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PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

Kup's Show

WBKB-TV

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Chicago

Moderator: Irv Kupcinet. Guests: Louis Lomax, "Thailand: The War That Is; The War That Will Be". Tom Ross, Sun Times Reporter and, "Espionage Establishment." William Rusher, publisher of the "National Review".

IRV KUPCINET: Tom, you and your co-author, Mr. Weiss, of "The Espionage Establishment", now being serialized in the Saturday Evening Post, caused quite a flap around this country and particularly in England. You revealed the identity of their two top Secret Agents. Did you have any compunction about breaking this tradition of keeping the names secret?

TOM ROSS: Frankly, no compunction at all. In a sense these were -- this was a secret that was no secret at all. It's really sort of a superstition within the British Governmental Class System. The identities of the head of MI-5 and MI-6 are known to every major intelligence establishment in the world...

KUP: Including the Russians?

ROSS: Including the Russians. Recently we've had a celebrated case of -- in which the British Press has had a field day with the fact that Ken Philbey, a very high ranking member of MI-6 was in fact a Soviet Agent for close to 30 years...

KUP: A double agent.

ROSS: It's inconceivable that when Philbey arrived in Moscow that the head of the KGB didn't ask him who was the head of MI-6.

(LAUGHTER)

ROSS: This is a convention which the British have found useful and which frankly a great number of people within the British Government and within the British Press have felt becoming increasingly an anachronistic. Particularly in a time

when it's -- when many people feel it's necessary to have a figure of responsibility in Espionage cases.

KUP: Or in intelligence situations.

ROSS: Well, the heads of MI-5 and MI-6 were anonymous. It was very easy for the British Government to dispose of any responsibility by in a sense pretending that no one existed to whom the responsibility could be placed.

(VOICES OVERLAP)

KUP: They went to a great deal of effort to keep these names secret, though, didn't they?

ROSS: Yes.

LOUIS LOMAX: This is probably one of the cases where best kept secrets are those not worth keeping. The only way to make something valuable is to refuse to sell it, and, in this respect, I think this business of having an anonymous head also gets across the idea that the person is involved in the system. That this is an individual who has use and value and not to reveal it -- it's interchangeable.

KUP: In your research on the British Intelligence System. I wonder if this has come up in your thinking? There seems to be in the defection of Philbey and a whole flock of others a thread of homosexuality running through these defectors. Why would the British Secret Service permit homosexuals -- accept them, when we make such a great effort to eliminate them from any sensitive positions?

LOMAX: I should suspect Dr. De Bono would have a better social perspective on this. It has been traditionally a fact that in England such aberrations as homosexuality have been viewed with a great deal more tolerance than they have been...

KUP: I agree, but when you're in a sensitive position it becomes a different measuring stick.

LOMAX: Once again it's sort of the establishment class sense. For example, in the case of Philbey, who was not a homosexual, and with Burgess and Mc Clain, who were -- in the case of all these gentlemen, they were men of good family, good background, proper schools, proper universities..

KUP: And proper sex.

LOMAX: And proper sex.

(VOICES OVERLAP)

ROSS: Within this context, within this class structure -- the governing concept of England for so long, this sufficient guarantee of their probity, sufficient guarantee of their security, that they have been properly raised and that they come

from the right background;..

KUP: There we make a very definite distinction. We think homosexuals are easy prey to blackmail. Apparently this has been proven by the British System...

ROSS: The question is whether they were easy prey because they were homosexuals or whether they were easy prey actually without taking that factor into account at all. Possibly within a kind of society which is tolerant of homosexuality, the fact that one would be exposed to the homosexual would be a fear, so therefore a man couldn't be blackmailed because of it.

In our society, homosexuality is such a loathsome concept that anyone in a Security situation would be terribly vulnerable to blackmail for fear that he would be exposed and his family etcetera...

LOMAX: Getting back to the ordinance of the establishment thing. Initially, this has outworn its usefulness, if a fellow belongs to the same club, same stripes in his tie, and same school, but in a way it's an early stage of a credit card system.

