Ex-CIA Agent Spotted by Pell

Journal-Bulletin Washington Bureau

Washington — The presence of a former Central Intelligence Agency operative on the staff of Action, the federal agency that includes the Peace Corps, was discovered by Sen. Claiborne Pell, then kept out of the public record because it was a short-term mistake.

In early April, Pell submitted six written questions to Action Director Joseph Blatchford at a Senate foreign relations committee hearing on the agency's authorization for the coming fiscal year. Two of the questions involve Pell's belief that a CIA agent had been used in a policy-making position in the Peace Corps.

The use of such agents in the Peace Corps is contrary to a long-standing policy. Host countries could not be expected to welcome Peace Corps volunteers if there was any taint of intelligence gathering operations about them.

A few weeks ago, Blatchford replied to the Pell question, saying that a former agent had been briefly involved in administrative affairs of the Action agency when it was formed through the merger of the Peace Corps and Vista (Volunteers in Service to America). The agent had originally worked for Vista. He has since been detailed to the Office of Economic Opportunity.

The original Blatchford reply carried a handwritten notation that Pell's staff had agreed not to make the disclosures public. Pell's staff rechecked the copy with the handwritten notation and insisted on a clean copy. A Pell spokesman said the purpose was to let Pell make the decision on disclosure himself.

Pell then decided that the agent had been only marginally involved in the Peace Corps, and then only for a few weeks. For that reason, he agreed to withhold the information on the agent from the record of the hearing.

According to Action, the agent was Eric H. Biddle Jr., who served with the CIA in Europe and Washington during the 1950s.
Ex-CIA Agent’s Status In Action Is at Issue

United Press International

The revelation that an ex-CIA agent is on the payroll of Action, the government agency which includes the Peace Corps, was deleted from a Senate Foreign Relations Committee report after a personal plea by Action Director Joseph H. Blatchford, it was learned today.

The former agent, Eric H. Biddle Jr., since has been detailed away from Action because such employment would be contrary to the agency’s stated policies.

Biddle, who served with the CIA in Greece, Germany, and Washington during the 1950s, currently works in the Office of Economic Opportunity. He continues to be paid through Action.

Blatchford’s sensitivity to the CIA issue came to light following questioning by Sen. Claiborne Pell, D-R.I., during an April 7 Foreign Relations Committee hearing on fiscal 1973 authorizations for the Peace Corps.

Written Answers

Pell, though not present, submitted six questions for Blatchford to answer. Included was the question: “Are there any former employees of the CIA or other intelligence agencies now on the payroll of Action, regardless of whether they are now performing duties for Action?”

A week later Blatchford sent written answers to all six questions to Pell, with a handwritten postscript at the bottom of the cover letter.

“I have an understanding with your staff that these questions and answers are for your personal use and will not be put into the record. We appreciate your sensitivity to this issue.”

Pell’s staff, however, rejected the postscript and demand-
Wenig Anklang


Schlimmer noch berührte den Peace- Corps-Chef Blatchford die Nachricht, daß selbst eine so befreundete Nation wie Pakistan die Jünger nicht länger leiden mochte, weil „die amerikanische Freiwilligen nichts anderes verkauft können als den Lebensstill eines Amerikaners der Mittelklasse“.

So wurde den Blatchford die Stunde erwärmt, daß er seine 30 000 Jünger wieder beisammen haben würde, als ihm gräßliche Nachrichten von der „Friedenstötung“ und der „Befreiung“ und „Wir sind dem USA-Impe- rialismus begegnet!“


Auf seine Verlustliste konnte Blatch- ford ferner einige tausend Friedenskün- der setzen, die ihre Aufgabe ernst ge- nommen hatten und tatsächlich vom Frieden Künden, die so leider nicht den spezialen amerikanischen Blatch- ford zähle seinen treuenigen Rast zu- sammen, und sich, glaube es, nur noch 19 000.

Chef Blatchford hatte die Sache geheim gehalten, aber da die CIA-Zentrale die gleichen Verluste ab- zubuchen hatte wie er, wurde gar bald nachher, daß das Peace Corps mal wieder so ein rechter Volltreffer ins Tor zur amerikanischen Lebensweise ge- worden war. So kürzte der Kongreß die Mittel radikal um 10 Million Dollar.

Blatchford in der Frischgesucht- mittellosen Unternehmen erfahren, rech- nete der Presse sogleich vor, „unser Budget noch nicht einmal halb so hoch ist wie der Preis für ein U-Boot“.


An der richtigen Adresse: „Chef, hier ist ein Mann, der einen neuen Invasionsschmuck komponiert hat.“

Aus „New York Herald Tribune“

"To the right address: "Boss, here is a man who has composed a new invasion march."
NOT WELL RECEIVED

Article; East Berlin BERLINER ZEITUNG 14 May 72 p 27

They did not need a computer to tell that a religion cannot be spread any more with 12 disciples, so they came up with 30,000 and in 1960 had President Kennedy say to them: "Go into the world and teach all nations to accept the American way of life." And he christened the 30,000 the Peace Corps, which the Americans felt would not cause suspicion either among the Christians or the heathens, and sent this Peace Corps in all directions so that in the minds of the ignorant a strong love for America and a strong aversion to American devils might blossom forth.

In the Peace Corps host countries the peace corporaues created considerable sensation because the people there had never met people who could talk so much without revealing a desire for any useful activity. So the Latin Americans rechristened the U.S. Cuerpo de Paz (Peace Corps) Cuerpo de Paseo (Walking Corps) and soon discovered that the purpose of the disciples was directed not so much toward gratuitous peace as toward gathering information for CIA cash.

While in the U.S.A. the Corps' reinforcements were instructed in 180 different languages and dialects, the first heralds of peace were flying back home. In Bolivia they were polite enough "to consider their presence no longer necessary," while in Chile the more frank expulsion. Those hurrying back home from Persia even had the impression that they had been fired away, for a bomb had exploded in the Peace Corps center.

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Even worse for Peace Corps chief Blatchford was the news that a nation as friendly as Pakistan could not stand the disciples any longer because "the American volunteers can sell nothing but the lifestyle of the American middle class." And that was just as insufficient for the government as it was too much for the people.

Then Blatchford awaited the hour when he would merely have disciples of his 30,000/30,000 again, horrible news came to his attention: in front of the U.S. center former Peace Corps members were demonstrating with red flags and slogans like "Liberation - not pacification" and "We have encountered U.S. imperialism."

The Peace Corps inventors, in the rush of establishing their forces, had completely ignored the fact that in the big, wide, free world the soldiers of peace would encounter the scent of the better known kind of American peacemaking -- namely war -- and that many would discover a certain contradiction between this and their professed peace mission.

On his list of the missing Blatchford could also place a few thousand heralds of peace who had taken their task seriously and told the story of peace -- but unfortunately not the especially American one. Blatchford counted up his sad remainder, and, behold, there were only 19,000.

Chief Blatchford would gladly have kept the affair a secret, but since CIA headquarters had the same number of losses, it soon became known that the Peace Corps had become a strike against the American way of life. So the Congress cut its funds radically by

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10,000,000 dollars. Blatchford, experienced in pricing militant undertakings, calculated for the press that "our budget is not half the price of a submarine."

Solely the chairman of the budget committee for foreign aid, Otto Passman, will finally be pleased with the Peace Corps. Years ago he had prayed: "Should I be permitted to express one last wish before my death, it would be the dissolution of the Peace Corps." May his and the Peace Corps' ashes rest in peace.