

12/31/74

Senator William Proxmire
Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C.

Dear Senator Proxmire,

As I heard Senator Case's observations about the CIA and perjury as they were rebroadcast Monday morning he did not give a source. I write because I believe it can be useful to you now. It is the fourth of my Whitewash series of books on the JFK assassination, and in it a formerly TOP SECRET transcript of an executive session. I obtained the transcript, after six years of official misrepresentation of the Freedom of Information law, in a bizarre suit in which I was represented by my colleague in this book, Jim Lesar.

Jim and I had hoped to be able to give each Member a copy of this book prior to its appearance because of its content about the CIA and because of the values Members may have found as they considered whether or not to over-ride the President's veto of the amendments to the law. It was beyond our capabilities.

(If you were present during the May 30, 1974 debate, you may recall that another of my Freedom of Information suits figured in the Senate's belief the law required amending to return it to the original intent of the Congress.)

When Allen Dulles expected his words to be secret in perpetuity because of official misuse of rubber stamps and classification, he let his hair down with his fellow Warren Commission members. He then told them that the CIA and the FBI swear falsely from top to bottom, that this is right and proper, and that it is not possible to check their word on who is their agent because only two people can know and they will swear falsely and besides, if there are written records they would be in hieroglyphics comprehensible to these two perjurers. This is the actuality of the Watergate investigations, as my own work leaves without doubt. This also spells out a serious problem for any Senatorial inquest.

When the first New York Times story on the CIA's domestic intelligence broke Jim and I discussed which Members he would try to take copies of our book. You are one of them. If he has not yet been to your office because of the other work he must do, if you would like a copy and if you would like copies for others on your committee, if you would have one of your staff please send me franks addressed to those you would like to receive them I will mail them promptly.

There is a whole area of CIA domestic activity that to the best of my knowledge remains undisclosed. By means of a cover they intrude upon the first-amendment rights of Americans within the United States. I am one. I have the proof and I have, through Jim Lesar, raised questions about it with the CIA. If I do not obtain relief I intend to sue. There is also another kind of domestic activity I hope could be included if there is at this late date the kind of thoroughgoing investigation the nation and its intelligence services need. This is the conditioning of the national mind through subsidized and sponsored books.

Yesterday's stories quoting you as having independent confirmation of the Times' disclosures are general. If your sources can inform you whether or not to their knowledge I was the subject of these improper interests I would appreciate knowing it. I do not in any sense fit the alleged justification. While I was opposed to the adventures in Southeast Asia from the outset, I was not an activist and participated in no demonstrations.

My only activities have been writing and speaking and investigating so I could write, with one exception: I have been James Earl Ray's investigator and did the investigating that led to Jim Lesar's successful habeas corpus petition. (A hearing was held in Memphis beginning October 22. We await the judge's decision on whether Ray will receive a trial.) This is to say that any official interest in me has to transgress against the first amendment no matter how it is disguised with a cover story.

Nor have I had any foreign connections except in connection with my writing and publishing.

I am not unknown to the CIA and the FBI. I was in OSS and I have lived and worked with the FBI. The Department of Justice once borrowed me from the Senate when I was a Senate investigator. When I was an investigative reporter I did what was and I believe remains the definitive work on Nazi cartels. I then gave the fruits of my investigations to the Department. In several cases my exposes were followed by official actions. Because this work coincided with the period of the Nazi-Soviet pact, it should have laid to rest any paranoid suspicions that I could have been a Communist, which I have never been.

Aside from the absolutely solid proof I have of surveillance on my public appearances that I do have I have what I regard as substantial reason to believe there were other CIA intrusions into my first-amendment rights. These led me to take a closer look at E. Howard Hunt and that, in turn, made it child's play to pinpoint the CIA "station" in Washington. To the degree it was appropriate to a Watergate book I have almost completed I have checked into other domestic activities. They disclose a pattern of such loose operations that they enable self-starters to go off on their own and to engage in improper activities with what amounts to a CIA subsidy if not direction. One specific and unreported illustration happens to involve a man recently reported as the subject of CIA interest. Subsidy is also hidden in seemingly proper federal contracts. Because disclosing all of this now could ruin the prospects of a book that represents much time and work I would be willing to tell you about this in confidence and would consider not insisting on confidentiality if you believe it is necessary to disclose it now.

Whether or not I can help you - and I am but an hour away if I can - I do thank you for taking a leadership role in correcting abuses that endanger any system of free society. At the same time, I would also encourage you not to be too hopeful about the performance you could expect of a special prosecutor. The Special Watergate Prosecution sat on and suppressed much that interests you and I can give you some of it, as I've indicated above. This was not because Leon Jaworski was part of covert CIA activities, which he was, personally and as a conduit. There is a clear record of difference between appearance and performance and there is, currently, suppression. I can give you a file of my unsuccessful efforts to obtain copies of public evidence, evidence introduced in trials and published. In each of the two cases the CIA is involved. And the Department of Justice has not even acknowledged my appeals under the Freedom of Information law.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg