

A Transnational Protest against the National Security State: Whistleblowing, Philip Agee and Networks of Dissent

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In the fall 1975 issue of *The New York Review of Books* the acclaimed author Gabriel García Márquez reviewed a title that had been widely anticipated in the United States. The new release, with its storyline involving foreign escapades, assassination plots, and torture, had the feel of a dramatic novel. The main protagonist worked for a secretive organization operating in Latin America that “promoted military coups and public disorders, circulated forged documents through the journalists on their secret payroll, financed strikes, arranged bloody repressions of demonstrations by students and workers... and ultimately established a system of brutal but effective secret police control.” The group was active throughout the hemisphere, destabilizing and overthrowing governments from Mexico to Chile. It is “a fascinating book” the Colombian novelist noted, “one reads it through without a break.”¹

This was no work of fiction though. Penned by a participant in the wars it described, *Inside the Company: CIA Diary*, graphically recounted how the U.S. government used the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to clandestinely interfere in the Western Hemisphere. Philip Agee had been an operations case officer for over a decade since the late-1950s before “blowing the whistle” on his former employer through an exposé of American covert action. Contradicting Washington’s official development goals through initiatives like the Alliance for Progress, *Inside the Company* revealed Agency “tradecraft,” including espionage, bribery, and support for juntas and police states not adverse to torture. More controversially, it exposed the identity of employees and local agents. In an era of high public and political scrutiny of the U.S. government’s secret activities, with press and congressional investigations into intelligence

abuses and covert CIA plots, Agee's revelation stood out as an extraordinary account by someone who had been on the frontline. It was one of the most significant acts of national security whistleblowing in the modern era.²

As a politically engaged author unafraid to wade into contemporary hemispheric affairs, Márquez was full of praise for the "impassioned book." *Inside the Company* laid bare the systematic nature of U.S. interventionism as well as the "connivance of the governing classes of Latin America" and "the almost limitless possibilities for corruption that are open to our politicians." The review in one of the most prestigious English-language literary magazines ensured that a title, previously only published in the U.K., received widespread attention. Yet Márquez's endorsement of the book and its author was not solely aimed at the American literary-intellectual establishment for he was also facilitating a wider, global platform for the whistleblower. After meeting Agee at the book's initial release in London the previous winter, the novelist invited the ex-spy to Brussels to testify before the International War Crimes Tribunal on political repression in Latin America, convened by the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation and organized by the French philosopher and critic Jean-Paul Sartre. Agee's critique of U.S. covert activities and compliant foreign partners was communicated to a worldwide audience. *Inside the Company* became an international smash, translated into over twenty-five languages, and its author a prominent dissenter of U.S. interventionism. This was not single-handedly thanks to Márquez of course but it was nonetheless striking that a Colombian author, a future Nobel laureate, voluntarily aided and promoted an American national security whistleblower. In fact, he was but one of numerous individuals and organizations around the world to do so.³

This article explores how an ardent clandestine cold warrior exposed the U.S. national security state and emerged as a vigorously outspoken opponent of American interventionism. It examines Agee's whistleblowing and campaigning as an overlooked aspect of modern dissent

culture by analyzing the spaces he occupied and connections he made in a transnational perspective. Through research in Agee's recently available papers, international state and private archives, newspapers and periodicals, and via interviews, the article presents two key arguments. Firstly, Agee's revelations and wider struggle was supported by a broad international spectrum of people, organizations, and non-governmental associations. The whistleblower in turn contributed to fluid transnational movements that sought to restrain the U.S. national security state as well as its Latin American and European allies. Secondly, the transnational nature of this insider dissent posed challenges for governments on both sides of the Atlantic. Their response was to double-down by asserting greater state hegemony over national security and secrecy, with the U.S. and Western European governments clamping-down on the words and movement of whistleblowers. However, such efforts could not completely control activities that materialized across national boundaries; a skillset that, ironically, Agee was taught by the CIA.⁴

Examining Agee's revelations develops a much-needed history of national security whistleblowing. The latter sits on the periphery of several historical sub-fields but offers fresh perspectives on transnational movements and protest networks, the U.S. and the world, cultures of national security and secrecy, American constitutional and international law, human rights, and the global cold war. To date Agee has been confined to the ghettos of intelligence studies where narrow, cursory debates have revolved on why he blew the whistle, specifically promoting an accusation that he was a defector to the Soviet Union and Cuba. His travails have been briefly considered by historians in the context of the Agency's response to growing political and public scrutiny in the 1970s.⁵ Agee was undoubtedly a controversial individual and certain aspects of his life and motivations may never be fully explained. However, whistleblowers and their actions defy simple characterizations. Limiting the issue to a zero-sum question of national allegiance not only reproduces the binary worldview of espionage and state secrecy but also fuels a crude patriot-traitor dichotomy that surrounds the subject, evident in partisan discussions

following Agee's death in 2008 and contemporary whistleblower cases. Intelligence methodology is not conducive to a historical assessment of the phenomenon of national security whistleblowing, including its place in wider political and popular culture and how whistleblowers were part of protest movements that cut across state borders.⁶

Agee was involved in emerging transnational networks that confronted governments from Amsterdam to Managua to Washington. His entire post-CIA life was in Western Europe and Latin America, including periods in Britain, Cuba, France, Grenada, Italy, Mexico, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Spain, and West Germany. This peripatetic life relied on a host of activists, publishers, authors, intellectuals, revolutionaries, peace movements, civil rights organizations, and ordinary citizens. Non-state actors were crucial during the writing of *Inside the Company* and supporting Agee in subsequent decades. Scholars have theorized that transnationalism is rooted in people inhabiting the same spaces, forming networks, and exchanging ideas. A transnational history of whistleblowing contributes to a growing literature on individuals living and operating across national boundaries. Organizations and figures that exist between and through polities and societies are often marginal, if not invisible, in national and diplomatic histories. While voluntary American travelers – tourists, missionaries, reformers, business elites, sports teams, activists – have received scholarly attention, those who did so out of necessity have not.⁷

In developing a history of whistleblowing this work contributes to a rich literature on dissent and protest. A large body of work highlights the global nature of nuclear disarmament efforts, anti-Vietnam campaigns, the protests of 1968, and the peace movement, but does not extend beyond the early 1970s. Nor has it incorporated the unique insider perspective offered by whistleblowers; dissent that corroborated critiques on the abuse of state power.⁸ Part of the reason may relate to style – *Inside the Company*, a recreated diary, had a presentist tone, a simplistic Marxist reading of covert activities as the symptom of imperialist capitalism, and unashamedly

targeted general audiences. But it was strikingly accurate on intelligence tradecraft and the machinations of interventionism. Indeed, Agee's attack on U.S. benevolence tapped a nerve during the 1970s, contributing to an epoch where revisionism was prominent in American society, academia, and culture, as well as growing activist networks in Europe and Latin America. In short, whistleblowing provided a clear lens to understand American Empire. While specialists routinely debate the abstract political, economic, strategic, and cultural dimensions of imperialism, Agee provided an accessible and popular critique of U.S. power by exposing its hidden hand. Revelations of clandestine coups and wars were easily comprehensible. The impact of his activities extended far beyond the U.S., inspiring scholars, activists, and journalists examining the influence of covert power in other countries.⁹

