IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

HAROLD WEISBERG

Plaintiff,

y.

Civil Action No. 77-1997

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

AGENCY, et al.,

Defendants.

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Washington, D. C.
September 13, 1978

The above-entitled matter came on for motion for summary judgment before THE HONORABLE JOHN LEWIS SMITH, JR., United States District Judge, at 10:10 a.m.

APPEARANCES:

On behalf of the Plaintiff:

JAMES LESAR, ESQ.

On behalf of the Defendants:

MISS JOANN DOLAN
MISS LAUMIE ZIEBELL

DAWN T. COPELAND OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER

## PROCEEDINGS

THE DEPUTY CLERK: Civil Action No. 77-1997. Weisberg v. CIA.

Mr. Lesar, Miss Dolan and Miss Ziebell.

MISS DOLAN: Good morning, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Good morning.

MISS DOLAN: Your Honor, before I begin, I would like to direct the Court's attention to the case of Hayden v.

NSA, which I cited in both of my papers and which was recently reported in 452 F. Supp. 247.

Your Honor, the record of this Freedom of Information
Act application adequately covers the bases upon which the
defendants have moved for summary judgment.

Indeed, the record has tripled the volume of the documents involved in the case.

The defendants have addressed in numerous affidavits each document located pursuant to the plaintiff's Freedom of Information Act request pertaining to Martin Luther King and James Earl Ray including those documents referred to originating at agencies other than the party defendants in this litigation.

Of the total of 485 documents, 230 are CIA documents and 20 documents referred to non-party agencies, were released to plaintiff in their entirety.

One hundred four CIA documents and three referred

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documents were released subject to deletions taken under the Freedom of Information Act.

A mere 31 CIA documents and 27 NSA documents were denied in their entirety.

There are in addition 62 copies -- 62 documents of which copies were located -- there were 62 FBI documents, classified FBI documents that were located in CIA files.

Those documents were referred to the FBI with a direct response to the plaintiff.

However, as those documents are classified, the CIA has no authority under the executive order 10652 to make any disposition of those documents, to alter the classification or to release them.

Therefore, it is defendants' position that those 62 documents are not at issue in this litigation.

The documents at issue in this litigation have been fully scrutinized to afford the maximum disclosure to the plaintiff.

This Court may only review the withholding of the 165 documents that have been withheld in whole or in part.

Despite the Government's concern for maximum disclosure, the nature of these documents are such, highly sensitive national security information and highly personal information about third parties, and that has been deleted pursuant to exemptions 1, 3 and 6 of the Freedom of Information

Act. In addition, at the request of the non-party agencies, three documents have been withheld pursuant to the -- minor portions of three documents have been withheld pursuant to exemptions B-7-C and B-7-D.

It is apparent that the majority of theinformation withheld for national security reasons is because release would reveal sensitive intelligence information concerning U.S. capabilities in collecting intelligence information.

Such information in the CIA files pertains to intelligence sources, to arrangements abroad, to intelligence methods employed in the CIA and in the case of the NSA it pertains to communications, intelligence techniques.

In each case the information protected by the defendants has consistently been recognized as being information protected by statute and is therefore exempt under B-3.

That information is protected in the case of NSA by Public Law 8636 and in the case of CIA by 50 USC 403-D and -G.

In addition, this intelligence information is for obvious reasons, in many instances, classified as indicated by the affidavits filed in this court. All classified information has been duly reviewed by duly authorized classified officers who have attested on the record that they have determined that each document or each portion withheld pursuant to exemption 1 is classified pursuant to Executive Order 10652

and bears the appropriate markings required by the Executive Order, requires continued classification and requires that classification because release could reasonably be expected to at least harm the national security of this Government.

That surely has been deemed by this Circuit, by this District Court, to be an adequate showing that the proper procedures in the classification have been followed.

Morever, the detailed description by both defendants also demonstrates that there is no doubt as to the validity of the substance -- the classification and the substance of these documents.

