

CIA

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Continued from page 3

two stories together left readers with the certain impression that the man in question was a traitor.

A week later Laurence Stern of the *Washington Post* reported that Philip B.F. Agee, the agent in question, had not defected, was no traitor and was living in England writing a book on his CIA experiences.

The *Times* covered its mistake with a story by Seymour Hersh in which Agee asserted that the CIA in Latin America has, on occasion, killed troublesome agents of its own, contracted in foreign countries. An interview with Agee in the *Times* showed him to be deeply disillusioned with the Agency; his 12 years as an agent turned him into a leftist concerned about US imperialism.

Agee countered the CIA disinformation about him by contacting Stern of the *Post* on the advice of Victor Marchetti. "I know him," said Marchetti. "I came into contact with him some months ago. He wrote me a letter from England describing his situation. We have corresponded three or four times. When the false story on him came out in the *Times* I cabled Agee and urged him to speak with Laurence Stern. I want this guy to get a fair hearing. I want him to stand up and tell his story. I don't want the American public stuck with the CIA party line."

Agee has had enormous problems in the writing of his book, and Marchetti attributes them to the CIA. "Agee is separated from his wife, who is living in the United States with his two children" he said. "Agee felt that the CIA put the screws to his wife in order to keep his children from visiting him in England. This problem was resolved thanks to the American Civil Liberties Union, which Agee went to for aid."

Agee's personal quandary is compounded by difficulties with his British publisher, Penguin. "Agee has written a very long manuscript, about two to three hundred thousand words. He went to England because he knew that he could never publish his book uncensored in this country. He had my example before him. Penguin, however, kept wanting to cut out important items. They cut out an en-

tire critical portion of the book and refused to give any reason for doing so. Agee is suspicious of Penguin's motives although he is still hopeful that they will put together a respectable book from what he has written. He has had to veto some of their ideas of

JULY 23, 1974.

publishing it, which were extremely suspicious. Penguin wanted to publish the first edition in a foreign country, not England. This could well have been an Eastern European country, like Poland, say, and this would have easily tainted whatever Agee had written. He would have appeared to be what the CIA was implying — a defector, a traitor. The CIA is probably working with MI6 (British Intelligence) to screw up his book," Marchetti said.

"I see the same pattern in his case as in mine. He has chosen to do things differently. He has moved out of the country. The main object of the disinformation about him is the American people. The CIA is certainly not fooling the Soviets."

Proprietaries

The CIA, in establishing fronts for its operations, has become a business conglomerate. The fronts, known as proprietaries, are necessary to provide a reasonably legitimate reason for agents to travel overseas. They are all incorporated and headquartered in the United States. What may seem to be a steamship company may, in fact, be a CIA proprietary. "God knows how many there are," exclaimed Marchetti. Marks, who is devoting much of his time researching proprietaries, said, "There are a lot of them. The CIA has set up media companies. Among its proprietaries are private security firms, steamship companies, radio stations, publishing houses, magazines, research and development companies. I even came across a behavioral psychology research center that was a CIA cover. You can break through the screen by seeing the incorporation papers that they are legally obliged to file. Then,

if you check the boards of directors of the proprietaries you find that there is a high degree of interlocking. If you know who these people are, and the CIA is not that clever about who the directors are, the companies can be identified for what they are."

Marchetti added, "There are proprietaries we don't even know about, don't suspect and we will learn about them to great surprise to ourselves. But they are there."

One CIA agent, who headed what may very well have been a proprietary, the New Orleans Trade Center, was Clay Shaw, a man fingered by New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison as a key plotter in the conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy. Marchetti remembers that during the Garrison probe the Director of the CIA was very concerned that Shaw's affiliation might be exposed. The Director was obviously concerned when

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the Garrison investigation was going on. When I asked what the problem was I was told that Shaw had been a domestic contact agent. The Agency is afraid of any exposure, even an innocent one. Shaw may simply have been just an agent. I have no information linking the CIA to the Kennedy assassination. I do feel

Kissinger), told him that the cables that Hunt forged *did* exist at one time. According to Marchetti's account, Halperin said that he had seen the cables but that they disappeared after the Democrats left office. Hunt was engaged not so much in fakery as in historical reconstruction. There is no way

silently and clearly guiding events to favor American imperial interests. The CIA is neither so silent nor lucid.

