

11 CIA Agents Passed Off as 'Journalists'

15 Companies
Said Involved

1/23/75
By Walter Pincus
Washington Post Staff Writer

The Central Intelligence Agency had 11 full-time clandestine agents working overseas last year posing as journalists for American and foreign news organizations, according to the draft report of the House intelligence committee.

The report says 15 television, radio, newspaper and magazine companies cooperated with the agency in arrangements whereby the CIA agents "wrote nothing at all," although five of them were supposed to be representing organizations of "major general news impact."

The committee report does not list the news organizations involved.

In the introduction to a five-page section entitled "Manipulation of the Media," the report says "the free flow of information, vital to a responsible and credible press, has been threatened as a result of CIA's use of the world media for cover and for clandestine information-gathering."

The committee report also deals with a second CIA-journalist relationship—the payment of reporters who write as free-lancers or stringers for American news organizations. In this case, however, the organization has no knowledge of the journalists' agency ties.

The committee report says "Publishers have been unable, despite strenuous effort, to learn from the

agency which, if any, of their employees have had a clandestine intelligence function."

Some paid CIA informers, the report said, "move from one bona fide press position to another without ever making employers aware of their past or present CIA status."

These contrast to the 11 full-time agents whose journalist employers knew them to be agents.

The part-time journalists, the report says, "are often

See CIA, A10, Col.1

CIA Used 11 Agents In 'Journalist' Role

CIA, From A1

directed to insert agency-composed 'news' articles into foreign publications and wire services."

Although, according to the report, "CIA does not intentionally propagandize in this country, CIA insensitivity to the possibility of its adulterating news digested by Americans is indicated by its frequent manipulation of Reuter wire service dispatches—which regularly appear in U.S. media."

Reuter is a British international news service whose dispatches are carried in many American newspapers, including The Washington Post.

A spokesman for Reuter in New York said yesterday that there would be no comment on the committee's allegation until Reuter officials have "had time to study it."

The committee report noted that agency employment of American journalists and use of U.S.-controlled news organizations as cover for CIA "has been tightened somewhat" since 1973, when regulations were changed to require Washington approval for any new arrangements.

The committee pointed out, however, that "foreign

nationals" in the journalistic field still can be used without getting Washington approval.

CIA Director William E. Colby, according to the report, said reforms had "reduced risks to an acceptable level" in the journalistic field and that the program had to continue because of the "need for reliable information and the increasing reluctance of private firms and the government to provide cover"

In another development, Sam Jaffe, a former reporter for CBS and ABC, disclosed that he had been in regular contact with the FBI beginning in the mid-1950s, when he was covering the United Nations in New York.

Jaffe said yesterday that because he was often in touch with Russians, he regularly reported those contacts to the FBI "to protect my backside."

At one time, according to Jaffe, FBI agents asked him to undertake a project suggested by a Soviet official that involved handling some visiting Soviet journalists. Jaffe said he refused.

Jaffe said he received no money from the FBI.