The article also engages growing literatures on the “long 1970s” and human rights. The political, economic, social, cultural, and geopolitical forces that transformed the United States during the decade have received increased attention from historians in recent years. Revelations by whistleblowers emerged during a uniquely reformist moment in response to the crisis of American hegemony and practically demonstrated globalization in action. But such exposures have not been considered in the broader context of efforts to curb the ability of the “Imperial Presidency” to wage war, support military regimes, and pursue covert activities. *Inside the Company* preceded prominent Congressional investigations into intelligence abuses, providing details that were confirmed by the Church Committee on CIA operations in Latin America. Whistleblowing continued as Congress’s drive to rein in the national security state had mixed results with greater oversight triggering a backlash from the security apparatus and foreign policy hawks.¹⁰ The 1970s also saw various state and non-state actors inform human rights policies by promoting visions of inalienable, universal individual rights over state sovereignty. Americans of diverse political persuasions embraced the “human rights revolution,” in dissimilar ways, as a new paradigm for U.S. foreign relations. While this posed intractable difficulties for communist

regimes, as scholars have documented, human rights language also raised problems for western governments when whistleblowers turned it back on liberal democracies.¹¹

A transnational history of whistleblowing challenges the notion, underpinning much of the literature on U.S. foreign relations and protest movements, of distinct state and transnational spaces. The article adopts an approach that thinks “with and through” the nation. Agee was part of transnational circuits that flowed across and between national spaces although governments were not powerless against him.¹² Whistleblowers came up against the long reach of state power in the cold war as their movement was impeded and writing censored. Monitored by western intelligence agencies, Agee was deported from several European countries and his U.S. passport was revoked. It was reminiscent of the travel control measures against American political exiles and dissenters earlier in the twentieth century, especially black activists like Paul Robeson, W.E.B. Du Bois, William Worthy and Malcolm X. Individuals posing a national security “threat” were denied the right to travel and reside in a country, with judicial authorities reinforcing executive branch power.¹³

A new front in the state backlash to whistleblowing emerged during the hawkish turn in U.S. foreign relations in the late-1970s and early-1980s. Rekindling the bipolar cold war framework of earlier decades, an aggressive national security posture during the final years of the Jimmy Carter administration crystallized during the “Reagan Revolution” through a massive defense buildup and the “unleashing” of the CIA to arm anti-communist insurgents in the Global South, particularly in Central America. With progressive reforms rolled back and congressional constraints loosened, new legislation to prosecute whistleblowers and prevent future Agees’ dovetailed broader efforts to reassert American power and expand the national security state.¹⁴

Yet concerted state efforts to marginalize Agee paradoxically deepened his engagement with a protest milieu operating across borders. Organizations and individuals provided protection

and support, resulting in greater visibility and new audiences. The whistleblower collaborated with activists and networks, especially solidarity movements for revolutionary regimes like Grenada and Nicaragua caught in the crosshairs of the Reagan Doctrine. Exploring this “transnational life” brings wider debates about the projection of state power and the possibilities of dissent – from the cold war to present – into sharper focus.¹⁵

Blowing the Whistle

Since the early twentieth century, national security whistleblowing has represented a distinctive form of revelation that exposes privileged information on state wrongdoing, mismanagement, or abuse of authority in the public interest. Such information has not always been classified, especially since the modern classification regime emerged in the middle of the century through presidential executive orders. Historically, it is among the boldest, riskiest, and most controversial forms of insider protest. The notion that it represents a leftist dissenting tradition was popularized during the 1970s through an unprecedented wave of “anti-imperial” whistleblowers, but the deeper history reveals that rationales vary enormously, from bureaucratic turf wars and concerns over waste and fraud to flawed decision-making and moral opposition to U.S. policies. A range of motives underpinned whistleblowing from Herbert O. Yardley’s 1931 exposé celebrating defunct American cryptanalysis, to A. Ernest Fitzgerald’s 1968 revelation of military procurement cost overruns, to Agee in 1975, to Edward Snowden’s 2013 exposure of National Security Agency (NSA) surveillance programs. Otherwise disparate examples have been homogenized by the U.S. government’s indiscriminate pursuit of employees revealing national security information.¹⁶

The state targeting of national security whistleblowers distinguishes it from other forms of insider revelation. Exposing privileged information has a long tradition in American history.

Since the turn of the twentieth century, it has been central to journalistic scoops on government and business corruption, from Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*, to the underground press and investigative journalism during the 1960s-1970s, to scandals around the "War on Terror" in the early twenty-first century. Often this has involved information deliberately "leaked" to the press, who are free to publish under the First Amendment, and is a central feature of the relationship between journalists and government officials. "It is endemic," notes legal scholar David Pozen, "the U.S. government leaks like a sieve." Leaking is inherently political, overwhelmingly anonymous, and legally shielded.¹⁷

In contrast, whistleblowing involves exposure – rarely anonymously and frequently with legal repercussions – in the public interest. The 1970s marked a defining moment with the political activist and consumer champion Ralph Nader helping to popularize the concept in describing individuals who served public over organizational interest by revealing "corrupt, illegal, fraudulent or harmful activity" and abuses of power. Nader's philosophy applied to corporate and public-sector employees alike, helping to formalize a tradition of whistleblowing. As political momentum grew to protect federal employees from retaliation akin to their counterparts in the private sector, the U.S government passed the Whistleblower Protection Act in 1989. Present-day legal and political definitions are rooted in this legislation.¹⁸

Yet national security whistleblowers were precluded from legislative protection, continuing a deep-rooted state denial of the concept itself. The precariousness for those revealing information, regardless of whether it is classified, is tied to a central paradox: the state rejects the notion of national security whistleblowing but aggressively attacks national security whistleblowers. The U.S. government insists on the term "unauthorized disclosure," a catch-all category that delegitimizes any revelation. The struggle over nomenclature is critical to charging individuals since, for much of the twentieth century, the state turned to the 1917 Espionage Act in arguing that exposures undermined security and aided enemies. Citing a World War I-era

federal law also circumvented a couple of key hurdles: the U.S. constitution precluding the kind of official secrets act common in other countries; and the need to balance first amendment rights with growing state secrecy. However, there was not a single successful prosecution under the espionage statutes for “unauthorized disclosure” up to and including the most famous whistleblowing case of the century, the 1973 trial against Daniel Ellsberg for disclosing the Pentagon Papers. Indeed, the mistrial against Ellsberg proved a critical moment as government retaliation turned to prior restraint, censorship, and travel control of employees past and present.¹⁹

More immediately, Ellsberg was the forerunner of a generation of anti-imperial whistleblowers during the long 1970s. A remarkable concentration of former defense and intelligence officials – including Perry Fellwock (aka Winslow Peck), John Marks, Victor Marchetti, Ralph McGehee, John Stockwell, and Frank Sennett – offered unparalleled insights into the theory and practice of the U.S. national security state. They disclosed systemic foreign relations misconduct and covert wars based on personal experience rather than classified information. The anti-imperial tradition quickly established in the popular imagination, which led the state to rehabilitate the reputations of earlier whistleblowers like Fitzgerald who critiqued waste rather than the underlying principles of national security. Agee was a key figure in this generation but, for all the similarities with his contemporaries, he stood apart as the only one to blow the whistle in exile and be considered a national security threat in multiple countries.²⁰

Like all whistleblowers, Agee began as a believer. As a young man he symbolized the liberal consensus prevalent in the early cold war, enjoying what he described as “a privileged upbringing in a big white house.” Following a religiously-informed education at a Jesuit high school and the University of Notre Dame, repeated CIA recruitment attempts paid off as the 22-year-old joined in 1957. Agee made a positive impression on Agency recruiters, who reported he was “a clean cut, nice young man” who is “well motivated toward Government service.” He undertook a

series of examinations to enter what he termed “an exclusive club with a very select membership,” completing a training program that included everything from classroom study to gym work to “How to disarm or cripple, if necessary kill an opponent.” The key activity was covert action, “the real reason for the CIA’s existence,” he explained in outlining Agency tradecraft: “all the techniques and tools of the trade used to keep a secret operation secret.” *Inside the Company* angered Agency insiders but would later be assigned as reading to prospective recruits due to its accurate description of a covert operations career. As the head of the clandestine service acknowledged, it was “an excellent reflection of the day-to-day life of an officer.”²¹