Here it's a fellow that's got a credit card. I remember trying to hire a car in New York. And I turned out and the chap said fine, and he thought I was nuts (?), I was going to pay cash, he said, my goodness, I can't let you have the car.

(LAUGHTER)

And it's the same thing. You've got the credit card and as in all credit card systems, sooner or later, this starts going down and you've got to expect your losses. You run up so much percent of bad debts and overused -- wrong people. And it in reactive positions, well then, the single wrong user can be very harmful. But in other positions like stock market alloys or, for instance, insurance in London, the whole system is based on this.

If the fellow acts in a way consistent with his credit card, then you're safe, and for instance, contracts over the telephone and this sort of thing are very valid which is why there is so much more mobility in the (WORD UNCLEAR) financially than there is anywhere else in the world.

And we have a case quite recently where a stock -- stock market firm went bankrupt because they insisted on honoring a contract made over a phone with someone who was that broke. And they said, we've accepted this contract and we've got -- rather than break this code. This is part of the credit card

system. And this case points out the fact that there are limitations of the system and certainly in certain areas it is quite outdated. But in itself it's not an entirely bad system.

KUP: Let me ask a couple of quick questions about that. The British have a reputation of being masters of this particular field. How would you rate them after you made your study of the C.I.A., as you did in your previous book, and now the Russian system and the British system and the Red Chinese system, how do you rate these intelligence systems?

ROSS: Well, it's somewhat unfair to rate the British system in the context of -- particularly of the great powers of the United States and the Soviet Union, because the British are no longer, even by their own self conception, a great power. Therefore, the uses - their needs for intelligence are different from ours. I think it's fair to say that the British retain, despite the many security problems which they've had in the last ten years, they still retain a reputation amongst intelligence professionals as being perhaps the best small system in the world.

The Soviet System is terribly strong and the uses of assassination, mayhem, and they're also terribly clever at espionage in terms of the collection of minute details within another society. The American system tends to be weak on agents, weak on political operations and terribly strong in terms of technical intelligence - the use of earth satellites. And also in analysis - unencumbered by ideology, a tendency to develop a sound report for the leaders of the government.

KUP: The F.B.I. is known as a Domestic Agency. I guess there's no doubt in your mind that the F.B.I. plays a role overseas (WORDS UNCLEAR) intelligence system?

ROSS: Yes, well, the F.B.I. has representatives in most major capitols...

KUP: Not as F.B.I. men?

ROSS: Not as F.B.I. men; they're generally under Diplomatic cover. But their role is limited in international affairs. It's generally a liaison with the police and security organizations of other countries for the interchange of information on ...

KUP: On the Communist infiltration...

ROSS: Or narcotics and other things of that sort.

WILLIAM RUSHER: This is what they're doing in Thailand. The bulk of the Thai Counter (?) Agency Corps is under the training of ex-F.B.I. men, plus the Green Beret. Both

let's come back to this other issue that we were talking about before. This business about homosexuality being embarrassing only a society that condemns this - and I think this is one of the things the American Society is going to have to come to grips with because apparently our homosexual population is increasing. I've become aware of it because they give out on my home television program in Los Angeles, and I think there's going to be a big move to sort of take a new look at homosexuality.

But I wanted to make this comment that I'm sure that most of you informed people already know. We're on the verge now, by the time this program is seen, it may well have happened. We're on the verge of a major scandal, right here in this country involving one of the leading contenders for the Presidency nomination, on this very point. That in the past ten days, two of his top advisors are quite "queer" shall we say, and he's bounced them. But it's just a question of hours before the major story's going to break, and I'll say this to make this point. I think again it's a part of the modes of our society -- that a man whose candidacy for presidency of the United States -- he has a lot of advisors...

(VOICES OVERLAP - LAUGHTER)

He has a lot of men whom he hires for specific reasons. And it turns out that their private lives are not consistent with the public morality, therefore, he is smeared. And I think this is part of the modes of our society.

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