"They're not so good. That's the funny thing about it. They are very fallible and inept at times," said Marks. He paused and added, "If you were a Chilean Marxist you wouldn't think that but the CIA is not that good at what they do."

Marchetti said, "They are becoming more sophisticated, however. Their covers are becoming deeper as things are exposed. The revelations about their clandestine activity is forcing them to become a truly clandestine organization."

"One can't minimize the danger to us and American society they pose," Marks said. "It's much more complex than people think. They are both repressive and inept."

"You mean impressive and inept," interjected Marchetti. "Sometimes they can be very good and sometimes they are very bad. You almost have to go on a case-by-case basis. They do have one thing going for them — they are an established bureaucracy. They survive. They have an injunction against me, a precedent. They are trying to get a new law, an equivalent to an official secrets act. We may be strangling Frankenstein's baby and wind up with Dracula."

Marchetti glanced at his watch. "I'm late for an appointment," he said to himself, and sprinted away from the table.

Marks and I were left alone. He confided to me, chuckling, that in the negotiations between the CIA lawyers and the ACLU lawyers over the manuscript of the book, both agreed that the National Caucus of Labor Committees is an obnoxious bunch of squirts. He doesn't believe that the NCLC (or the SLA) is CIA. "Just a pain in the ass," he said.

Marks has recently become a Washington editor of *MORE*, the journalism magazine. He is a contemporary journalist, part of the post-Watergate press operating like an intelligence agent for the public. "When you expose something that's hidden its cover is blown. Investigative reporting on the CIA is very fruitful. It stops some of their practices. You can't get at the root of the generic problem but you sure can get at specifics. Marks's statement explains exactly why the CIA is relentlessly pursuing its disaffected agents with covert pressure and court orders. Several former intelligence agents are not about to halt the imperialist juggernaut but their potential for educating Americans about clandestine action taken in the national name is inestimable.



E. Howard Hunt: Reconstructing History?

that the investigation into the JFK assassination ought to be reopened, though. There are many unanswered questions. The problem with the Agency is that it employs so many different people for so many different reasons."

The Plumbers

In January, 1972, Marchetti noticed that several top level CIA people were making their way periodically to the White House. He met with Bob Smith of the *New York Times* and registered his apprehension. Smith investigated and reported that an office to stop national security leaks had been set up, headed by David Young. This was, of course, the Plumbers, but it was nearly a year after the *Times* story appeared that their cover was blown. Marchetti's initial instinct was proved to have been sound.

One of the "national security" problems involved Plumber E. Howard Hunt's attempt to forge cables alleging that President Kennedy ordered the assassination of South Vietnamese President Diem. Marchetti claims that Morton Halperin, a former member of the National Security Council (bugged on the order of, and now suing, Henry

of finally proving this charge, since the original cables, if they ever existed, have vanished.

CIA In Boston

The CIA maintains a center in Cambridge for debriefing pliant traveling professors and businessmen. But the most important CIA activity in this area, according to John Marks, is the recruitment of foreign students as agents. "There is a contact agent on every major university campus. He recruits foreign students who may rise to positions of power in their own countries," said Marks.

Marchetti said, "You never know when a foreign student from Harvard is going to wind up being a cabinet minister. The odds are in favor of having some high foreign officials as long-time CIA agents."

Repressive and Inept

Marchetti and Marks, two insiders from the intelligence netherworld, do not invest the CIA with the omnipotence that many cursory critics attribute to it. Having lived in the concentric rings of the spy bureaucracies for years, they are able to discern its structure and its weaknesses. The CIA has a palpable familiarity to them; it is not seen as an almost mythological force,