded hundreds of

freight trains fireboxes, electric-eye detonators that derailed trains inside Italian mountain tunnels, flashless pistols and corset bone stiletos, oil additives which caused Nazi tanks to burst into flame, rifle-bullet booby-traps that protected American jungle patrols, and "Who? Me?" a smelly device which mortified Japanese officers with embarrassment at its artificial human odors.

The dedication of Lovell's book reads, in part: "To the men and women of OSS, working in solitary danger behind enemy lines, so many of

whom gave their lives for us, with no hope of recognition or reward . . ."

**Uncover Plot**  
They include C-12, a super agent who, Lovell recalls, personally uncovered a German plot to assassinate Roosevelt and Winston Churchill at the Tehran conference. And the men of detachment 101 who harassed the Japanese and killed them by the hundreds in the jungles of Burma.

And Jim the Penman, a convicted counterfeiter and forger, who worked for the OSS with the permission of the Treasury department.

But especially, the dedication was meant for people like Marguerite, a teen-age French girl refugee. Lovell told this story about her: She was a native of a French village, lying directly behind Omaha beach, the principal landing place in the invasion of Normandy. She was smuggled back to France with a suitcase of high explosives to place in a strategic telephone and telegraph exchange. The charge had a 30-minute time delay fuse but it didn't work. The communications center was destroyed on the eve of

Normandy, but the instant blast took the young girl's life.

**Without Peers**  
Perhaps Lovell's most vivid recollections of the OSS are about its leader, Gen. Donovan, the inspiring but reckless "Wild Bill" who, in reputation at least, may never have a peer.

Sipping bourbon and crunching peanuts in a cocktail lounge, Lovell portrayed Donovan this way: "He was a totally inspirational leader, although a totally unutilized person. He was shaped like a pear and

he was all gray—his eyes and his hair. He wore ill-fitting clothes.

"But, oh, my God, what a leader! He'd take over a group of people and they'd follow him through hell. He had charm, magnetism and humor."

Lovell, an affable, active and well proportioned man of 72, said the revelations of the OSS in his book and private conversations were "low echelon information."

For a real picture of the OSS, should you read between the lines and multiply by two or three, he was asked.

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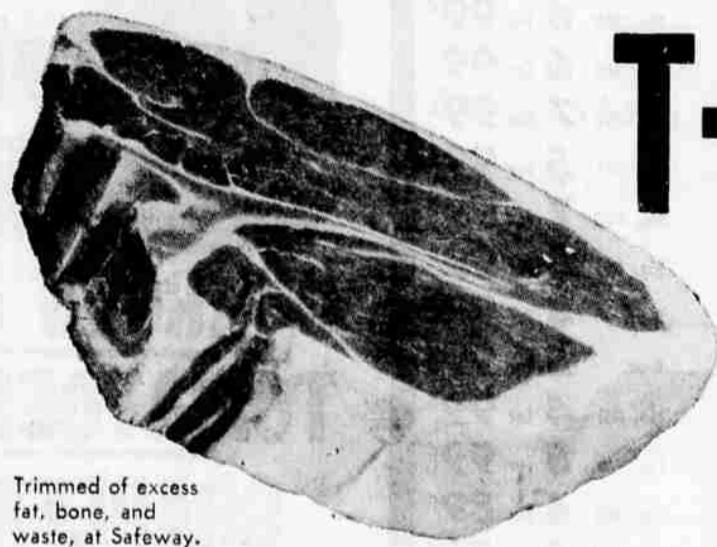
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# SAFEWAY

### Landing on Moon Said Focal Point

Los Angeles (UPI)—Why is the United States spending \$30 billion or so to put a man on the moon?

The question assumes that the lunar landing is the ultimate goal of space research. New Frontiers, publication of The Garrett corporation, says it is not, but a focal point on which to concentrate the whole space research effort.

The magazine says the real goal of the proposed lunar expedition is American's pre-eminence in space for reasons of security, prestige and other benefits. It says the major benefit is more data about the universe.

New Frontiers notes that for the hard-headed realist who wants to see a return on his tax dollar, the "35 five years of the space age already have demonstrated many ways in which space research can provide practical benefits. The most dramatic example is the communication satellite such as Telesat. Advances in this area mean sports fans most likely will be able to view live the next Olympic games from Japan. The student of current affairs also will be able to witness history-making events abroad as they happen.