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CONGRESS TARGETS CIA NAME-DROPPERS

Guardian Correspondent

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Sen. John Chafee (R-R.I.) was visibly angry and struggling to control himself. "I want to put him away," Chafee declared at a committee meeting in late July. "I want to nail him."

The target of this unusually blunt outburst was Louis Wolf, a coeditor of *CovertAction Information Bulletin*. He has enraged Chafee and almost every other lawmaker on Capitol Hill because he is the author of a regular column in the Washington-based *Bulletin* which lists the names of persons who allegedly work for the CIA. Under the guise of an all-out effort to "get Wolf," Congress is now rushing to pass a bill that civil libertarians regard as an assault on the First Amendment.

The legislation has already been approved by the intelligence committees in both the House and Senate. "We've been assured by the leadership that this bill will be acted on in this Congress," says Rep. Edward Boland (D-Mass.), chair of the House intelligence panel. "Despite the controversy over the First Amendment," adds the authoritative *Congressional Quarterly*, "both houses are expected to pass the legislation without major difficulty."

The key feature in the measure sets a 3-year jail term and/or \$15,000 maximum fine for a private citizen who exposes the identity of a covert U.S. intelligence agent. The penalty can be assessed, the bill states, even if strictly unclassified, publicly available sources were used in naming the operative. Not only employes and paid hands of the CIA are protected by the bill. It also

prohibits identification of FBI agents or informants working in the U.S. who are engaged in counterintelligence or foreign intelligence investigations.

On Aug. 26, members of the civil and constitutional rights subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee voted to weaken this provision. The subcommittee was reviewing the legislation because it creates a new criminal statute. While the panel's decision was hailed by opponents of the legislation, most expect the rule to be restored by the full Judiciary Committee when it meets next week.

Civil liberties groups point out that the legislation could be used to jail a reporter who reveals the name of a CIA agent during the course of his or her research on the activities of U.S. citizens in a country such as Chile. The bill could also have been used against journalists and publications that identified members of the Watergate break-in team as CIA employes. And, the watchdog organizations add, the "get Wolf" initiative poses a direct threat to any political group that exposes one of its members as an FBI informant or paid agitator.

'NAMING NAMES'

Legislation of this sort has been rattling around Congress ever since former CIA agent Philip Agee began "naming names" several years ago. Previous versions went nowhere, however, because the obvious damage they would wreck on the First Amendment seemed to many lawmakers to outweigh the advantages. But these misgivings were cast aside following two incidents in Jamaica last month.

Wolf held a press conference in Kingston at which he named 15 officials in the U.S. embassy there whom he said were CIA agents. The same 15 people had been so identified last year in *CovertAction Information Bulletin*, but Wolf said that he wanted to emphasize their presence because of indications that the CIA is engaged in a destabilization campaign against the elected, anti-imperialist government of Prime Minister Michael Manley. Shortly after the news conference, the house of the man identified by Wolf as CIA station chief in Jamaica was fired on by unknown persons. Armed guards outside the home of another official on Wolf's list were also shot at soon afterward. No one was injured.

Wolf says that he suspects the CIA was behind both attacks although he cannot prove it. He argues that the shootings may well have been stage-managed by the agency to create exactly the kind of hysterical climate on Capitol Hill that now prevails.

Rep. Boland, for example, calls Wolf's disclosures "a pernicious act that serves no useful purpose whatsoever." Every attempt in the intelligence committees to soften the bill somewhat was rejected, with members concerned about civil liberties reduced to prefacing their remarks with denunciations of Wolf and Agee.

Similarly, Sen. Birch Bayh offered an amendment to the legislation which would, he said, distinguish between Wolf and "normal" journalists. A deliberate attempt to "impair or impede" U.S. intelligence activities would have to be established under Bayh's amendment before someone could be prosecuted for naming a CIA or FBI agent. Publications like the *Washington Post* and *New York Times* would presumably be protected by such a provision while left-wing newspapers would clearly be

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