Finally, with regard to CIA privacy claims under exemption 6, a review of the documents we have attached to the record indicates that the CIA has scrupulously withheld material under exemption 6 where the release of that information would be embarrassing to individuals.

It is not claiming privacy for every individual listed in its file. It is evident in going through the documents that in cases in which the information contained in the documents or the context of the documents illustrates that the information is in the public record, or that the information would not be of an embarrassment to the individual, that information has been released.

In other cases, the CIA was compelled to protect the privacy of individuals in its files and we feel it is

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in the public interest as well to protect that privacy.

In conclusion, the defendants are confident that the exemptions claimed in this action are legally justified and in addition, the defendants are further confident that all relevant issues have been thoroughly addressed in the pleadings filed with this Court.

However, in light of recent decisions that have been filed in this Circuit the defendants would like to have the opportunity to supplement the record with some additional information and clarification that may assist the Court in deciding these legal issues.

In addition, Your Honor, if Your Honor feels that it is necessary the NSA would be prepared to file an in camera affidavit if you feel supplementation is required.

However, we are confident on the record before you now and on the basis of such supplementation that you would have no problem in finding that the withholdings in this case are fully justified under the Freedom of Information Act.

THE COURT: How long would you want to file the supplemental information?

MISS DOLAN: I would think three days if that is possible.

Thank you.

MR. LESAR: Good morning, Your Honor, Jim Lesar for Mr. Weisberg.

Association case?

MR. LESAR: Well, that case -- Acti

MR. LESAR: Well, that case -- Actually, it was about four cases and they dealt with a lawsuit seeking certain data

THE COURT: What were the facts in the National

Your Honor, the issue before the Court, the primary issue on the motion for summary judgment, is whether or not there are material facts in dispute.

This Circuit has recently handed down decisions which I think are very important on that issue which reflect a much deeper concern by the Court of Appeals over the way in which Freedom of Information cases have sometimes been handled in the District Court.

I wish to call the Court's attention in particular to the decision which the Court of Appeals handed down on May 9th, 1978 in the case of National Association of Government Employees v. Campbell, et al., on page 9 of the slip opinion the Court said, "Summary judgment is unavailable if it depends upon any fact that the record leaves susceptible to dispute. Facts not conclusively demonstrated but essential to the movant's claim are not established merely by opponent's silence, but rather the movant must shoulder the burden of showing affirmatively the absence of any meaningful factual issue. That responsibility may not be relieved through adjudication since the Court's function is limited to ascertaining whether any factual issue pertinent to the controversy exists --"

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pertaining to insurance agreements between federal agencies and Government employees, and it was an attempt to get at that data.

The Government filed affidavits which raised certain factual issues about whether or not these documents fit within exemption 4 which deals with confidential and financial information.

The District Court awarded summary judgment in favor of the plaintiffs, the FOI plaintiffs, and determined the facts, as it were, simply on the record against the Government in the face of the Government's affidavits which raised what the Court of Appeals felt was an issue of material fact.

The Court very strongly, repeatedly, emphasized that at that stage of the litigation, the role of the Court was simply to determine whether or not issues of material fact are in dispute and not to resolve the issues in that stage of the litigation.

It also called attention to the fact that particularly in cases where the resolution of the facts depend upon the credibility of expert witnesses, special caution is called for by the District Court and that, of course, is the situation that we have here. We have expert witnesses not subjected to cross-examination and asserting their conclusions where the adversary has no opportunity to test the validity of those conclusions.

Now, it is obvious that there are factual issues in dispute here and the most obvious of them is the question about the nature of the search, whether or not a thorough search was made. It has become quite apparent from the supplementary affidavits that have been filed and put into the record by the defendant — by the Central Intelligence Agency in particular, that they have interpreted or misrepresented the request by Mr. Weisberg and particularly with respect to item 6 of that request.

Item 6 requested all analyses, commentaries, reports or investigations on or in any way pertaining to any public materials on the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. or theauthors of said materials.

