

Izzy-The day you left on your trip I phoned to see if in your opinion the New York Review could be interested in such a story. We are but an hour away if you are interested.

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Mr. David Kraslow
The Los Angeles Times
1700 Penna. Ave., NW
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Kraslow,

The weekend radio news reported a plan to subpoena the tapes of Jack Nelson's Watergate interview, your paper's decision to refuse them, and this means, with Judge Sirica, that somebody is going to jail. Today more than ever good reporters don't belong there.

My own experience is that when there is conflict involving unequal strengths, the wiser course for the weaker is to seek and hold the initiative.

E. Howard Hunt was working for the White House at the time of the "caper" and the arrests. Ken Clawson deceived in saying his last employment was March 29. I filed a "Freedom of Information" Law request for the days of Hunt's White House employment after March 29 with Clawson. Counsel to the President John Dean replied under date of October 19 refusing me this "public information" and at the same time confirming it. My interpretation of his language is that it can be alleged to be criminal activity in which he engaged on behalf of the White House ("could be used as evidence in the criminal prosecution"). Mr. Dean has not replied to my appeal under the law, made on October 20. In it I reminded him that there had been no response to my request for information about the government contracts of the Mullen agency and asked for that information again. I also asked for "public information" about federal payments to or to the benefit of the President for his own use of his own property and about permanent improvements in it made at taxpayer expense.

These were not idle inquiries, nor is this the first time I have used the Freedom of Information Law. (One case is now before the court of appeals in D.C.) I am a writer. Hunt's path crossed mine, to my detriment, in 1965, when he was engaged in domestic intelligence for the CIA, by which he was then employed. It did not like my work and it did engage in surveillance of me of which I have proof in repetitious form. There is a prima facie case that Hunt was then also in association with the Mullen agency, although it has not been published. The Mullen agency handled CIA work, including, if not restricted to, within the United States, for the CIA front it served had several offices within the territorial limits, in the larger cities. As you may recall, Hunt was employed by the agency while he was employed by the White House. He was not merely a hired pen at the agency. He was vice president and a member of the board. I know he was still connected with it after announcement that he had been fired, getting mail and phone messages at an address it used, not its offices.

For the moment, this is for your information only. I have been planning to seek a market for the full story. I am undecided about taking the White House to court under the law. Failure to respond to inquiry under the law is, in my view, enough grounds. Under the law, such a case goes to the head of the docket. However, the documentary support for all of this is available to you should it interest you or your paper. Were it willing to use the FOI law, I think a helluva story could be developed showing how the CIA spys on writers, political figures and others in their public appearances, through a front the identification of which I have in the form of bills rendered to it, its checks in payment, envelopes in which payment was mailed and other proofs, including my own tape recording of my own conversation with the national manager of the commercial service the CIA uses. (His flattery is that in my field I hold the all-time track record for their interest.)

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg