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Reporters, spies have close ties

Their 'affinity' breeds suspicion

By FRANK GREVE
Herald Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — While no evidence has been offered that U.S. News & World Report correspondent Nicholas Daniloff spied for the CIA in Moscow, it is not surprising that Soviet officials suspect American reporters of espionage.

Indeed, reporters and CIA agents historically have been so chummy that Joseph Fromm, then chief foreign editor for U.S. News, told a congressional committee in 1977 that "a foreign government could be forgiven for assuming that there is some kind of informal link."

Fromm's testimony came amid a series of embarrassing disclosures about the CIA's use of reporters as informants, conduits of disinformation, spies — and even spy masters. The disclosures produced reforms and a climate of mutual suspicion that shattered what Washington Post reporter Ward Just calls "the natural affinity between journalists and spies."

And yet, while reporters and CIA operatives are separated today by CIA regulations, they are not divorced. Though agency rules bar the actual hiring of accredited American journalists for covert missions, informal information-trading — what former CIA Director William Colby terms "mutual back-scratching" — still is encouraged.

"We'd be stupid to cut that off," Kathy Pherson, the CIA's media director, said last week. "Journalists have the same rights as any other American citizen."

In addition, CIA Director William Casey can declare exceptions to the reporter-hiring bar in "an emergency involving human lives or critical national interests." Former Director Stansfield Turner authorized three such exceptions — one involving Iran — between 1977 and 1980.

Editors 'naive'

Turner told a convention of newspaper editors in 1980 that they were "naive" to think any formal regulation could end alliances between reporters and the CIA. "I think a lot of correspondents are patriotic enough" to serve the CIA — perhaps without even informing their superiors, said Turner, adding he "would not hesitate" to approach them.

Many analysts believe Turner's remarks were intended to improve the cover available to CIA agents by forcing foreign counterintelligence agencies to include reporters as suspects.

Soviet officials hardly needed the encouragement. In the past 30 years, they have expelled 28 U.S. correspondents who, in that closed and suspicious society, must adopt the nosy and secretive habits of spies to do their jobs.

Last week, Daniloff said he may have triggered Soviet suspicions when he "worked energetically and probed deeply" to report on such subjects as Soviet military units in Afghanistan, nuclear waste dumps and the shooting down of Korean Airlines Flight 007.

Such topics involved "secret information," according to Foreign Ministry spokesman Gennadi Gerasimov.

Daniloff denied "any connection with any government agency" and Soviet allegations that he "acted on instructions" from two former U.S. Embassy diplomats identified by Soviet officials as CIA spies. But he did not address the question of whether the two men had been sources or acquaintances.

"It's a fair supposition that, in a community like Moscow, he might have made their acquaintance," ventured U.S. News senior editor James C. Kilpatrick. "Other former Moscow correspondents have told me they knew nearly everyone in the U.S. Embassy."

No special relationship

He added that the magazine's policy is "that our correspondents should have no special relationship

of any kind with any intelligence agency. It's a no-no." Kilpatrick acknowledged that the policy does not rule out CIA personnel as sources: "The operant word is special."

Intelligence sources say, however, that Moscow long has been considered too risky for "deep cover" CIA operations, including those that might involve a reporter. Significantly, although exposés during the late 1970s named dozens of reporters and news organizations that had cooperated with the CIA for pay or patriotism, no Moscow-based American correspondent ever has been linked publicly to the agency.

Much of what is known about reporter-spy relations comes from an extraordinary series of House and Senate Intelligence Committee hearings held in 1977, plus the CIA's published regulations and a Freedom of Information Act lawsuit settled in 1982.

Together these sources establish that, through the mid-'70s, hundreds of American reporters worked hand-in-glove with the CIA, and dozens were employed by the agency.

A few, like the late columnist Joseph Alsop, admitted volunteering their services: "I've done things for them when I thought they were the right thing to do," Alsop said in 1977. "I call it doing my duty as a citizen." Others, like New York Times columnist C.L. Sulzberger, acknowledged helpfulness on a "totally informal" basis.

ABC correspondent Sam Jaffe said he had helped the agency — but denied reports that he had been paid to do so. CBS boss William Paley recalled meeting with top CIA officials to discuss opening a CBS News bureau abroad as a cover for an agency operative — but said he could not recall whether the network had done so.

Scores of reporters acknowledge that they were debriefed by the CIA after visits to Communist countries.