Now, the CIA has admitted in their supplementary affidavits that they did not conduct any search for materials or the authors in the assassination of Dr. King.

Their pretext for not doing this beggars the imagination. They say that we didn't provide them with the names of the authors of the books as if the greatest intelligence agency of the United States was unable to and did not know who has written the books on the assassination of Dr. King, and as if they had not known that Dr. Weisberg had written a book on the assassination of Dr. King.

This is typical of the many sorts of examples of bad faith, that has been in our dealings with the Central

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Intelligence Agency, and which are reflected in the record.

In fact, it is quite clear and plaintiff has put into the record evidence that the CIA does have records on the authors of books on Dr. King's assassination. Those records have not been provided and in fact it is now apparent that no search was made for them.

A second factual issue in dispute would concern the status of the 62 or the 64 referrals that have been made to the FBI.

The Government has now taken the position that those are not now properly the subject of this case. I think it is an absurd position. In many other cases that I have been involved in the referrals by the agency sued to another agency, has always been treated as part of the cases and again it is indicative of the agency in not proceeding in good faith and trying to invent pretextual reasons for not producing the documents.

The Freedom of Information Act is quite clear. suit is against the agency which has the possession of the documents. The CIA unquestionably has possession of these documents.

Of course, if it is necessary to do so, we could amend the complaint to include the FBI as part of the suit and then that would resolve that question. I really don't think that there is any reason to do so.

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There is also a question as to whether or not the documents are properly classified. We don't know. All we have is the CIA's word for it and their word is increasingly being subjected to the closest scrutiny by the United States Court of Appeals.

I think it is quite obvious why and that is because it is becoming obvious to the Court of Appeals that time and again the affidavits submitted by the CIA are not accurate and do not reflect the facts.

The defendants in this case relied very heavily on the Goland decision. That is Goland v. CIA and the issue there deals with the search made by the CIA and if you read the decision in Ray v. Turner, which the defendants filed with the Court yesterday, you find out that one week after the Court of Appeals had decided the case in favor of the CIA, the CIA suddenly admitted to the Court and to the appellants in the case that for six months they had known of the existence of 321 documents which they had withheld from the judicial process but which were possibly relevant to the scope of the plaintiff's request.

So you have this issue come up again and again. The intelligence agencies all use words with meanings they have attached to them that are peculiar to the rest of us and which again misrepresent the situation.

This is apparent from the case of Marks v. Central

Intelligence Agency, case 77-1225, again, which the Government filed with the Court yesterday.

I call to the Court's attention page 1, footnote 4 of that decision in which Chief Judge Wright, who was concurring in part and dissenting in part noted that the CIA had originally withheld portions of a document under exemption 7-E that deals with investigative techniques and procedures and ultimately, however, after the case was in court, they released -- I guess quoting from the footnote, the agency formerly described a portion now released as "Information which is a product of a national security and intelligence investigation which if released or described in any manner would disclose the intelligence method of investigative technique utilized."

That is cited and what it turned out was what he is talking about of secret techniques and procedures were in fact photographs taken of Mr. Marks on the street outside of a restaurant. That is what it boiled down to.

Judge Wright noted that at least on their face such photographs do not qualify as the kind of investigative techniques and procedures that Congress intended to be protected from disclosure.

Now, we have the same kind of issue in this case with respect to intelligence sources and methods.

The Government in -- in the Ray v. Turner case, Judge Wright noted, and I think it is very significant that on page

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46 of his concurring opinion, he notes that there is a distinction between 50 USC 403(b)(3), 50 USC 403(b)(g), both of which Courts have previously held to be exemption 3 statute and he says that while -- Reading from the opinion on page 46 of the concurring opinion by Judge Wright, while "Particular types of matters listed in 403(g)e.g. names, official titles, salaries) are fairly specific. Section 403-B-3's language of protecting intelligence sources and methods is potentially quite expansive. To fulfill Congress' intent to close the loophole created in Robertson, courts must be particularly careful when scrutinizing claims of exemptions based on such expansive terms. The de novo determination that releasing contested material could in fact reasonably be expected to expose intelligence sources or methods, it is thus essential"-when an agency seeks to rely on Section 403-B-3."

