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Journalists Damage Efforts To Rebuild CIA and FBI

An organization of so-called "professional" journalists has launched a last-ditch effort to defeat legislation supported by President Reagan that would protect the identities and the lives of our intelligence agents.

Members of the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ), which includes reporters for major newspapers and network news programs, gathered in Washington two weeks ago and made plans to sabotage legislation that would take Philip Agee's *Covert Action Information Bulletin* (CAIB) and *CounterSpy* out of the business of "naming names" of U.S. intelligence operatives.

The new issue of CAIB has just hit the newsstands, and its "naming names" column lists the names and locations of about 70 alleged U.S. intelligence agents around the world. Such exposure makes agents ineffective and vulnerable to terrorist attack.

In 1975, an American diplomat in Greece, Richard Welch, was murdered in cold blood by terrorists after being named as a CIA agent by *CounterSpy*. In 1980, an American diplomat in Jamaica, Richard Kinsman, had his home raked by gunfire after being named as a CIA agent by an editor of CAIB.

The agents' identities bill, as it is called, has already passed the House. But liberal senators such as Lowell Weicker (R.-Conn.) and Howard Metzenbaum (D.-Ohio) have bottled it up in the Senate, a tactic revealed in the current issue of CAIB as a "strategy" designed to enable "progressive people" to stop the legislation by seeking "to educate legislators, the public, and especially the press, to the dangerous ramifications of the bill."

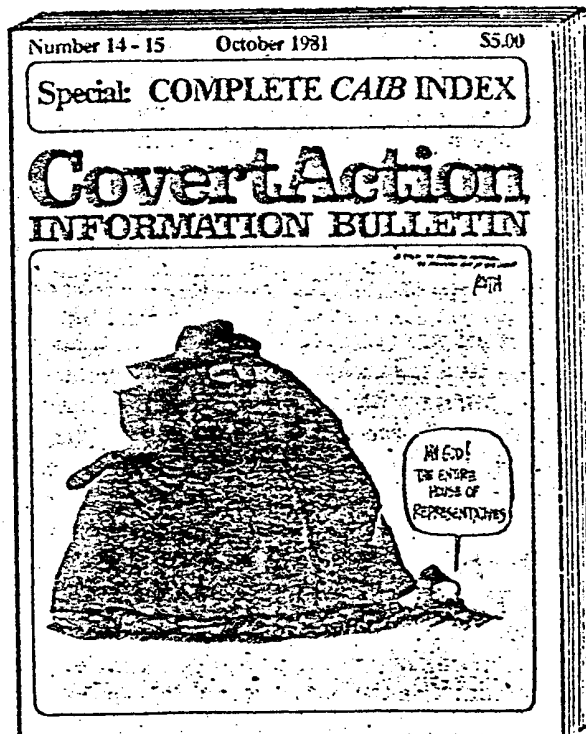
The SPJ has allowed itself to be "educated" on this issue. Even though the Supreme Court has ruled that Philip Agee's disclosures of intelligence operations and personnel "are clearly not protected by the Constitution," the SPJ has bought the line that any legislative attempt to outlaw "naming names" is unconstitutional.

But it realizes that some version of the law will pass. It is therefore lobbying the Senate into adopt-

ing what SPJ President least constitutionally supported version d Judiciary Committee-secutors to prove th *CounterSpy* had a spec pede" intelligence operations when they named names.

That version, however, as Justice Department official Richard Willard points out, might enable publications such as the CAIB to evade the law by claiming that their real intention is just to stimulate public debate on intelligence issues.

An enforceable bill, according to intelligence experts, must contain tougher language which enables prosecutors to press a case when the editors of CAIB or *CounterSpy* had "reason to believe" their disclosures would impede intelligence operations. This is the language that is in the House version of the bill, thanks to an amendment offered by Rep. John Ashbrook (R.-Ohio), who has been denounced by the CAIB as "one of the most reactionary congressmen in the country." The "reason to believe" language was actually taken out of the original bill introduced in the Senate by Sen. John Chafee (R.-R.I.). The specific intent provision was



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