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Spooking the Namer

By Jeff Stein

It was during the craziest days of the early 1970s when the Movement had spun out of control and existed only on a single piston's worth of black comedy and third-rate street theatre. Vietnam vets taking over the Statue of Liberty and flying the flag upside down. Leslie Bacon bombing the men's room of the capitol. And then there were Ellen Ray and Bill Schaap, two crazy Americans way out there on the Pacific rim of the empire, in Okinawa, organizing workers at the big air base and helping GIs get out of going to Vietnam. And they had these kites . . . these kites to bring down B-52s, kites with tinfoil stringing from them that they'd fly right up there in front of these huge jets loaded with 10,000-pound bombs lofting off the runways of Okinawa on another run to the Mekong Valley. Bill and Ellen, standing there at the end of the runway with their kites, trying to lasso a goddamn B-52!

Ellen Ray is remembering all this 10 years later, in the bar of the National Press Club in Washington, four blocks from the White House. Bill Schaap, now her husband, fills in the details. And across the table, Louis Wolf takes it all in with his permanently etched visage of gloom, suffering this interview and wanting only to be back in the womb of the National Archives, from where, every month, he emerges with another list of CIA agents ready for the pages of *Cover Action Information Bulletin*.

Wolf, Schaap, and Ray—along with former CIA agent Philip Agee—are the people who name the names of CIA agents. Every other month, they publish their *Bulletin*, full of in-depth articles about CIA operations and techniques. But it is the little section near the back of the book

that drives the intelligence agencies up the wall. This is the section where they update their lists of CIA staffs around the world from Burundi to Bangkok. Along the way they've published two books, *Dirty Work: The CIA in Western Europe*, and *Dirty Work (II): The CIA in Africa*.

They are driving everybody up the wall. Everybody. No matter that they get the names from poring through old diplomatic lists in the archives—just move your finger down the list of the Biographic Register till you find the guy who came into the State Department in '58, spent three years as an "analyst" with the U.S. Army in Laos from '61 to '63, "temporary duty" at the Pentagon in 1965, on leave in "private business" for another couple years, and then back to the State Department for duty in Chile when Allende was overthrown—it's easy enough for a seven year old to figure out who the spooks are, but Wolf and Schaap and Ray are driving people crazy.

And it's not just the CIA that has been trying to put them out of business. Members of Congress are so angry they've taken the First Amendment by the neck and strangled it with a bill, likely to pass soon, that will make it a crime—three years in jail, \$10,000 fine—to print the names of CIA agents even if they've been gathered from public sources and printed before. The first people to go to jail will be Schaap, Ray, Wolf, and Agee, once one of the CIA's best agents in Latin America, now an apostate in Europe, lobbying his books like grenades from across the Atlantic.

They've been asking for it, it's said, and now they're going to get it. The moguls of the editorial rooms hate them too. The

well, direct. I mean, it's one thing to do your anti-imperialist trip putting out some nice little newsletter about, say, bank loans in Zaire. But that's not enough for Schaap, Wolf, and Ray. They go right down to Jamaica, hold a press conference, and rip the cover off 15 spooks in the U.S. embassy. Not five years after the government's been toppled, but right now, while the CIA's doing it.

The CIA has been gritting its teeth over the *Bulletin* (and its predecessor, *Counterspy*) for nearly a decade, trying unsuccessfully through a series of maneuvers to put it out of business and its editors in jail. But it wasn't until last July that serious clouds of repression long on the horizon gathered into a furious storm. Somebody shot up the house of one of the CIA agents in Jamaica.

Suddenly, the "Intelligence Identities Protection Act" leapt from the discard bin, where it had been since 1978, and raced through both sides of Capitol Hill as fast as a congressional pay raise. By last month, super-patriots like Long Island Democrat Jerome Ambro were screaming about a death penalty for those who have access to classified information and leak it. (Presumably, Ambro will construct an amendment exempting Zbigniew Brzezinski.)

"Will this get Agee?" one senator asked Judiciary Committee Chairman Ted Kennedy as the bill was ramrodded through markup in the smallest room on Capitol

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