

Exposing U.S. Empire

Philip Agee as a Model for Today's Whistleblowers and Dissidents



*CovertAction Magazine presents a Roundtable Webinar with
Legendary Whistleblower Daniel Ellsberg*

*Also speaking: Col. Ann Wright, Chris Agee, Louis Wolf and more...
Moderated by Mimi Rosenberg*

DATE: July 26, 2021 - TIME: 12:00pm–2:00pm EST
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PARTICIPATION IS FREE

In May, former National Security Council Adviser Jonathan Stevenson published a book accusing CIA whistleblower Philip Agee of treason. In June, on the 50th anniversary of the publication of the Pentagon Papers, the New York Times published an op-ed hatchet job on Daniel Ellsberg arguing his actions were an assault on democracy.

On the eve of Daniel Hale's July 27th sentencing for exposing the inner-truths of the drone war whereby 90% of casualties are civilians—and with Snowden and Assange arguing their respective cases—it behooves us to clarify what is a whistleblower and why do they go public.

In the case of Stevenson's characterization of Agee as a traitor, he did not actually provide any proof that Agee collaborated with any foreign power or supplied information to them illegally; rather, Agee publicly disclosed the names of CIA officers. Stevenson furthermore did not like that Agee provided a structural critique of U.S. empire, driven by corporate, plutocratic greed and engineered through regime-change operations.

Stevenson groups Agee and Edward Snowden as “bad whistleblowers,” who question U.S. empire, while lauding more moderate whistleblowers, like Ellsberg (as Stevenson sees him) and Bill Binney, who only criticized specific surveillance programs.

On the eve of Hale's sentencing, this webinar will offer a rebuttal to Stevenson's book and similar arguments that conflate moral and patriotic efforts to call out government criminality with so-called “agents of a foreign principal.” By providing an accurate examination of Philip Agee's career, among others, we will detail the motives behind whistleblowers' disclosures and the substance behind their analysis.

Our aim in invoking Agee's legacy is to empower a new generation of whistleblowers to speak out against government abuses and the U.S. empire. We hope that these whistleblowers will not just oppose specific government excesses (i.e., torture or mass surveillance) but will also follow Agee's example in raising public awareness about the structural imperatives driving American exceptionalism and the wanton abuse of human rights that it engenders.

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