Then he drops down to footnote 39 and says, "A court may determine, for example, that the terms intelligence sources and methods, like the terms of investigative techniques and procedures in exemption 7-E, should not be interpreted to include routine techniques and procedures already wellknown to the public."

We have made this point repeatedly throughout this case in Mr. Weisberg's affidavit that there is no statement in the affidavits that the information which is being withheld is not already public and our past experience indicates that

the agency in fact does claim secrecy and claims the protection of this provision of the law, when in fact the information is already public.

So under these circumstances I think the way to proceed, and I think there is abundant support for this in the recent opinions of the Court of Appeals, that is to permit the plaintiff to undertake some discovery and then if need be for the Court to examine the materials in camera with the aid of a classification expert suggested by plaintiff.

We do have a classification expert in mind that we -who we think would be of great assistance in this matter if
that issue should be reached.

We think that first discovery is needed.

Finally, with respect to exemption 6, the Court of Appeals in the -- I am sorry. My memory fails me at the moment, and I don't see a note on it, and I don't know if it was the Court of Appeals or Judge Wright, but one or the other indicated that the CIA -- the CIA's claim of exemption 6 in that case might be overbroad, and I think that is the situation here.

We need to take some discovery to determine just what interpretation the CIA places on exemption 6. At present there are no facts that would justify this Court in assuming that the CIA has carried its burden properly, concluded the material withheld is exempt under exemption 6.

For example, there are not statements in the affidavits. They just say that they conclude there will be harm done to certain individuals if their names are released but there are no facts that can provide for this Court the basis of determining the degree of damage.

Under exemption 6 the Court has to engage in a balancing test and so the Court needs to know what kind of harm would come and are they talking about facts so severe that would ruin a man's reputation or are they simply talking about something very minor like the fact that his name was in a CIA document.

Those are the kinds of things that we need discovery to determine.

Now, counsel for the Government has indicated that it wants to file some supplementary, I gather, affidavits or materials of one kind or another.

Mr. Weisberg has worked very hard over the weekend and yesterday and the day before to finish up an affidavit which we think will be of assistance to the Court and we will be filing that either later this afternoon or tomorrow.

I think that about concludes it but there are a couple of other points that I would like to make.

The Government's reply brief alluded to a misstatement in Mr. Weisberg's affidavit regarding an affidavit by
Mr. -- I believe it is Mr. Briggs of the CIA. In fact, Mr.

Briggs had not submitted an affidavit.

As I told the Government counsel after I had received the reply brief, we have become aware that that was a misstatement of fact and Mr. Weisberg had executed an affidavit correcting that fact.

He gave the affidavit to me some time very shortly after the Government's reply brief was filed and I have lost it. I can't find it. I have searched and searched and I cannot find it, but sooner or later it will turn up. The affidavit was made, though.

The Government is correct that that was a mistake and I do want to correct for the record.

There is one other factual issue that I forgot to mention that relates to the \$500 deposit which Mr. Weisberg made to the CIA and which they have never refunded in spite of the fact it is apparent now and their affidavits admit that the cost in this case would not begin to approach \$500.

The CIA claims that he owes them money for another Freedom of Information Act case. Again, that is not a full and accurate representation of the proceedings between the two.

Mr. Weisberg had in fact offered to pay that. He had made a request for a waiver of the cost in that case and that related to documents on the CIA so-called mindbending activities.

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Those documents had been withheld from Mr. Weisberg until after they had been made available to other persons. He then requested them and they chose to treat that as a new request and they never acted on his appeal for a waiver to the fees in that case, and they have not responded to a letter in which he offered them alternative ways to proceed with respect to the fees in that case.

The fact is that they requested a \$500 deposit, the costs come nowhere near that and he is entitled to that money back.