Agee had a consistently positive service record around Latin America, operating in Ecuador, Uruguay, and Mexico. CIA performance evaluations praised his recruitment and organization of local agents, noting that his dedication and linguistic capabilities made him stand out. Agee has “good experience and fluent Spanish” and is “a very fine officer, well above the average.” Supervisors suggested he was “very likely” to have “an outstanding career ahead of him” only a year before he resigned. Agee’s activities prepared the groundwork for a transnational life. In his final posting as an undercover Embassy Olympics attaché in Mexico City he fostered relations with cultural organizations and anti-communist leftists. The initial objective had been to infiltrate such groups, but it proved the start of deeper engagement with progressive non-state networks that would be crucial in subsequent years.²²

Agee did not, as is common with whistleblowers, experience a eureka moment or sudden change of heart. The precise circumstances surrounding his resignation in late 1968 are nonetheless obscure. Agee later emphasized growing unrest due to his Catholic conscience and his reassessment of covert operations as the symptom of American capitalist imperialism and overt interventions as evidence that Washington prioritized anti-communism over reform. Yet any religious or political reservations harbored at the time were never made explicit. There were

concurrent personal troubles through a divorce and custodial battle over his children. The CIA argued, also in retrospect, that these private factors, alongside claims of alcoholism and womanizing, meant Agee was pushed out. However, performance evaluations remained positive until the final months in post. Professional and private factors were likely both at play as the 32-year old submitted his resignation. Tellingly, Agee was complimentary to the Agency in his resignation letter which was accompanied by a signed agreement not to disclose classified information. In short, there was no indication that whistleblowing was on the horizon.²³

The CIA's retrospective attempt to discredit Agee's character was central to the more loaded allegation that he was a defector who switched allegiance to communism. The claim, which snowballed in subsequent years after the Agency peddled it to the U.S. press via sympathetic journalists, was particularly charged in the context of a zero-sum cold war spy game. Historian John Prados persuasively rebuts the defector accusation, detailing how plans to sully Agee's reputation originated at the highest echelons of the CIA. Intelligence scholarship has nonetheless fixated on the issue with former-spies insisting that Agee tried to sell secrets to Soviet and Cuban intelligence. Agee himself claimed his departure was "not *to* any country but certainly *from* the CIA and American foreign policy." Claims and counterclaims are unlikely to desist with the defector issue as much ideological as empirical. Notwithstanding gaps in the historical record, examining Agee's activities in relation to places and networks, rather than a patriot-traitor paradigm, offer fresh insights into the phenomenon of national security whistleblowing.²⁴

Inside the Company emerged in a post-Agency life across Latin America and Europe with the help of progressive-leftist individuals and groups. Agee initially remained in Mexico City, now joined by his sons, working for a company run by people he met during his final assignment that manufactured mirrors. Gravitating towards a circle of artists and writers, the idea of writing about his CIA experiences germinated. Yet without a book contract or advance, Agee looked to

teaching and subsequently enrolled on a graduate degree in Latin American Studies at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México in 1970, researching the political and economic impact of U.S. policies in the countries he had worked in. A writer friend introduced him to François Maspero, the French publisher of major leftist works like Che Guevara's Bolivian Diary, who expressed interest in a book. Maspero encouraged further research in public libraries in Mexico and Cuba but, as with sources proving insufficient, urged Agee to move to Europe. After quitting his studies, and with his children back in the U.S., Agee intensified his research and writing in Paris and London from 1972-1974.²⁵

On the eve of his departure to Europe, Agee gave the first indication of his plans in a letter to the editor of *Marcha*, a left-wing political weekly in Uruguay, outlining how the Richard Nixon administration would use the CIA to undermine progressive groups in upcoming national elections in late 1971. In explaining his credentials and background, Agee said he was working on a manuscript. Uruguayan leftists were informed of his pending exposé, as were the CIA after French authorities intercepted the letter on its way from Maspero's Paris office to Montevideo.²⁶

Ironically, U.S. government attempts to seize Agee's manuscript in Europe sustained the author and accelerated the publication of *Inside the Company*. Nominally private American citizens in Paris tried to befriend Agee by offering money and resources, including a bugged typewriter that subsequently featured on the book's front cover. Without an income or other means of support, Agee accepted the material assistance from the covert CIA officers and agents but, thanks to other friends in Paris and London, evaded their attempts to capture the manuscript. The Agency had in effect subsidized the soon-to-be whistleblower. Moving to the U.K. in October 1972, Agee received assistance from groups like the International Commission for Peace and Disarmament and *Latin American Newsletters*, which reported on regional political and economic conditions. Robin Blackburn of the *New Left Review* made an introduction to Penguin

books, who contracted the manuscript and offered an advance. Agee eventually completed the book without the covert CIA stipend.²⁷

French and British intelligence services nonetheless kept him under strict surveillance. The British Cabinet Secretary noted privately, “the CIA…asked us for some information about his movement” on the grounds of alleged cooperation with Cuban intelligence. Eager not to disclose the security detail, the Europeans were sensitive to accusations they were following Agency instructions. The CIA’s efforts to ensnare Agee would, however, undermine later prosecution efforts. Shortly after the release of *Inside the Company*, U.S. Attorney General Edward H. Levi noted that indicting the whistleblower for “unauthorized disclosures” under the Espionage Act also opened the door to prosecuting CIA officers for their pursuit of him around Europe and other undisclosed steps taken against him. The Gerald Ford administration decided to avoid the risk, as would its successors when thoughts of prosecution resurfaced in later years. While other steps would be taken, as we shall see, safeguarding Agency tradecraft proved fundamental and Agee never faced trial. Like U.S. government attempts to charge Ellsberg in 1973 and Thomas Drake in 2010, overzealous and potentially illegal methods against whistleblowers, as well as a refusal to discuss intelligence methods in a civilian court, meant any legal case collapsed.²⁸

On completion of the manuscript, a guerrilla publicity campaign was launched with the assistance of *Latin American Newsletters* in October 1974. At a small press conference at the heart of the newspaper industry in London, Agee announced the start of a campaign to “expose CIA officers and agents and to take the measures necessary to drive them out of the countries where they are operating.” The first act of the “neutralization” drive revealed the names and addresses of thirty-seven undercover CIA employees in the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City. No classified information was being revealed since all the research was in open sources.²⁹

The fact Agee was in London was also tied to the fate of the whistleblowers who originally revealed the methodology of identifying spies from publicly-available material. In 1974 ex-State Department official John Marks detailed how open lists like the *Foreign Service Register* and *Biographic Register* could be crosschecked to distinguish CIA officers from genuine American Embassy staff stationed abroad. Alongside former-CIA official Victor Marchetti, Marks published *The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence* that argued the Agency's obsession with covert action had side-tracked it from the original mission of collecting and analyzing information. The U.S. government took the unprecedented action of censoring the book before publication on the grounds of protecting state secrets. The publisher Alfred A. Knopf nonetheless released it with 339 redacted passages blanked out. The publishing tactic made worldwide headlines although Marks's methodology was the more significant revelation. It was quickly adopted by *Counter-Spy*, a magazine founded by the novelist, essayist, and activist Norman Mailer in 1973 as part of a "Fifth Estate," a non-profit organization for greater public oversight of the U.S. government. *Counter-Spy* challenged CIA and FBI secrecy, sensationally identifying over one hundred Agency Station Chiefs around the world in its Winter 1975 issue.³⁰

