

C.I.A. Will Keep More Than 25

Personnel Not Covered By Pledge Bush Made

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WASHINGTON, April 26—The Central Intelligence Agency plans to continue to employ as agents more than 25 journalists or other representatives of American news organizations, according to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Activities.

The committee disclosed today that those persons were not covered by a public pledge made in February by George Bush, the Director of Central Intelligence, that the agency would stop hiring correspondents "accredited" by American publications and other news organizations.

The disclosure was published in a section of the committee's report on foreign and military intelligence activities entitled "Covert Relationships with the United States Media."

The committee did not identify the journalists involved or their employers, but a staff member said privately that many of the individuals were in executive positions at American news organizations.

The panel recommended the enactment of a law precluding the agency's "operational use" of any person regularly involved in writing, editing or setting policy for United States news organizations.

It said it was "concerned that the use of American journalists and media organizations for clandestine operations [was] a threat to the integrity of the press."

The committee did not deny the value to this country of the dissemination of propaganda abroad, but it observed that in this time of sophisticated mass communications there was no way to prevent such propaganda from influencing American citizens at home. The agency is prohibited by its charter from engaging in domestic propaganda.

Journalist-Agents

Domestic Publication

The report cited many instances in which the efforts of C.I.A. agents acting abroad as journalists were printed in domestic publications.

The committee said it was aware other countries made use of "the international media" for propaganda purposes and that the United States public was not insulated from such efforts. The strongest defense against propaganda, the report said, is a "free and vigorous" press.

The most effective way to respond to the use of such propaganda abroad, the report added, is to permit American journalists to work "without jeopardizing their credibility through covert use of them."

The committee cited these examples, among others, of work by journalist agents.

¶A book about China written covertly by an agent was reviewed in The New York Times by another agent. The committee did not identify the book or the reviewer. A committee source said that the reviewer was a scholar and not a staff member of The Times.

¶The agency paid \$170,000 a year for publication of a magazine in South Vietnam in 1974 and 1975. The South Vietnamese Embassy distributed the magazine to Americans, including all members of Congress.

¶Two news services maintained by the C.I.A. in Europe were subscribed to by major American newspapers. According to the report, "The C.I.A. made a senior official at the major U. S. dailies aware that the C.I.A. controlled these two press services."

¶The "Penkovsky papers," a book purported to be based on the reports of an executed Soviet spy, was actually written by C.I.A. agents. It was published in the United States by Doubleday and Company in 1964

and became a commercial success. The report said that the publisher did not know of the agency's involvement.

In most cases, the report said, American news organizations were not aware that contributors were C.I.A. agents.

Fewer Books Published

The employment of news organizations and publishing houses by the Central Intelligence Agency appears to have been reduced in recent years. The committee noted, for instance, that "well over 1,000 books were produced, subsidized or sponsored by the C.I.A. before the end of 1967," that about one-quarter of them were written in English and that many of them were produced in the United States. Since then, the committee said, the agency has published only about 250 books, nearly all of them abroad and most of them in foreign languages.

In 1973, William E. Colby, then the Director of Central Intelligence, halted the secret use by the agency of five full-time journalists with major American publications.

In February, Mr. Bush said: "Effective immediately, the C.I.A. will not enter into any paid or contractual relationship with any full-time or part-time news correspondent accredited by any U.S. news service, newspaper, periodical, radio or television network or station."

Mr. Bush's statement was interpreted in many quarters as meaning the end of the agency's use of news personnel. However, the committee disclosed in its report that "of the approximately 50 U.S. journalists or personnel of U.S. media organizations who were employed by the C.I.A. or maintained some other covert relationship with it at the time of the announcement, fewer than one-half will be terminated under the new C.I.A. guidelines."

The pivotal word in Mr.

Bush's statement appears to have been "accredited." The committee said that the agency interpreted the word as applying to individuals who are "formally authorized by contract or issuance of press credentials to represent themselves as correspondents." Thus, executives who do not work as correspondents are apparently not covered by Mr. Bush's directive, nor are freelance writers who are not affiliated with a specific employer.

C.I.A. Withholds Names

The C.I.A. has refused to make public or even available to the Senate committee the names of affiliations of its agents working as journalists. The agency contends that to do so would destroy the effectiveness of active agents and damage the reputations and possibly endanger former agents.

The committee, however, described these categories of journalists who have worked as agents:

¶Staff members of general circulation American news organizations. The committee said that it had found only two individuals now in this category and that their relationship with the agency was being ended under Mr. Bush's February directive.

¶Staff members of limited-circulation American publications, such as trade journals or newsletters. The committee reported that it had found fewer than 10 persons now in this category, most of whom used their staff positions only to provide a "cover" for full-time C.I.A. work.

¶Freelance writers; part-time stringers for newspapers, magazines and news agencies; "propaganda writers," and employees of American publishing houses. The committee said this was the largest category. The panel reported that most of these individuals were bona fide writers or photographers who were paid by C.I.A. but that most of the news organizations to which they contributed were unaware of their C.I.A. relationships.

¶Journalists with whom the C.I.A. makes occasional, informal contact during which information is exchanged or verified.

The report cites several examples of books published by the agency and articles written by agency journalists, but it gives no examples of continuing journalistic activities by agents.