I think unless the Court has questions, that concludes my presentation.

THE COURT: I have no questions. Is there anything further?

MISS DOLAN: Yes. I would like to start with the last point and the question of the \$500 fee that was paid.

Mr. Weisberg was informed in March of this year that that money either would be applied to the amount he owes in another administrative matter or it may be refunded to him. It was completely his choice, and I am informed that there has been no record of response to his pressing that matter and so it is completely Mr. Weisberg's choice, whether he wants the money applied to that other matter or whether he wants the money refunded.

MR. LESAR: Your Honor, if that is the case, we

will take the refund right now.

MISS DOLAN: Well, I don't have the money with me, but we will make the necessary arrangements.

THE COURT: All right.

MISS DOLAN: A few other points plaintiff has raised in the case of NAG v. Campbell, that case isn't cited in our briefs. I read it some time ago. I feel there are distinguishing points in it. If my recollection serves me right, I believe discovery was sought — I believe it was the Government that was proceeding in that case. The facts might be a bit different and I would like to review it before responding to it.

Mr. Weisberg -- Mr. Lesar has raised a question as to why the CIA was unable to retrieve documents pertaining to publications written about the assassinations.

The affidavit filed in August of this year, I believe, explains that those documents were not retrievable by name of Martin Luther King or James Earl Ray and therefore unless they can give some indication as to how to retrieve documents indexed in their files according to the authors' names, they could not retrieve it pursuant to this request which was held to pertain to Martin Luther King and James Earl Ray.

Moreover, to suggest that the CIA was responsible for researching what had been written on the subject from

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sources all over this country, the world, and their burden is to research their records and therefore, that material did not turn up in response to this request.

On the question of referrals, plaintiff's counsel is correct. In many instances we do track documents referred to other agencies and in this case we have tracked all unclassified documents and have filed supplemental affidavits from six agencies whose documents were located in CIA files.

Classified documents are different, Your Honor.

Copies were in Central Intelligence Agency files but they have no control over the disposition of those documents.

If the events develop that the FBI justifies the classification of those documents and if for some reason this Court was not satisfied with that and ultimately a release was ordered, the Central Intelligence Agency still would not have the authority to release those documents because they are classified by the FBI.

Therefore, unless the FBI is a party, we do not see how those documents can be given this Court's jurisdiction.

As to the suggestion that he would amend his complaint at this stage to include the FBI, he did that at the complaint stage, then perhaps he realized that classified NSA documents could not be released unless they were a party defendant.

At this stage we are very close to summary judgment

and I think it would be inappropriate to amend the proceeding in that regard.

On the question of classification, Your Honor, it appears that the plaintiff's only attack to the classification is an attack on the credibility of the witnesses in this case. We feel that we have already established adequately the proper procedures that we followed and I addressed those remarks earlier.

As to the question of whether they are classified in nature, I think it would be evident that this type of information would be classifiable.

There is nothing to refute the veracity of the affiants in this case other than the allegations of plaintiff and unless Your Honor has questions as to the contents of those documents, I don't think there is any question of classification here.

I think plaintiff's argument as to our position of intelligence sources was interesting, but why he feels discovery by a classification expert would resolve this exemption 3 issue, we do not understand.

We feel that if the record is not clear at this point, our supplemental affidavit should more than adequately resolve that matter.

Finally, as to his comment on exemption 6, as

I stated earlier we have not claimed exemption 6 for every

instance in which a name appears. We feel that our index explains why that particular information would be harmful to the individual whose privacy is protected.

Thank you.

THE COURT: Mr. Lesar.

MR. LESAR: Your Honor, justa couple of brief comments.

First, my client has given me a note informing me that I misspoke myself when I addressed the question of his missing affidavit. I said that he had executed the affidavit after the Government had filed its reply brief. He says he believes it was before the Government had filed its reply brief and he is correct. I now recall that. It was immediately after I had filed my opposition that we became aware of it and corrected it.