Didn't name names

In 1982, the CIA described how it had used reporters, without naming names. The disclosure, in an affidavit, was part of the settlement of a Freedom of Information suit by Judith Miller, a former Progressive magazine reporter now working for The New York Times, that sought details of the agency's relationship with journalists.

"Some, perhaps a plurality, were simply sources of foreign intelligence; others provided cover or served as a funding mechanism" for agency activities, the affidavit said.

"Some provided nonattributable material for use by the CIA, collaborated in or worked on CIA-produced materials or were used for the placement of CIA-prepared material in the foreign media," it continued.

"Others assisted in nonmedia activities by spotting, assessing or recruiting potential sources or by handling other agents, and still others assisted by providing access to individuals of intelligence interest or by generating local support for U.S. policies and activities."

It concluded: "Finally, with respect to some of these individuals, the CIA simply provided informational assistance or requested assistance in suppressing a media item such as a news story."

The term "handling other agents" means directing and supporting spies, debriefing them, writing reports based on their findings and paying the agents, according to a guide published by the McLean, Va.-based Association of Former Intelligence Officers.

Besides using reporters, the CIA sometimes dispatched its own employees on intelligence missions abroad "who served as real or pretended journalists," according to testimony by Colby, the former CIA director, before the House Intelligence Committee in December 1977.

In a few cases, he said, American reporters were told by the CIA what to report in their dispatches.

Colby said photographers, drivers and other unaccredited personnel working for American news bureaus abroad — including some free-lance writers — were still considered fair game for agency employment (though more recent regulations require the prior consent of the news organization's top management).

Recruiting foreigners

Colby also successfully opposed restrictions on recruitment of foreign reporters or exploiting foreign news media. "I believe that we should not disarm ourselves in this contest in the hopes that the rest of the world will be gentler," he said.

These days, reporters and CIA officials recoil when asked to discuss journalist-spy ties. In Moscow, for example, U.S. briefers won't even talk about the CIA rule against hiring reporters, saying, "We just don't comment on intelligence matters."

Clearly, however, contacts still are frequent between CIA personnel and American journalists abroad. "I consider, and most foreign correspondents consider, intelligence people good sources of information," Fromm, now a contributing editor to U.S. News, said Friday.

"I was just in Japan and Korea, and a New York Times correspondent was with me. He asked me who the CIA station chief in Seoul was, figuring he was probably the best source of information. There's nothing illegitimate about it," Fromm added, even though, in Soviet eyes, such contact might make the reporter seem to be "an unpaid spy."

The somewhat different point of view of a CIA station chief was argued in an affidavit contained in the Miller lawsuit.

The unnamed chief said an agent would approach a correspondent "because he's the guy who knows where all the skeletons are, what's the real story on so-and-so. They make an appointment. They talk. The agency man has information to make him look good. If those meetings don't prove fruitful to the agency man, they will end. So it behooves the journalist to make them useful."

Fromm himself acknowledged the point in his December 1977 testimony before the House Intelligence Committee. "Obviously, the CIA's interest is to get information from a correspondent beyond that which he would report or have reported, because otherwise they could get it," he said.

4
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STATINTL

THE DANILOFF CASE

Spies and journalists often fish the same waters

J By Ethan Bronner
Globe Staff

Toward the end of the Vietnam War, just weeks before Saigon fell to the North Vietnamese, the Saigon station chief for the Central Intelligence Agency telephoned correspondents of major American news organizations several times a day.

Washington was breathing down his neck, and many of his operatives were gone. Had they heard anything new?

A Correspondents recall they gave the agent, Thomas Polgar, what they had, some reluctantly but others willingly. During the previous months and years, Polgar had been helpful to them. He had been, in fact, one of their best American sources, a man who, unlike certain Foreign Service officers, had no apparent ax to grind. In the Vietnamese jungle of political disinformation, he spoke, by and large, dispassionately.

Were those reporters working, albeit temporarily, for the CIA? Were they compromising themselves professionally?

"Any foreign correspondent who is overseas for any length of time who doesn't have some CIA contacts is not doing his job," said Keyes Beech, a retired, Pulitzer Prize-winning correspondent who spent three decades in Asia for the Chicago Daily News. "They are in the business of gathering information, and so are we. And you don't get it if you don't give."

The complex question of relations between correspondents and American intelligence officers has been raised anew by the Soviet charges of espionage against Nicholas Daniloff, Moscow correspondent for US News and World Report.

Soviet watchers, especially those who know Daniloff, are virtually unanimous in their belief that he has been framed by the KGB, angry over the arrest on spying charges of one of its officers in New York.

