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HUMAN EVENTS
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Liberals Block Legislation

Will Senate Act to Protect U.S. Agents?

CounterSpy, Philip Agee's first vehicle for undermining U.S. security by exposing the identities of its secret intelligence agents—its eyes and ears and "first line of defense"—published its first issue in March 1973. Its blatant subversion received worldwide publicity in December 1975 when one of those it had exposed, Richard Welch, CIA station chief in Athens, was murdered by terrorists.

There was a brief hiatus in these enemy-serving exposures when *CounterSpy* temporarily ceased publication in late 1976 before being succeeded by Agee's next instrument, *Covert Action Information Bulletin (CAIB)*, launched at the anti-CIA, Soviet-controlled 11th World Youth Festival in Castro's Havana in the summer of 1978 (in December 1978, *CounterSpy* began publishing again under new management).

The *CAIB-CounterSpy* campaign was supplemented by three Agee books—his 1975 *Inside the Company: CIA Diary*, which listed over 400 individuals and groups he claimed were CIA agents, fronts and covers (and was translated—probably with KGB help—into at least 16 languages); the 1978 *Dirty Work: The CIA in Western Europe*, with its list of over 800 alleged CIA agents and agencies, and his 1981 *Dirty Work 2: The CIA in Africa*, with its 238-page CIA "Who's Who."

Agee continues his "dirty work." Just last October, he appeared in Managua, Nicaragua, charged the U.S. Embassy was harboring CIA personnel disguised as diplomats, and urged a mob near the embassy to "meet violence with violence" and "Take the place over or burn it to the ground," according to the *London Times* (the U.S. press, strangely, did not report this incident). The excited crowd then "burned effigies of Uncle Sam and fiercely denounced President Reagan and the CIA."

Early in November, the pro-Sandinista paper, *Nuevo Diario*, listed 40 people it said had worked for the CIA in Nicaragua in recent years and published biographies of 13 claimed CIA personnel then attached to the embassy.

Some of those named received death threats. A number of them, as well as some other embassy personnel, fearful for the safety of their wives and children, sent them out of the country. U.S. officials linked the exposures to Agee's visit and accused the Nicaraguan government of "an act of provocation."

Earlier, in June 1980, the Supreme Court had found that Agee's activities, openly aimed at seeking "to have the CIA abolished" and "to drive them [CIA officers and agents] out of the countries where they are operating," presented "a serious danger to American officials abroad," endangered "the interests of countries other than the United States," presented "a serious danger to the national security" and "are clearly not protected by the Constitution."

CAIBers boast that they have exposed over 2,000 U.S. agents. The financial cost and vital intelligence lost by their identifications have been incalculable. Their usefulness lost where they were serving, the CIA has had to transfer exposed agents to new localities, find new covers for them or restrict them to other than clandestine assignments. In their new assignments, foreign language problems, unfamiliarity with the local culture, lack of contacts and similar factors have tremendously reduced their effectiveness. In addition, replacements for those exposed have had to face these same problems—when substitutes for them with the necessary basic qualifications can be found, trained and provided new cover. Aside from the millions in dollar costs, the results, as the Supreme Court found, "have prejudiced the ability of the United States to obtain intelligence."

Almost nine years have passed since *CounterSpy* began its exposures.

What has Congress done about this dangerous security-intelligence problem during all these years?

In 1976, immediately after Welch's murder, bills to criminalize the exposure of U.S. agents couldn't even get a hearing in a liberal-left-dominated Congress. As the exposures continued, the same was true in 1977, 1978 and 1979. Hearings were finally held in both houses and bills reported in 1980—but none were passed. More hearings and bills were reported in 1981—and finally, on September 23, the House considered an ineffective measure reported by its Intelligence Committee. Rep. John Ashbrook (R.-Ohio) succeeded in pushing through an amendment that greatly strengthened it and it passed the Democratic-controlled House by a 354-to-56 vote.

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