Inside the Company was published in the U.K. to prevent any threat of U.S. government censorship. Agee remained in contact with Marchetti following a meeting in London and enthusiastically disseminated Marks's methodology. Determined to help other insiders describe their experiences, he developed a wider network for opposing CIA covert action. Collaborating on books that detailed Agency meddling in Western Europe and Africa, Agee was also a regular contributor to *Counter-Spy*, praising the "naming names" tactic in the controversial Winter 1975 edition. When the magazine folded he joined other activists to launch its successor, the *Covert Action Information Bulletin*, which would be at the forefront of "a worldwide campaign to destabilize the CIA through exposure of its operations and personnel, thereby making it as

difficult as possible for the Agency to carry out subversive operations against governments and political movements.”³¹

Agee’s book emerged as the Church Committee, the U.S. Senate investigation into intelligence activities, began examining CIA covert operations. The substance of Agee’s exposures was confirmed as Senators received testimony on U.S. interventionism around the world and Agency assassination attempts on foreign leaders. The revelations had a profound impact in Latin America, leading to diplomatic pressure from regional allies. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger urged all U.S. embassies not to comment on *Inside the Company*. Agee’s exposures had a profound impact on the CIA in Latin America where various covert operations were discontinued, relationships with favored agents terminated, and “substantial sums” spent to relocate case officers and change administrative processes. One National Security Council (NSC) staffer explained “the Agee problem” was hampering Agency tradecraft beyond the hemisphere as “long-standing collaborators abroad have become increasingly uneasy about their relationships with CIA.” The revelations had contributed to an edgy climate where “sources have been reporting less fully than they formerly did,” some “long-standing agents have dropped CIA contact,” and it was increasingly difficult to recruit new agents.³²

Agee’s stated objective was to nullify the effectiveness of covert activities by exposing “CIA officers so that their presence in foreign countries becomes untenable.” On whether the approach endangered lives, he explained it was to “neutralize them, not have them killed.” Unsurprisingly, critics disagreed. Agee was accused of aiding U.S. enemies and effectively publishing assassination lists. Such criticism accelerated in December 1975 when Richard Welch, the CIA Station Chief in Greece whose cover had been blown by local newspapers, was gunned down by a Marxist Revolutionary group in front of his Athens home. Opponents quickly set upon the likes of Agee for a practice that “was tantamount to an open invitation to kill.” Agee had not mentioned Welch and, as an internal U.S. government investigation subsequently

confirmed, was not responsible for the murder but he was nonetheless accused of having blood on his hands by the Agency and its congressional and media supporters. As one of the most prominent advocates of “naming names” Agee was regularly cited in the context of Welch’s death. His assertions of innocence and solidarity with the “countless other families whose members have been lost to CIA-supported security services” fell on deaf ears.³³

Undeterred, Agee continued to protest Agency meddling in Western Europe by collaborating with local activists in Britain, France, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, Sweden, and West Germany to identify Agency personnel from open sources and organizing non-violent demonstrations outside Embassies and residences. As foreign language translations of *Inside the Company* appeared, Agee outlined that the crux of the problem transcended the CIA. Speaking at the launch of the Italian edition in Rome, he stated covert activities were guided by “the U.S. ruling classes” and would continue until there was “a radical change in the orientation of the American government.” Agee’s revelations encouraged the work of local journalists and activists to examine the history of U.S. interference in Italy and influence over intelligence services. One journalist opined about Italian intelligence, “This is why They Don’t Work Properly in Italy.” Further publications emerged, including a translation of the leaked Pike Committee Report, the critical House of Representatives investigation into intelligence abuses.³⁴

London proved an ideal base to write and campaign. Americans had travelled and connected to Europe throughout the twentieth century in search of progressive political, cultural, and social conditions and ideas. A thoroughfare for activists, the British capital was home to a lively progressive scene, non-governmental groups, a vibrant and diffuse media culture, and resources like newspaper archives. Agee was increasingly exposed to the leftist scenes in London and Paris, especially the networks around figures like Russell and Sartre. Although markedly different, both movements were antithetical to U.S. foreign policy unilateralism and European political orthodoxies while expressing solidarity with Global South activists.³⁵ Agee spoke widely

on CIA meddling in countries from Argentina to Zaire, providing commentary on the unfolding U.S. congressional investigations and speaking with journalists from around Europe. He wrote an article for Sartre's journal *Les Temps Modernes* and the preface to a British publication of the Pike Report. Agee debated Agency defenders on television in the U.K. and U.S., as well as contributing to the Allan Francovich documentary, *On Company Business*, about covert operations. As *Inside the Company* hit bookstands, Agee settled in Cambridge with his sons and new partner, a Latin American activist who had been tortured by the Brazilian police. Yet no sooner had roots been established in the U.K. than they were forcefully ripped up.³⁶

The State Strikes Back: Exile and Forced Transnationalism

Agee's hopes of a new life in Western Europe were soon dashed. Alongside Mark Hosenball, an American journalist who had written about the British satellites communications center GCHQ in the counter-cultural magazine *Time Out*, he was issued with a deportation notice in November 1976. Home Secretary Merlyn Rees "had decided that their departure from the United Kingdom would be conducive to the public good" and was "in the interests of national security." Agee represented a danger because he "had maintained regular contacts...with foreign intelligence officers"; "had been and continued to be involved in disseminating information"; and "counselled others in obtaining information for publication." Agee and Hosenball faced no criminal prosecution nor were they accused of leaking classified information. The specific charges could not be revealed but they could make separate "representations" to an Advisory Panel comprised of three senior establishment figures, appointed by Rees, in closed session. The Home Secretary emphasized that the action "was taken neither at the behest of, nor after consultation with, foreign Governments or their agencies."³⁷

Opposition to the order became an international *cause célèbre*. An Agee-Hosenball Defence Committee organized by friends and colleagues of the two men sprang into action, launching a public relations offensive showing that the ruling “has nothing to do with the security of the British state but plenty to do with the security of the American and British intelligence services which work hand in glove.” The Committee organized peaceful rallies, marched on the Home Office, and picketed the U.S. Embassy and residences of CIA officers. A petition calling for the “removal of all CIA and NSA personnel assigned to the Embassy” was presented to the American Ambassador. Agee spoke around the country and participated in a “CIA Teach-In” at the London School of Economics. The case received public backing from artists, writers, and activists including Márquez, Sartre, Blackburn, Simone de Beauvoir, Jane Fonda, Philip Noel-Baker, Costa-Gavras, Ralph Miliband, and Eric Hobsbawm. The historian and peace campaigner E.P. Thompson wrote a strongly-worded letter to the *Times* newspaper attacking CIA meddling abroad and the “pusillanimity” of the British press for failing to adequately report it. “Long after the United States Congress has repudiated certain past activities of the CIA,” Thompson noted, “an influential section of our press continues to cover these up.” The Anne Frank Foundation, the British Trade Union Congress, and over fifty Members of the U.K. Parliament including leading Labour and Liberal figures like Stan Newens, Judith Hart, Neil Kinnock, Robin Cook, Tony Benn, and Peter Hain pledged support. Prominent French and Greek Socialists Régis Debray, Claude Estier, Jean-Pierre Chavenement, and Andreas Papandreou also gave public backing. Supporters had varied reasons for backing the campaign but coalesced over the obscure motives for deportation and opaque appeals process.³⁸