Yet there has been a rich history of relations between the CIA and American

correspondents, especially in the two decades immediately after World War II. Several dozen reporters are documented to have been on the CIA payroll, and scores of others to have provided occasional services, both journalistic and otherwise, free of charge.

Joseph Alsop, the syndicated columnist who is now retired, said he did several favors for the CIA, including taking a trip to Laos in 1952 and one to the Philippines in 1953. In both cases, the CIA felt his coverage would affect the political situation, and he complied. On other occasions, he said, he has done small non-journalistic favors, but declined to elaborate.

"I have the utmost contempt for any colleague who refuses to help out his government when asked to do so, as long he doesn't accept money," Alsop said. "Is it wicked to behave as a patriot nowadays?"

According to CIA files made public under the Freedom of Information Act several years ago, journalists acted as sources of foreign intelligence, provided cover, offered material for use by the CIA and collaborated in or worked on CIA-produced articles for placement in foreign newspapers. Others assessed or recruited potential sources or provided access to people in whom the CIA was interested.

A number of major news organizations, including The New York Times, Newsweek magazine, the Christian Science Monitor, CBS, ABC and the Associated Press, cooperated with the CIA in various ways at one time, according to published reports and interviews with those involved.

A "During my operational days, I used to run my people as journalists," said William Colby, CIA director from 1973 to 1976. "Most other countries, including democratic ones, have no compunction against using journalists for intelligence. During the 1950s and '60s, American journalists felt much freer to work with the CIA. It was only in the 1970s that people started getting hysterical about such contact. The CIA needed journalists to get at people and places we couldn't. One of our biggest problems is cover. I think it's time we all pulled our socks up and put this thing in perspective."

Daniel Schorr, longtime correspondent for CBS and now a commentator for Na-

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tional Public Radio in Washington, agreed that things have changed since the 1950s. He said the era of the Cold War, when it was widely perceived that national security was keenly threatened, produced a very particular mood.

"There was a whole different ethic in those days," he said. "When Khrushchev came to the UN, CBS gave permission to have a CIA guy in our booth so he could try to lip-read the private conversations."

Harrison Salisbury, who covered Moscow for The New York Times throughout the difficult Stalin years, said his confidential memos to his editors ended up in the hands of the CIA. He is convinced his editors gave them directly to the CIA, which, he said, maintained in those years a New York agent who was on close terms with New York Times editors.

During the 1970s, the Watergate scandal and the Vietnam War helped produce a new political culture. A generation of reporters brought up on an adversarial relationship with their government exposed and criticized the relationship between the CIA and the media.

Congressional hearings on the work of the CIA were held, and news organizations engaged in a period of self-searching. In 1977, investigative reporter Carl Bernstein wrote a landmark article for Rolling Stone magazine alleging that, according to CIA sources and files, more than 400 American journalists had secretly carried out assignments for the CIA over the previous 25 years.

Three months later, The New York Times produced a three-part series saying it had been able to identify 70 such cases. Among them numbered at least one of its own previous full-time and one past part-time reporter.

During that period, organizations such as the Overseas Press Club and the American Society of Newspaper Editors condemned the use of journalists by the CIA and called for a stop to it. Congress held hearings with the aim of legislating curbs on the CIA. A key witness during the hearings was Daniloff, who supported such legislation.

Moreover, the CIA itself was getting skittish about such close relations with a mistrustful press and decided to restrict contacts. It issued internal regulations forbidding itself from entering into any relationship with journalists accredited to a US news organization for the purpose of conducting intelligence activities.

Although there is every reason to believe the rules have been respected, there are two rarely-mentioned loopholes: Voluntary work by journalists is allowed, and restrictions on hiring can be overcome with the permission of the CIA director.

New analysts believe that relations between the CIA and the media will return to the level of the 1950s. David K. Shipler, who has served for The New York Times in Saigon, Moscow and Jerusalem, said he views CIA agents like anyone else: sources of information, but nothing more. He recently turned down a request that he lecture CIA agents on the Soviet Union.

"The last years have led to a clearer sense among both journalists and the CIA that there is little to be gained from a relationship that could be misunderstood," said Peter Osnos, former foreign correspondent for The Washington Post.

But some reporters and intelligence officers overseas continue to meet at cocktail parties and to play tennis together, and there is little way of predicting what could bring about another swing. The tenor of political debate has shifted to the right since the 1970s, and those who urge greater cooperation between the two communities feel encouraged.

