

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

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28 June 1974

JULY 2, 1974

Honorable Howard H. Baker, Vice Chairman
Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities
United States Senate
Washington, D. C. 20510

Dear Senator Baker:

My staff has advised me of the rather extensive discussions they have had with your staff with respect to the staff report which is to be released on your "CIA Investigation." This report presumably encapsulates the results of the process we started last January when I assured you of our complete cooperation. In subsequent meetings, we provided information, some of extreme sensitivity, so that you could evaluate data from other sources. There then ensued an almost continuous exchange of information between our respective staffs. Eventually, in this spirit of cooperation, 24 Agency witnesses appeared before your staff on a voluntary basis to answer questions under oath. Our contribution consisted of over 700 CIA documents and 2,000 pages of testimony.

We have received a revision of the staff report with a request that it be sanitized by bracketing material to be deleted on security grounds. I understand that your staff is preparing supplements to the report which are to be submitted to us for sanitization and comment, and that the report and the supplements will be made a part of the Committee's open record although they will not be included in the Committee's formal report. It is my further understanding that the transcripts and ten volumes of Agency material will not be released but will be removed from Committee records and placed under seal in an appropriate repository and will not be released without CIA approval.

It had been my hope that sufficient concrete evidence would have been produced to assure you that CIA had no prior knowledge of the Watergate or Ellsberg break-ins or coverups. However, when I reviewed the summary staff report submitted to me on 1 April, I realized that you had not been so assured. In some 160 comments we attempted, by citation to the evidence available to us, to communicate our thoughts in this respect. I have now been advised that practically none of our comments which we prepared on 3 April have been reflected in the revision of the staff report. If the revised report is released with its present thrust it implies that there is reason to believe that the Agency and its officers and employees had prior knowledge of and were wittingly involved in the break-ins and the coverup.

I recognize that you have every right to subscribe to conclusions in the staff report which are at variance with those I have drawn from the evidence presented during your investigation, which I have developed as a result of my own intensive internal investigations and which has been reviewed independently by other investigative bodies within both Houses of the Congress, and by the Special Prosecutor and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

It thus appears we have come to differing views on this subject. If the report is made available to the public in the form proposed, I am concerned that the Agency can be the subject of what I deem to be unjustifiable conclusions that Agency officers or employees were knowingly involved in the break-ins in the Watergate or Dr. Fielding's office or subsequent coverups. In such case, I may feel it necessary to take an appropriate public position to assure that the conclusions from my investigation and the results of other investigations are also known.

I am returning herewith the revised report "CIA Investigation" which was given a member of my staff by Mr. Liebengood in the late afternoon of 27 June 1974 without repeating our substantive comments but with security deletions.

Sincerely,


W. E. Colby
Director

Enclosure

cc: Chairman Sam Ervin