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 ARTICLE APPEARED
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WASHINGTON TIMES
 12 July 1985

Clerk only fourth CIA employee charged with spying

By John McCaslin
 THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The arrests of Sharon M. Scranage, the Central Intelligence Agency clerk, and her reported lover on espionage charges marked the fourth time the CIA has publicly charged an employee.

Intelligence sources said that the use of sexual relationships is a classic approach used by many secret services to acquire sensitive documents and information from otherwise competitive or hostile governments.

FBI agents this week were able to capture Michael Soussoudis, the Ghanaian who allegedly approached and persuaded Miss Scranage to divulge vital U.S. information.

A U.S. intelligence expert said the alleged charges represent "just the tip of the iceberg" concerning penetrations into the CIA.

Most such cases, the source said, if discovered, result in quiet dismissal. Rarely do details of the operation become public, for to do so often requires revealing sensitive intelligence information in court.

One of the agency's most famous cases was brought against David Henry Barnett, a former covert CIA agent in Indonesia. Barnett was charged in 1980 with selling the Soviets the identities of CIA agents in Indonesia and the identities of Indonesians cooperating with the CIA.

Barnett left the agency in 1970 and developed financial problems. His activities netted him \$93,000. He was sentenced to 18 years in prison after pleading guilty.

A former CIA clerk, William P.

Kampiles, was arrested and charged in 1978, with having sold a top-secret manual to the Soviets for \$3,000.

The publication for the U.S. KH-11 spy satellite was spirited out of CIA headquarters while Kampiles was employed as a clerk there. He was convicted and sentenced to 40 years in prison.

Karl F. Koecher, a former contract translator for the CIA, was arrested in New York City in 1984 on charges of supplying U.S. secrets to the Czechoslovakian intelligence service. He is still awaiting trial.

Ms. Scranage, 29, a CIA operations support assistant, was charged with conspiracy to commit espionage by supplying U.S. secrets to Michael Agbotui Soussoudis, 39, a citizen of Ghana and a relative of that African nation's head of state.

The information allegedly involved U.S. spy operations in Ghana during the time she was assigned to the CIA station in that country.

Mr. Soussoudis was arrested Wednesday in a Springfield hotel.

"In the past there have been cases of local love affairs between our employees and foreigners, but the CIA enforces a strict rule of not permitting staff personnel to marry foreign nationals," said John K. Greaney, a general counsel with the CIA until 1980.

Roy Godson, Washington director of the National Strategy Information Center and an intelligence expert, commenting on the latest case, said, "Instead of just focusing on Soviet-bloc personnel in other countries, U.S. counterintelligence should also be seeking to protect our activities" within those countries."

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