Admiral Stansfield Turner, former CIA director, said: "The whole trend in our society against government, military and the intelligence field is changing. At Yale, 144 students applied for 18 slots in a seminar I'm giving. This at a campus where [former Defense Secretary Robert] McNamara wasn't allowed to speak. Things are changing."

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WASHINGTON TIMES
8 September 1986

CIA rules prohibit journalists on payroll

By Rita McWilliams
and Bill Gertz
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The Central Intelligence Agency continues to follow internal regulations established during the Carter administration that prohibit using U.S. reporters for intelligence activity, a CIA spokesman said yesterday.

The regulations, established during Stansfield Turner's reign as CIA chief, remain in effect and are closely followed, said CIA spokesman Sharon Foster.

The rules specifically bar the CIA from taking part in "any relationships with full-time or part-time journalists accredited by a U.S. news service, newspaper, periodical, radio or television network or station, for the purpose of conducting any intelligence activities."

The regulations were announced Dec. 2, 1977, after then-Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman Daniel Inouye, Hawaii Democrat, said he would propose legislation prohibiting the use of journalists for intelligence work.

At the time, Mr. Inouye said he had "come to the conclusion that no intelligence agency should be involved with working journalists."

The CIA, however, is permitted to use journalists working for foreign publications and broadcast outlets in its overseas intelligence gathering.

Moreover, the regulations say the CIA would not deny "the opportunity" for any person "to furnish information which may be useful to his or her government." Also, the CIA is permitted to have "unpaid relationships with journalists or other members of the U.S. news media organizations who voluntarily maintain contact for the purpose of providing information on matters of foreign in-

telligence or foreign counterintelligence to the U.S. government."

The issue of journalists and spying surfaced with the recent arrest of U.S. News and World Report Moscow correspondent Nicholas Daniloff, who was charged yesterday by the Soviets with espionage.

Mr. Daniloff, and officials of the magazine and the U.S. government, have said the Soviets set him up. Even President Reagan said in a personal letter to Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev that he would personally vouch for Mr. Daniloff's innocence.

In 1978, Mr. Daniloff testified before the Senate Intelligence Committee that Congress should create a formal prohibition against "paid, regular or contractual relations between intelligence agencies and journalists."

He said recruiting of reporters would damage the integrity of the press, according to Friday's editions of The New York Times.

House Intelligence Committee Chairman Lee Hamilton said: "I'm not aware of any policy with regard to the use or non-use of journalists — I don't know if there is any rule."

William Colby, who worked for many years as a CIA clandestine services operative before preceding Mr. Turner as CIA director, admitted using American journalists for intelligence work.

"I've handled journalists as my agents in foreign situations, but I never told them what to write when they wrote home to their American papers," Mr. Colby said. "They were very useful in terms of getting into things that officials can't get into in foreign countries."

Mr. Colby, however, dismissed the idea that Mr. Daniloff was engaged in espionage as a "total put-on by the Soviets" designed to bargain for the release of Gennady Zakharov, an alleged Soviet spy recently arrested in New York.

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FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

PROGRAM CBS Nightwatch STATION WUSA-TV
CBS Network

DATE September 8, 1986 2:00 A.M. CITY Washington, D.C.

SUBJECT Spies and Defectors

TERENCE SMITH: Spies and defectors. Usually their tales are relegated to the realm of fictional thrillers. Lately, though, more and more of these cases are making front-page news. Is it a new phase of the superpower cold war?

Joining us with their views are former CIA Director William Colby and Vladimir Sakharov. He's a former KGB agent who defected to the United States in 1971.

Gentlemen, welcome.

It's certainly in the news. And we are confronted now with a new pattern, or at least the latest version of a new pattern, in the case of Nicholas Daniloff, the U.S. News & World Report reporter who was seized in Moscow in what appears to us to be a clear effort to arrange a trade with a Soviet employee of the U.N. who was picked up in New York.

Do you accept it as that, Mr. Sakharov, from face value?

VLADIMIR SAKHAROV: Absolutely. The Soviets had to frame somebody. Daniloff was there. And they need need [unintelligible].

SMITH: But can it be that simple, Mr. Colby? I mean because if it is that simple, where does that lead?

COLBY: Well, I think the most interesting aspect is not the seizure of Daniloff but the fact that the KGB could force it. Apparently, one of the reasons was that the lawyer in the case in New York apparently did not bring to the attention of the judge the fact that our government would have agreed to paroling Mr.

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