An influential player in the Agee-Hosenball Defence Committee was the London-based Concerned Americans Abroad (CAA), which had been active in the anti-Vietnam war movement. Since Agee and Hosenball could not appeal like British or European citizens in court, the CAA lobbied the U.S. Embassy to assist the American nationals but were informed it

was considered “purely a British internal matter.” The CAA nonetheless continued the fight, leading the fundraising drive, convening town hall meetings, producing flyers and newsletters, organizing press releases, and lobbying newspaper editors. Agee’s “representations” to the closed-session panel included testimony from prominent progressive politicians and statesmen. Former U.S. Attorney General, Ramsey Clark, ex-Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Morton Halperin, and the leading United Nations and Amnesty International figure, Seán MacBride, provided evidence.³⁹

The case posed several problems for the James Callaghan government. During parliamentary questions, the Prime Minister was pressed about his discussions with Kissinger on CIA activities in the U.K. Following the Advisory Panel’s recommendation to uphold the deportation order, Labour MPs forced a House of Commons debate to adjourn the ruling by focusing on the appeals process and an edict that undermined Britain’s tradition of political dissent. “A procedure where charges are unknown, no evidence is taken, no representation is allowed and no result is given is worthy of a Kafka novel or of Alice in Wonderland,” noted Jonathan Aitkin, making “Britain something of a laughing stock in other democratic countries.” Having attended the “representations,” Alexander Lynn commented, “it was the most farcical procedure I have ever heard in all my life.” Paul Rose summarized the scene: “There were these three men, who themselves were trying men who did not know what the charges were with witnesses giving evidence in relation to matters in respect of which the charges were not known.”⁴⁰

The campaign generated broad grassroots and political support but the deportations were upheld. A national security matter would not be subject to a process involving the presentation of evidence in open court. Responding to criticisms that the British were lapdogs to the Americans, Rees reiterated the decision “was taken solely in the interests of this country” and not “after consultation with the Government of the United States or its agencies, including the

CIA.” Defending the country through Executive action was “a security matter,” he noted, “not a matter of politics.” This would become a familiar rationale as Agee departed the U.K. in June 1977.⁴¹

Attempts to establish a home in France and the Netherlands were thwarted by even swifter judgements. In Britain Agee had had the opportunity, however imperfect, to contest the edict but the French and Dutch governments were more draconian over deportation. Barely a month after settling in Paris and enrolling in the *Alliance Française* to study French, Agee was arrested and escorted into neighboring Belgium. The left-wing newspaper *Libération* had published details of CIA agents in France and mentioned Agee even though, as a Paris tribunal later confirmed, he was not involved in writing the articles. For the French government, his presence was “undesirable” due to “his past activities and the consequences which certain of his present activities might have on France’s relations with certain friendly countries.”⁴²

Seeking the support of Debray and Estier, the French Socialists who had spoken out during the U.K. deportation, Agee attempted a quickfire public defense campaign appealing to popular opinion and France’s tradition of asylum for political exiles. He also turned to the Council of Europe, claiming the deportations infringed his human rights. Highlighting the American government’s double-standards, Agee insisted that continued CIA covert operations were “obviously an exception to [Carter’s] human rights policy” and the administration’s attempt to hinder his work was “a violation of America’s human rights policy, because people...have a basic human right to be free from torture for their political beliefs.”⁴³ The appeal was rejected and exclusion upheld in subsequent years despite Agee’s repeated claims that it contravened the European Convention on Human Rights and U.S.-French Treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation. The government’s refusal to allow him entry “must either be continued American pressure or plain vindictiveness” he explained to the editor of *Libération*. “I find it surprising that the Socialist administration would continue to deny me permission to visit France,” he noted to

Estier, while telling Debray, “I cannot help but think that American pressure is the reason, and that continuing refusal to permit my entry amounts to a punitive action simply to please the United States.” The whistleblower discovered the not uncommon dynamic of politicians being less amenable when in power than in opposition.⁴⁴

Agee was framing his case through a rhetoric increasingly in vogue. “The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Helsinki Declaration recognize the right of anyone to collect information and to disseminate it freely,” he noted, and “to practice their professions without hindrance.” The expulsions infringed on his human rights, Agee explained, and highlighted the insincerity of western employment of the concept. “If working against violations of human rights disturbs relations between Western ‘liberal democracies,’ perhaps my situation will help expose the selective and hypocritical use of the ‘human rights issue’ by these countries.” Agee’s embrace of human rights had popular appeal but could not spare him from deportation in the name of national security. The cold war context was palpable. Dissidents of Soviet power like Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, Andrei Sakharov, and Václav Havel enjoyed a rapturous reception in the west, especially among conservative U.S. politicians, and Warsaw Pact countries were criticized for curbing travel during the Helsinki Accords by American negotiators. Yet the notion of human rights violations against American whistleblowers received a markedly different reaction.⁴⁵

The end of 1977 brought another deportation as a Dutch visitor permit was revoked because “Agee’s activities were damaging to the foreign relations of the Netherlands” and “endangered national security and public order.” Once more his writing was the problem, particularly a piece in the left-wing magazine *The Leveller* about the British expulsion that vowed to continue “spook-spotting” and aiding “the victims of covert action.” At a hastily-organized press conference in Amsterdam, Agee noted the infringement of his human rights and defended his right to work as a writer. “The action taken against me in the United Kingdom, in France and now in the

Netherlands unhappily resembles the banning practices of South Africa,” he noted, “for if I am not to publish, or to counsel, or to speak without risking deportation on ‘national security’ grounds, then my activities are restricted not unlike a banned persons are.”⁴⁶

Agee’s predicament received widespread press attention and Socialist members of Parliament questioned whether it should be heard in court. “His case also probably finds considerable sympathy within the Dutch population,” acknowledged the American Embassy, “long known for offering refuge to individuals rejected elsewhere for their ideas.” Ultimately the decision went the same way as Britain and France. European governments were no longer willing to accommodate a national security whistleblower, with attempts to simply enter Italy, Norway, and West Germany over the next two years refused. Agee forever insisted that behind-the-scenes American pressure forced the hand of European allies – a plausible claim, which U.S. officials were conscious of, but difficult to verify. His collaboration with local activists undoubtedly troubled European governments, who did not consider his exile as a regular case of refuge.⁴⁷

Unable to enter or reside in several Western European countries, Agee’s movement was further curtailed on Christmas Eve 1979. Noting his “activities abroad are causing or are likely to cause serious damage to the national security or foreign policy of the United States,” Secretary of State Cyrus Vance revoked Agee’s passport. The trigger was a curious proposal, that came to nothing, for Agee to mediate the release of U.S. hostages in the American Embassy in Tehran by assisting Iranians to decipher captured CIA documents. While a U.S. District Court argued that the passport revocation was unconstitutional the reprieve proved short-lived as an appellate court reversed the decision. When the case moved to the Supreme Court in 1981, *Haig v. Agee* upheld the ruling with Chief Justice Warren E. Burger stating “it is an inhibition of *action*,’ rather than of speech.” The Secretary of State had “broad rule-making authority” and while revocation “undeniably curtails travel,” Burger noted, “the freedom to travel abroad with a ‘letter of introduction’ in the form of a passport issued by the sovereign is subordinate to national security

and foreign policy considerations.” A passport functioned as “both proof of identity and proof of allegiance to the United States.” The Chief Justice concluded, “restricting Agee’s foreign travel, although perhaps not certain to prevent all of Agee’s harmful activities is the only avenue open to the government to limit these activities.”⁴⁸

Burger had inadvertently identified a critical point. Curtailing movement was the only practical way for the state to contain the whistleblower. Agee had not revealed classified information but disseminated a methodology, making prosecution under the Espionage Act uncertain. There was no precedent for successful prosecution for “unauthorized disclosures” and, as Ellsberg’s case demonstrated, a trial risked detailing U.S. government retaliation in court. The Justice Department had already noted that trying Agee could lead to prosecution of the CIA for their efforts to repress *Inside the Company*. European governments could not charge him under their jurisdiction so, with extradition to the U.S. an altogether different issue, chose to deport him. Agee’s lawyers advised him to stay abroad but secured a Justice Department agreement there would be no prosecution “for violation of the espionage statutes.”⁴⁹

