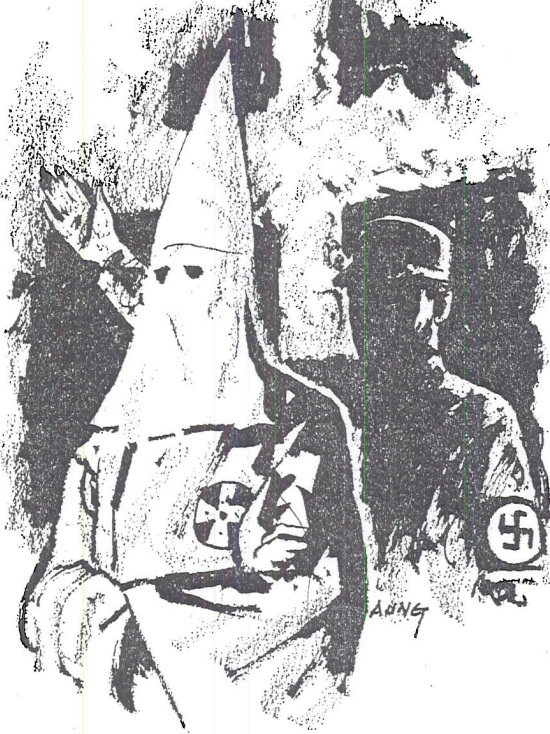


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A hated spy's strange story

By John Hilferty
Knight News Service

READING, Pa. — Ask people around here who Roy Frankhouser is and they will tell you he is a racist, an anti-semiter, a Nazi, a Klansman and a Minuteman.

They'll also tell you he's the most hated man in town — perhaps in the whole state.

But what people do not know is perhaps the most intriguing thing of all about Roy Frankhouser — that while parading before the public in jackboots and swastikas, he was living a secret life until recently as an agent of the U.S. government.

As an informant, Frankhouser fed the government a variety of information on illegal trafficking in guns and explosives by extremist groups. He also went on several

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trips to Canada — thereby becoming, briefly, an international agent of the U.S. government — in an attempt to thwart Arab extremists.

The Canadian assignment in which Frankhouser, an acknowledged anti-Semite since childhood, was sent off to Toronto to head off a suspected terrorist plot against American Jews — was approved in the White House itself, by the National Security Council.

In his home town, Frankhouser has long been a familiar figure. Some Reading residents recall that after classes at Northwest Junior High School he would go knocking on doors of World War II veterans, bowing politely and asking if they had any old Nazi flags, helmets, swastikas or Iron Crosses; they wished to part with.

Now, at 35, he is a thoroughly scarred veteran of his unpopular cause. He has been arrested more than 60 times.

He also has suffered a number of beatings. A decade ago his left eye was kicked out in a fight outside Reading's Old Court Tavern.

Frankhouser became nationally known through several incidents. In 1965, he appeared before the House Un-American Activities Committee and invoked the Fifth Amendment 33 times when questioned about the Ku Klux Klan.

The same year, a fellow Klansman, Daniel Burros shot and killed himself in Frankhouser's small Reading house after the New York Times reported that Burros, a virulent anti-Semite, actually was half-Jewish.

Frankhouser also has received publicity as national intelligence chief for the extremist Minutemen and as a long-time organizer for the National States Rights Party.

He was recruited as a government agent in 1972, two years after the government sent a Treasury Department agent to set up an office in Reading as a result of a series of bombings of synagogues and the Jewish Community Center there.

The first permanent agent was Edward Slamon, a native of Southwest Philadelphia and graduate of St. Joseph's College with 20 years' experience as a special agent for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF).

In May, 1970, Frankhouser, then Grand Klokard (speaker) of the Pennsylvania United Klans of America, showed up at the fire-arms bureau office, ostensibly to ask Slamon if a rifle he was carrying was of legal length.

"I think Frankhouser just wanted to take a look at the new boy in town," Slamon recalled. At the time,

During the next few months, Frankhouser and Slamon often ran into each

other in Jimmie Kramer's Peanut Bar, a downtown Reading tavern near Frankhouser's home.

The smooth-talking Frankhouser began hinting to Slamon that he could help uncover an active traffic in stolen weapons. Finally, on Sept. 22, 1972, in a ride with Slamon in a government car through the Pennsylvania Dutch farming country, he agreed to become a government informant.

"I told him at the time that our primary interests were the militant groups that were very active—the black militants, the JDL (Jewish Defense League), the IRA (Irish Republican Army), the Black September," Slamon said. "Roy told me that he had connections in almost every group."

Although none of those organizations seemed particularly close to Frankhouser's various causes, there was one — the Black September — whose anti-Jewish activities could appeal to the American ultra-right.

In October 1972, according to Slamon's testimony, Frankhouser told Slamon that he had "made contact with some members of the Black September movement," which had a headquarters in Toronto.

Slamon got approval for a mission from higher authorities, including the National Security Council and John Caulfield, then assistant director of enforcement for ATF.

Caulfield, a former New York City policeman served the Nixon Administration at various times under John Ehrlichman, Charles Colson and John Dean. He resigned in the spring of 1973 when it was disclosed he had tried to persuade Watergate burglar James McCord to remain silent by offering him clemency.

Slamon has testified in a closed hearing in federal court in Philadelphia that "even the White House has given the go-ahead on this, because of the nature of the investigation."

So Roy Frankhouser, Nazi and Klansman, was sent to Canada as an agent of the U.S. government primarily to penetrate the Black September group.

On the surface, his mission was to address Klan rallies in Detroit and attend meetings of the Western Guard, a right-wing extremist group in Canada.

Earlier he had reported to the firearms bureau that Black September was interested in buying automatic weapons and explosives in order "to kidnap and/or assassinate Jewish leaders in the eastern U.S.," according to Slamon's testimony.

Slamon said Frankhouser's last known contact with his Canadian sources was a telephone call on Jan. 17, 1973. The conversation was taped and is in the government's possession.

The Canadian mission finally collapsed early in 1973 when Slamon told Frankhouser he had orders from Washington to turn all information over to Canadian police conducting their own investigation of Black September. When asked to cooperate with the Canadians, Frankhouser's response was a blunt "no thanks."

Frankhouser also complained of being underpaid.

There may well have been disillusionment on the government's part, too. Slamon

has concluded that the mission accomplished little and that Frankhouser never actually penetrated Black September. There has never been Toronto-based terrorism against American Zionists, as was feared.

In September 1973, Frank-

houser was implicated in a large dynamite theft. The government contends he was involved not as an informant but as a participant.

Frankhouser was arrested in the dynamite case on Feb. 21, 1974. It was charged that Frankhouser "did aid,

abet, counsel, induce and procure a commission" in the selling of stolen dynamite. He also was indicted on a charge of receiving, storing and transporting dynamite.

Frankhouser maintains he is innocent and that he was

involved only as a government agent.

Government officials have refused to elaborate on the written record. The case itself is now scheduled for trial on Sept. 16, with Frankhouser facing a possible sentence of up to 51 years.