

Britain to Deport Anti-CIA Author

London

Home Security Merlyn Rees told Parliament yesterday the government will reject appeals and carry out its decision to deport former CIA agent Philip Agee and journalist Mark Hosenball, both Americans.

Angry members of Parliament from Rees' own Labor party cried "Shame, shame," as the home secretary made his announcement. One shouted, "The CIA have demanded this."

But Rees replied: "There has never been representation from the American government or from any American agency."

Deportation of the Americans is believed to be almost unprecedented. Britain is traditionally tolerant of varying political views and a cradle of free speech.

Lawyers for Hosenball, 25, a reporter for the London Evening Standard, prepared an appeal to the High Court.

Agee, 41, who served for nine years as an operative the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency was on a lecture tour and not immediately available for comment. He is the author of an anti-CIA book called, "CIA Diary," which named a number of undercover CIA agents, and is working on a second book.

Both men appealed to a special tribunal after being notified last November 16 that they were to be deported on security grounds.

Details of the reason for expulsion were never published. The Home Office deportation order said simply that Agee "had maintained regular contacts harmful to the security of the United Kingdom with foreign intelligence officers" and that Hosenball "sought to obtain and has obtained for publication information harmful to the security of the United Kingdom."

Members of Parliament repeated earlier demands that the charges against the men be specified, but Rees said: "That can't be brought out without risking the lives of people who work for the state."

He said that after considering the evidence of the three-man appeals tribunal convened last month "I have reached the clear conclusion that in both cases my original decision must stand. I have the law to carry out, the law that Parliament passed. I believe I have done the right thing."

The deportation orders come under the 1971 Immigration Act which covers national security.

Agee and Hosenball have until March 4 to state the country to which they will be traveling, and must report to the police each week in the interim.

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