The inadequacy of the Espionage Act for prosecuting national security whistleblowers led the U.S. government to develop new tools based on prior restraint. In response to the books by Marchetti and Snepp, the state introduced a formal pre-publication review process, creating the CIA Publications Review Board (PRB) in 1976. Anyone who signed a secrecy agreement had to submit writing or speeches intended for a public audience in advance or face trial. The enforcement of the secrecy agreement effectively suspended first amendment rights for national security officials, past, present and future. Even in exile, Agee was forced to comply as a 1980 Justice Department injunction stipulated that all his writing must be vetted by the PRB.⁵⁰

Yet Agee’s exposure tactics through public sources and the power of his example remained. “It is despicable that Philip Agee can publish the names of persons he claims are CIA officers,”

noted Senator John H. Chafee, a leading advocate for a new intelligence bill, “and yet the U.S. government has no legal mechanism to prosecute him for this act.” “At stake,” noted a senior NSC figure, “is whether a small group of Americans who oppose all U.S. human intelligence capabilities can continue with impunity to ferret out and reveal the secret identities of American intelligence officers and agents.” Alluding to the death of Richard Welch in Greece, Barry Goldwater, Chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and key supporter of the bill, urged colleagues to vote for the legislation “before someone else is killed or injured by traitors like Philip Agee.”⁵¹

The Carter and Reagan governments introduced a law to prosecute exposures of covert activities and shield intelligence operations across borders, as well as tightening access to national security information. The Intelligence Identities Protection Act (IIPA) of 1982 made it a federal crime to reveal covert intelligence officers intentionally whether through classified or non-classified sources. Strengthening the national security state was part of a broader reassertion of U.S. power, epitomized by the Reagan administration’s hawkish foreign policy, following the damage of the Vietnam wars and reformist moment of the 1970s. The CIA and NSA argued for exemption of its operational records from declassification under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Claiming the law hampered intelligence efforts, the agencies noted it was being abused by the likes of Agee who made hundreds of FOIA requests for records during his deportation and passport cases. “It is frankly disgraceful,” commented CIA Deputy Director Frank Carlucci, “that we are required to assist him in his endeavors.”⁵²

Agee had invoked federal information law to fight state retaliation. Opponents of the IIPA may not have sympathized with his fate but they warned of the constitutional ramifications of the legislation. Joseph Biden, one of only a handful of dissenting Senators, argued the bill “is so broadly drawn that it would subject to prosecution not only the malicious publicizing of agents’ names but also the efforts of legitimate journalists to expose any corruption, malfeasance, or

ineptitude occurring in American intelligence agencies.” The press decried the impact on its First Amendment rights as the bill criminalized stories revealing information gleaned from public records, regardless of whether the author had served in government or handled classified documents. The U.S. government response had gone beyond whistleblowing. Yet the individual who had provoked the changes continued to travel and write.⁵³

Agee’s Transnational Activism and Solidarity

Given his trials and tribulations in Europe it was no small irony that Agee secured a permanent home on the continent through a constitutional caveat. In 1978 he became a resident of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), settling in Hamburg with his new wife. Agee had met Giselle Roberge in Paris through her mother, a friend who had provided him with refuge and assistance during the writing of *Inside the Company*. The couple married in Amsterdam and moved to the FRG where Roberge was a ballerina at the State Opera. Agee applied to live with his wife since, as part of the shared sovereignty between city-states and the republic, jurisdiction lay with the Hamburg state government rather than Bonn. The whistleblower was issued with a residence permit and a Reisedokument, a West German travel document. Perturbed U.S. Embassy officials were informed that the FRG “wishes above all to handle this quietly and avoid publicity to greatest possible extent” since “no further action” was planned by Hamburg authorities. State efforts to control the whistleblower’s movement had been undermined by the bureaucracy of the state itself.⁵⁴

Agee was settled in Hamburg when his U.S. passport was revoked. Any potential problems it raised for residency or his ability to work were soon offset by Grenada and Nicaragua who extended him passports out of solidarity. The whistleblower in turn did extensive solidarity work for the revolutionary Central American regimes. Following an invitation to speak at an

international seminar on the CIA by Prime Minister Maurice Bishop, Agee was granted a Grenadian passport. He wrote favorably on the New Jewel Movement, especially its decision to join the non-aligned movement and its health, education, and land reforms. During a 1981 trip he advised on resisting Agency-supported counterrevolutionaries. “Allow me to express our sincere appreciation for your consistency in speaking about the Revolutionary process in Grenada” and “the threats posed...by the present United States Administration,” Bishop wrote privately. “This, we are certain, will go a significant way in effectively combating the vicious propaganda to which we have been subjected.” Bishop’s path to socialist revolution proved insufficiently hardline for some members of the Movement, who deposed and executed him in 1983. The subsequent American military invasion brought about the return of the pre-revolutionary regime and the termination of Agee’s Grenadian passport.⁵⁵

Another socialist government promptly stepped in with a new passport. Drawing inspiration from other national liberation struggles in the Global South, the Nicaraguan Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional looked to Western European and American audiences as part of emerging transnational solidarity networks. These campaigns involved a global civic society – activists, scholars, journalists, film-makers, labor, religious groups, veterans, and the peace movement – that expressed solidarity with Managua and opposed U.S. sponsorship of the counterrevolutionary guerrilla Contras seeking to overthrow the Sandinistas. The critique of U.S. interventionism and promotion of domestic Nicaraguan health reforms, social justice, mass literacy campaigns, and gender equality resonated with Agee in Hamburg, who became active in the solidarity campaign.⁵⁶

The Nicaraguan passport allowed Agee to continue travelling and working. On visits to the country he participated in volunteer coffee production brigades – modeled on the Venceremos Brigades founded by Students for a Democratic Society and the Cuban regime – and praised the Revolution, penning articles for *Soberanía*, a quarterly magazine published in Spanish and English,

that featured a “naming names” column by its own writers. Furthermore, he advised the Sandinistas on resisting Contra raids and identifying CIA tradecraft. At a 1983 solidarity conference in Managua, Agee called for a continental front against the Agency, including mass protests at Embassies and Agency residences. The tactics previously employed in Europe were repackaged for Latin American needs. Agee’s revoked American passport was cited by Nicaraguan newspaper *Revista Envío* to highlight the double-standards of U.S. accusations against the Sandinistas, especially in the context of media censorship, dissent, and human rights.⁵⁷

An American in the world plugged into transnational protest networks, Agee had a key voice in international campaigns against U.S. interventionism. Márquez’s invitation to testify at the Russell Tribunal in Brussels marked the beginning of his involvement with Latin American solidarity campaigns. The speech received widespread press attention, causing consternation among U.S. diplomats as further details of CIA ties to organized labor were revealed. A year after the overthrow of Bishop, Agee embarked on a speaking and fundraising tour for “The Maurice Bishop and October 19, 1983 Martyrs Memorial Foundation,” taking in twenty-four cities in over eleven European countries. He was a frequent and outspoken critic of CIA involvement in Nicaragua and El Salvador, especially its backing of the Contras and José Napoleón Duarte, publishing work that circumvented the PRB through extemporaneous interviews with activists. Ideas and writing circulated since dissent did not respect national borders. Speaking at a 1987 rally for Nicaragua in Bonn, he shared a stage with the former FRG Chancellor and Berlin Mayor Willy Brandt.⁵⁸