On the question of the FBI referrals, it is a very simple problem.

I don't think that until rather recently that I
was even aware that any documents had been referred to the
FBI. Certainly, I don't recall at any time during the administrative process in the two years prior — the approximate
two years prior to the institution of this suit — excuse me,
I guess it was about a year. The request was in June of
1976 and we filed suit in 1977 and so there was a period of
a year or so when there was some administrative matters and

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at no time do I recall any reference being made to referrals
to the FBI and so how could I bring suit against the FBI
without in fact knowing the referrals had been made. It just
strikes me as a frivolous issue.

I want to raise what I really think is a central issue, in order for this Court to find for the Government and to grant them summary judgment the Court has to accept as true the Government's affidavit.

Now, the problem is, and I think our affidavits demonstrate, that there have been many cases where the affidavits submitted by the Government have proved either not to be true or not to be accurate.

There is a particularly graphic example of this and I would like to relate that to the Court because I know the Government in its reply brief made an attempt to blacken Mr. Weisberg and myself by saying that we made these charges because we disbelieve in the honesty of Government officials, but that is a canard. There is absolutely no basis for that.

In fact the example I am going to give will show that where we did disbelieve in Government's affidavits in a particularly crucial matter, we were proven right.

In the suit that Mr. Weisberg brought originally back in 1970, then it was rebrought after exemption 7 was amended in 1974, the Government submitted an affidavit to the Court stating that no neutron activation analysis had

been performed on Specimen Q-15 in the assassination of President Kennedy.

Judge Pratt accepted the Government's affidavit on that point and threw us out of Court. We took it to the Court of Appeals which found that the issues being raised by Mr. Weisberg were of interest to the nation and remanded it for discovery including depositions or possibly live testimony from former FBI agents who actually conducted the test.

When we took these depositions, Your Honor, we established that in fact the neutron activation tests on Specimen Q-15 had been performed and so the Government's affidavits were false and the discovery proved it so.

This is not just a matter of my opinion or Mr.
Weisberg's opinion. It is a finding of fact made by Judge
Pratt in the case of Weisberg v. The Department of Justice
and it is reported at 438 F. Supp. 492, p. 503.

That, I think, is the perfect example for the need for the Court to exercise caution in accepting the Government's affidavit and for our need for discovery.

Thank you, Your Honor.

MISS DOLAN: May I reply?

THE COURT: Very briefly, yes.

MISS DOLAN: On that last point, Your Honor, that case was against the FBI. It should not have any relevance here as against the CIA.

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On the question of the referrals, it is true that the documents of the FBI were turned up during the latter processing of the documents and not the processing that occurred in 1976, therefore, the referrals were very late and plaintiff knew it.

However, the affidavit of Martin Wood of the FBI clarified for this Court that plaintiff has contemporaneous requests of the FBI and therefore, we do not feel that he has been prejudiced by the late referrals in this case.

Finally, I believe -- I believe some point during plaintiff's argument he suggested that he would like to have an in camera expert on his behalf. The Government would vigorously oppose that if we ever got to that stage in this case.

Thank you.

THE COURT: I will consider the matter further and advise counsel at a later time.

With reference to the Government's request, you will have 20 days to file any supplemental memorandum. That will be on or before October 3rd.

If you desire, you can have the same right to file anything you desire during that period of time.

MR. LESAR: May I make an inquiry?

THE COURT: Yes.

MR. LESAR: Will the supplemental material be

affidavits and exhibits or will it include, for example, a brief on the most recent Court of Appeals case?

It may be helpful to the Court if we do brief the impact of the two recent decisions on this case.

THE COURT: You may do so if you so desire.

MISS DOLAN: Our intention was to file an affidavit but I assume that either of us can file a supplemental brief.

THE COURT: That is right.

(Whereupon, the hearing was concluded.)

## CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

It is hereby certified by the undersigned reporter that the foregoing transcript is the official record of the above-entitled matter.

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