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Mr. R. James Woolsey, Director - PERSONAL
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, DC

10/17/94

Dear Mr. Woolsey,

It may be a futility to address you personally, as it has been in the past with another director, but as I then believed, I believe now that the director should know what I write about. Not someone, as then, with an interest in his not knowing.

The current criticisms of the CIA reminds me. But first I apologize for my typing and ~~wir~~ writing. I'm 81, in impaired health and they can be no better.

When ~~I~~ under FOIA I first requested the CIA's records on and about me I got no response. The law then required acknowledgements within 10 days. A lawyer friend then spoke to General Counsel Lawrence Houston. He invited us to visit him. He told us he found no record of my making any such requests. When I showed him two carbon copies he knew I had made those requests. So, to begin with, others in the CIA lied to its general counsel to violate the law and to deny me my rights under it.

Thereafter I did receive a few records, what I ~~then~~ knew was far from all. As always happened, appeal was a futility.

When the Privacy Act was passed I was by this CIA dishonesty denied my rights under that Act. Now I am told that ~~in~~ under the 1992 Act the CIA has deposited at the Archives and made available for any use defamatory records about me, records I am sure are not faithful to fact, from what I've been told they say. I have no other source on what they say because I cannot travel safely and because the CIA both lied to its general counsel and violated the laws to withhold from me what it had and was not within any exemption to the Acts. This means that the CIA has defamed me forever with no recourse for any meaningful correction when it would have been required to file and disclose with the records alleged to be inaccurate any statement I would file, as I understand the Privacy Act. What it placed in the ~~Secretaries~~ ^{Archives} and susceptible to this kind of hurtful misuse it still denied me more than two decades after I requested copies of them. ~~And~~ appealed their denial.

Included in what was disclosed was an Office of Security memo stating that it had ~~two~~ ^w files on me. It was then x-ed through and not given to Mr. Houston.

After the Act was amended in 1974, with one of my earliest FOIA cases cited in the legislative history as requiring that CIA, FBI and similar agency records be accessible under FOIA, I filed a number of additional requests. They were ignored. When I inquired the next year, under that 10-day law, I was told some were subsumed in other requests and as I recall that the CIA would, in its own good time, get around to the others.

That did not happen. Not only did that not happen, in some instances the requested records were later disclosed to others; no copies to me.

One of the dirtier tricks used to deny me records copies of which were mine as a matter of right was to dump on me a large volume of records I had not requested, did not want and had no use for. This was done in violation of the CIA's own regulations, as my ignored appeal made clear with a copy of those regulations. It was required to give me an estimate of the total cost and to require a down-payment-if I had requested them. Because I did not pay for what I neither wanted nor needed nor asked for the CIA then took the position that because I owed it money it could not let me have anything until I paid it. (It had earlier refused to accept those copies back.)

These records relate to the CIA's toying with the mind. My initial interest in that was limited to a memo it gave the Warren Commission saying we then were five years ahead of the USSR in that field. I later had an additional interest, in the Frank Olson case. I'd know one of his sons as a teen-ager. But I neither had nor expressed any other interest and some time before it dumped those many unwanted boxes on me the CIA had announced full disclosure on that subject. So I also had no reason to expect any other records from it.

To this day I have since then received only referrals back to the CIA from other agencies, and I am confident I have not gotten all of them.

While I obviously do not know what is in those two office of Security files on me or about any records other components have, as I am confident some do, I do have a pretty good idea of what some of those withheld records include. They include spying on what I said at the least by using a commercial service to give the CIA transcripts and prima facie cases of interfering with my publication here and abroad. Abroad at the time, as the Church committee disclosed, when it was having foreign mail intercepted. Some of mine, all relating to publication, were delayed and some never reached me. This includes even manuscript copies.

Within the United States this includes a prima facie case when E. Howard Hunt seems to have figured in it. He then had as a New York cover address the literary agency of Littauer & Wilkinson, 500 Fifth Ave., New York City. I took a deal to that agency for it to handle and instead it was killed.

I have carbon copies of some of the transcripts the CIA paid to get, bills to it as "The Public Affairs Staff," with a copy of at least one check in payment and the envelope in which it was mailed, a Riggs bank check with no mention of the CIA on it or the envelope or the bill. I do not now have ready access to my files but I remember the names Harold Ober and I think Jeanne Davis as among those figuring in this.

And all of this when any domestic activity was prohibit for the CIA.

It also was after Director Helms told the newspaper-publishers' convention, "Trust us- we do not target on Americans."

If my purpose was to make a stink, there is more I can add to this. Like Helms' untruthful testimony to the Watergate committee that it was not until after Hunt retired that the CIA referred or recommended to The Mullen Agency that it employ him. He had been there for years when he was a CIA employee. When there and when a CIA employee he was part of the campaign to get Justice Douglas impeached. I have this documented solidly. And that documentation may well include others involved with the Watergating Miami Cubans. There is also a reasonable case of other CIA Watergate involvement that I do have, with names, and phones and addresses.

But my interest is not in making any kind of stink. It is in compliance with the laws and with my requests under the laws.

When I am 81 and in seriously impaired health this means reasonably prompt compliance if it is to have any meaning.

When all of this is up to more than two decades old it surely qualifies for getting to the top of any lists and this is what I am now asking of you. Including first of all all records relating to me so that for the record for history I can file what I may want to say about them with you and with the Archives.

Regardless of what any contrived records may reflect, I am not and I never have been opposed to proper intelligence in the modern world. Before there was the OSS in which I served when that was not compulsory I gave, as the records that were disclosed to me reflect, Jimmy Roosevelt what his father used in a "fireside chat" that included plans for a pro-Hitler putsch in Chile. I also gave those records to the Department of Justice. And when I was a soldier in the OSS and was given a medical discharge I declined a job with a major magazine to continue working in intelligence at a lower pay.

Some terribly sick things were done in the name of intelligence and what I encapsulate herein is, I believe, pretty sick and very wrong, too. It is anything but the proper functioning of an intelligence agency. It did, I believe, violate both our laws and our Constitution.

I would like to have some reason to believe it is now all of the past but giving those records to the Archives for any misuse wanted while still denying them to me does not encourage this hope.

I also hope that for once this reaches a director so he can be aware of it and do what is necessary to see that it is not repeated again.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg
Harold Weisberg

I add that all my records, including about a third of a million pages obtained by a dozen ~~or~~ or so FOIA lawsuits, will be a free public archive at local ~~Wood~~ College. With no quid pro quo. Its previous librarian was a retired CIA librarian. Its present librarian was his assistant. I gave it all that was dumped on me that I had not requested as well as what I had requested and paid for.

This will be true also of the belated compliance I hope you will see to.

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