Agee travelled widely on the Nicaraguan passport until it was revoked by the Violeta Chamorro government in 1990. One notable trip was a return to his homeland for the first time in almost twenty years. Since he was not subject to a warrant or prosecution, Agee’s 1987 U.S. visit proved trouble-free, as would further trips in subsequent years. He spoke around the country against U.S. interventionism, addressing public and town hall meetings and appearing on

public radio and TV talk shows including *Geraldo*. Agee collaborated with student activists developing a movement to push CIA recruiters off college campuses, penning a foreword to a protest manual. In carving out an activist-journalist career, Agee corresponded with ordinary citizens and increasingly engaged with the New Left critique of American Empire. Indeed, his revelations went some way to confirming the underlying arguments by critics of U.S. foreign policy. Agee communicated with prominent intellectuals and activists including Noam Chomsky, Edward Herman, Howard Zinn, and William Blum, reading draft manuscripts and supporting foreign translations of their works.⁵⁹

While settled in Hamburg for professional and personal reasons, Agee frequently visited Cuba, building links between the island, Western Europe, and North America. He established an online travel company that enabled American citizens to defy the U.S. government embargo on visiting the country. An individual who had worked for the CIA to isolate Cuba spent the final years of his life assisting other Americans circumvent travel restrictions. The exact nature of his relationship with the Castro regime nonetheless remains a blind spot for historians. Agee regularly travelled to the island and his travel business was based in a Havana apartment, which included a study stacked with papers and academic literature on international affairs, intelligence, and the CIA. With an independent income, albeit a small one from the travel agency and publishing, it is unclear whether he received a Cuban stipend like other prominent U.S. exiles. Agee certainly enjoyed the sanctuary afforded to American dissidents by the Cuban government.⁶⁰

Cuba nonetheless posed a dilemma as Agee's work both recognized and underplayed the connection. A tension marked his writing between expressing fondness for the Revolution and asserting the independence of his words. On the one hand, he acknowledged the assistance of communist party members during research for *Inside the Company* and advised the regime on resisting CIA operations. Agee openly endorsed the Cuban model, praising the healthcare

system, high literacy levels, and vision of social equality, although was notably silent on the lack of free speech and levels of poverty. On the other hand, he was eager for his writing to be free of Cuban influence. Agee's decision to move to Europe and the reason he fought to remain amid successive deportations was to avoid a permanent move to Havana. The struggle to write *Inside the Company* was not consistent with someone who received financial backing from a foreign government. While his time in Cuba requires further exploration, crucially, Agee's activism and solidarity work were more than a bipolar cold war story, extending around the world and continuing until his death.⁶¹

The Dilemma of Hegemony

On the eve of the publication of *Inside the Company*, CIA chief William Colby gave President Ford a heads-up that Agency tradecraft and operations would be exposed. Furthermore, he warned the book would be grist to the mill of critics, leading “to further public debate and concern about the CIA” and “intensified pressure from an ever larger Congressional audience.” Domestic scrutiny in the following years was unprecedented yet Colby had underestimated the fallout, which did not stop at the water’s edge but reverberated globally. European and Latin American governments were particularly concerned as Agee exposed their close political and security ties with the U.S. They too faced disgruntled public opinion that, as Mexican President Luis Echeverría complained to American officials, would be used against them by domestic opponents. National governments reacted by curbing Agee’s movement and censoring his writing. Yet the essential point was that his activities transpired through, across, and between nations.⁶²

Revelations by whistleblowers were part of a broader movement within western democracies for greater government accountability. In the U.S. context, insider exposures buttressed

congressional and popular efforts to modify the national security state. While the legacy of these reforms was mixed, historians have yet to examine the phenomenon of whistleblowing. Theoretical works by political scientists suggest that the changes brought by whistleblowers are limited while individuals face difficult personal futures. Agee's family life certainly bore the brunt of exile and opposition. Forced transnationalism was far from comfortable or romantic. His lawyer of over thirty years essentially worked pro-bono because he believed in his cause and Agee was rarely solvent.⁶³

Moving past questions of impact and purgatory, the critical issue is how whistleblowing re-conceptualizes debates about national security. By opening discussions previously off-limits due to the sanctity of state secrecy, it helps to identify structures of power and patterns in state retaliation against dissent. Contemporary whistleblowers like Edward Snowden also face uncertain futures as his revelations galvanized public and political discussion about surveillance culture, raising questions about the supposed “balance” between national security and civil liberties. Snowden’s exposures, like Agee before him, were made in exile, operating across borders and alongside non-state actors. They have informed and shaped wider debates around the world. Snowden is the latest “member of a group of citizens who have denounced the excesses of the north American empire,” notes Venezuelan scholar Keymer Ávila, following in the footsteps of the pioneering Philip Agee.⁶⁴

Examining whistleblowing in a transnational perspective also speaks to key transformations in state power in the modern era. As the U.S. national security state continues to grow so does the number of individuals requiring security clearances; 5.1 million Americans at a recent count, many of whom are not government employees. With more people accessing secrets, the greater the likelihood of future whistleblowers. The history of national security disclosures demonstrates that governments attack dissenting voices. Yet such efforts also serve to push whistleblowers into networks that foster revelations and provide greater visibility. Attempts to

curb dissent reveal the limits to state repression since transnational protest movements cannot be entirely stifled by the state. “Hegemonizing,” as Stuart Hall put it, “is hard work.”⁶⁵

¹ Gabriel García Márquez, “The CIA in Latin America,” *New York Review of Books*, Aug. 7, 1975.

² Philip Agee, *Inside the Company: CIA Diary* (London, 1975). Twelve years after the exposé Agee published a memoir, *On the Run* (Secaucus, 1987). On definitions of U.S. national security and the emergence of the modern national security state see: Melvyn P. Leffler, *Safeguarding Democratic Capitalism: U.S. Foreign Policy and National Security, 1920-2015* (Princeton, 2017); Andrew Preston, “Monsters Everywhere: A Genealogy of National Security,” *Diplomatic History*, 38 (June 2014), 477-500; Michael J. Hogan, *A Cross of Iron: Harry S. Truman and the Origins of the National Security State, 1945-1954* (New York, 1998).

³ Márquez, “The CIA in Latin America”; Gene H. Bell-Villada, *García Márquez: The Man and His Work*, 2nd ed.

(Chapel Hill, 2010), 64-69. On the dilemmas for Latin American intellectuals in navigating choppy cold war waters: Patrick Iber, *Neither Peace nor Freedom: The Cultural Cold War in Latin America* (Cambridge, Mass., 2015).

⁴ When Agee’s personal papers were donated to the Tamiment Library in New York in 2009, the CIA vetted the collection on arrival from storage in Cuba. There are few clues as to what was removed, while any Cuban copies are officially denied. The papers are nonetheless a remarkable collection, including hundreds of declassified government documents acquired via Freedom of Information Act requests. Philip Agee Papers (Tamiment Library & Robert F. Wagner Archives, New York University, N.Y.)

⁵ Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The Mitrokhin Archive: The KGB in Europe and the West* (London, 1999), 300-5; Oleg Kalugin, *SpyMaster: My 32 Years in Intelligence and Espionage Against the West* (London, 1994), 85, 191-92.

For more measured assessments: John Prados, *The Family Jewels: The CIA, Secrecy, and Presidential Power* (Austin, 2013), 236-56; Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, *In Spies We Trust: The Story of Western Intelligence* (Oxford, 2013), 162-68; and insisting on the defector accusation Christopher Moran, "Turning against the CIA: Whistleblowers During the 'Time of Troubles,'" *History*, 100 (April 2015), 251-74.

⁶ Robert Baer, "Havana's Man in Havana," *Foreign Policy*, Nov. 9, 2010, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2010/11/09/havanas-man-in-havana/>; Chris Agee, "Bridging the Gap: Philip Agee (1935-2008)," *NACLA Report on the Americas*, 42 (Jan.-Feb. 2009): 9-13; "Remembering Philip Agee," *Socialism and Democracy Online*, March 6, 2011, <http://sdonline.org/51/remembering-philip-agee/>. The patriot-traitor dichotomy is prevalent in coverage of modern-day whistleblowers: Chase Madar, *The Passion of Bradley Manning* (New York, 2012); Andrew Cohen, "Will Bradley Manning Be Remembered as a Traitor or a Patriot?," *Atlantic*, July 30, 2013, <http://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2013/07/will-bradley-manning-be-remembered-as-a-traitor-or-a-patriot/278193/>; Anthony D. Romero, "Edward Snowden is a Patriot," *American Civil Liberties Union*, Dec. 17, 2013, <https://www.aclu.org/blog/edward-snowden-patriot>; Jeffrey Toobin, "Edward Snowden is No Hero," *The New Yorker*, June 10, 2013, <http://www.newyorker.com/news/daily-comment/edward-snowden-is-no-hero>; Brent Budowsky, "Is alleged NSA leaker a hero or villain? A patriot or scoundrel?" *The Hill*, June 6, 2017, <http://thehill.com/blogs/pundits-blog/the-administration/336500-is-alleged-nsa-leaker-a-hero-or-villain-a-patriot-or>.

⁷ Patricia Clavin, "Defining Transnationalism," *Contemporary European History*, 14 (Nov. 2005), 422; Frank Costigliola and Thomas G. Paterson, "Doing and Defining U.S. Foreign Relations: A Primer," in *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, 2nd ed., ed., Michael J. Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson (New York, 2004), 24; "AHR

Conversation: On Transnational History," *American Historical Review*, 111 (Dec. 2006), 1443-45, 1449-50; Pierre-Yves Saunier, *Transnational History* (Basingstoke, 2013), 3. Key works on voluntary American travelers include: Brooke L. Blower, *Becoming Americans in Paris: Transatlantic Politics and Culture between the World Wars* (New York, 2011); Christopher Endy, *Cold War Holidays: American Tourism in France* (Chapel Hill, 2004); Ian Tyrrell, *Reforming the World: The Creation of America's Moral Empire* (Princeton, 2010); Emily S. Rosenberg, *Financial Missionaries to the World: The Politics and Culture of Dollar Diplomacy* (Durham, 2003); Jason Colby, *The Business of Empire: United Fruit, Race, and U.S. Expansion in Central America* (Ithaca, 2001); Thomas W. Zeiler, *Ambassadors in Pinstripes: The Spalding World Baseball Tour and the Birth of the American Empire* (Lanham, 2006); Sarah B. Snyder, *From Selma to Moscow: How Human Rights Activists Transformed U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York, 2018).

⁸ Lawrence S. Wittner, *One World or None: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement through 1953* (Stanford, 1993); *ibid.*, *Resisting the Bomb: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement, 1954-1970* (Stanford, 1997); April Carter, *Peace Movements: International Protests and World Politics since 1945* (London, 1992); Benjamin Ziemann, ed., *Peace Movements in Western Europe, Japan and the USA during the Cold War* (Essen, 2007); Charles DeBenedetti with Charles Chatfield, *An American Ordeal: The Antiwar Movement of the Vietnam Era* (Syracuse, 1990); Melvin Small and William D. Hoover, eds., *Give Peace a Chance: Explaining the Vietnam Antiwar Movement* (Syracuse, 1992); Carole Fink et al., eds., *1968: The World Transformed* (New York, 1998); Martin Klimke and Joachim Scharloth, eds., *1968 in Europe: A History of Protest and Activism, 1956-1977* (New York, 2008); Two exceptions going beyond the 1970s, albeit exclusively in the U.S. context, are: Howard Brick and Christopher Phelps, *Radicals in America: The U.S. Left since the Second World War* (New York, 2015); Michael S. Foley, *Front Porch Politics: The Forgotten Heyday of American Activism in the 1970s and 1980s* (New York, 2013).

⁹ The iconoclastic revisionist history remains: William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (Cleveland, 1959). Agee can be considered part of a tradition of popular leftist critiques of U.S. power, including Howard Zinn, Noam Chomsky, and specifically relating to the CIA: Alfred McCoy, *A Question of Torture: CIA Interrogation from the Cold War to the War on Terror* (New York, 2006); Tim Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA* (New York, 2007); Peter Dale Scott, *American War Machine: Deep Politics, the CIA Global Drug Connection, and the Road to Afghanistan* (Lanham, 2010). Examples of the impact of Agee's writing outside the Anglo-sphere include: Roberto Faenza and Marco Fini, *Gli Americani in Italia* (Milan, 1976); Juan Alberto Bozza, "Estrategias anticomunistas norteamericanas frente a la radicalización sindical en Argentina y Chile (1962/1973)," *PolHis*, 5 (no.10, 2012), 197-210.

¹⁰ Bruce J. Schulman, *The Seventies: The Great Shift in American Culture, Society, and Politics* (New York, 2001); Daniel Rodgers, *Age of Fracture* (Cambridge, Mass., 2011) Niall Ferguson et al., eds., *The Shock of the Global: The 1970s in Perspective* (Cambridge, Mass., 2010); Daniel J. Sargent, *A Superpower Transformed: The Remaking of American Foreign Relations in the 1970s* (New York, 2015); Thomas Borstelmann, *The 1970s: A New Global History from Civil Rights to Economic Inequality* (Princeton, 2012); On congressional intelligence investigations and the backlash: Loch K. Johnson, *A Season of Inquiry: The Senate Intelligence Investigation* (Lexington, 1985); Kathryn S. Olmsted, *Challenging the Secret Government: The Post-Watergate Investigations of the CIA and FBI* (Chapel Hill, 1996); Anne Hessing Cahn, *Killing Détente: The Right Attacks the CIA* (University Park, 1998).

¹¹ Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (Cambridge, Mass., 2012); Stefan-Ludwig Hoffman, ed., *Human Rights in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, Eng., 2010); Sarah B. Snyder, *Human Rights Activism and the End of the Cold War: A Transnational History of the Helsinki Network* (New York, 2011); Lynn Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights: A*

History (New York, 2008); Akira Iriye, Petra Goedde and William Hitchcock, eds., *The Human Rights Revolution: An International History* (New York, 2010); Barbara J. Keys, *Reclaiming American Virtue: The Human Rights Revolution of the 1970s* (Cambridge, Mass., 2014); Mark Philip Bradley, *The World Reimagined: Americans and Human Rights in the Twentieth Century* (New York, 2016).

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⁶¹ Agee, *Inside the Company*, 584-89, 659; Agee, *On the Run*, 28, 369; Agee, “Terrorism and Civil Society as Instruments

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⁶² William Colby to Gerald Ford, Dec. 21, 1974. *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969–1976*, XXXVIII, Part 2, 28;

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⁶³ Alford, *Whistleblowers*, 18-20; Sagar, *Secrets and Leaks*, 144-49, 181-204; Interview, Wulf; Agee to Lyle Stuart, July 5,

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Agee Papers.

⁶⁴ Nick Cullather, “Security and Liberty: The Imaginary Balance,” in *The Snowden Reader*, ed. David P. Fiddler

(Bloomington, 2015), 19-25; Keymer Ávila, “Diez claves del caso Snowden,” *Casa de las Américas*, 272 (July-Sept.

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⁶⁵ Brian Fung, “5.1 million Americans have security clearances.” *Washington Post*, March 24, 2014:

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