

# Purged Officer Is Fearful of Future for C.I.A. and Himself

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WASHINGTON, Dec. 21—Frank Dawson is looking for a job, so he wrote out a resume of his career experience. "I showed it to my children over the Thanksgiving holidays," he said with a laugh. "It was a revelation to all of them."

Mr. Dawson has spent more than 25 years in the Central Intelligence Agency, specializing in counterintelligence, or "catching hostile spies," as he put it. He is looking for a job because he is one of 212 senior officers who have been dismissed by Adm. Stansfield Turner, Director of Central Intelligence, in a massive purge of the agency's covert operations division. He is a spy who was thrown out in the cold.

Frank Dawson is pseudonym, because the officer would not allow his real name or any personal details to be used. He said he was afraid to be seen publicly with a reporter and would talk only on the telephone. Since he is not leaving until the spring, he is still an active officer and he could hardly accept the realization that he was breaking the code of silence that he had lived with for so long.

"This organization that I put 25-plus years of my life into is being ruined," said Mr. Dawson. "The press gave us such a helluva beating while only reporting minor facets of things, and here I am talking to the press."

### Change in Position

"Six months or a year ago, if you had called me up, I wouldn't have given you the time of day," he said. "But I am trying to wake up the Congress of the United States in order to stop this man, its as if your family was being attacked and you've got to defend it."

Admiral Turner has said repeatedly that he is not weakening the C.I.A., only trimming off excess personnel. He has compared himself to a football coach with too many good players, but the people who got his notices do not agree.

These critics say that foreign intelligence services will lose faith in the C.I.A., potential informers will hesitate to take risks and officers with invaluable skills and experience will be lost. Above all, the officers echo the complaint that has

been heard since the dawn of the Industrial Revolution: we are being replaced by machines that cannot do the job as well.

One former station chief, who also got his notice, accused Admiral Turner of relying too heavily on technology. Without an efficient spy network, he said, intelligence analysts "can't put in the human factor."

Behind the statistics and the speeches, behind the management decisions and "cost benefits ratios," there is still a human factor. C.I.A. officers are not characters in a spy novel. They are real people, shaped by a certain historical era and taught to play by certain rules. Now they are told they are obsolete, "surplus property" as one of them put it.

Mr. Dawson fought in World War II, went back to college after his discharge and joined the C.I.A. in the early fifties. "The Korean War was on, and I felt there was a need for the intelligence business," he recalled.

### Patriotism and Responsibility

"It's hard to describe," he continued. "But it was the Cold War, the McCarthy period. The subversion that was going on in this country—we just needed people to fight this, and we had a sense of satisfaction in our accomplishments. In this day of liberalism it seems little to make a statement like that, but it was true. Today, people have forgotten that period."

Robert S. Walters, a former officer who retired several years ago, said that after the Office of Strategic Services was disbanded in 1945 the clandestine spy system was the only intelligence operation that kept going until the C.I.A. was formed in 1947.

"The only living piece that carried over from WW II to the present time was the human collectors," recalled Mr. Walters, who joined in 1946. "There was a very deep feeling of responsibility, some of the old boyishness about it. These were the keepers of the Holy Grail. There are not many of them left, but nonetheless, they inculcated a sense of belonging and deep-eyed patriotism in those of us who came on later."

C.I.A. officers like to call themselves the nation's "first line of defense," and

this sense of mission created a special bond among them. Other veterans just told war stories, but this elite corps continued to live them.

### Job in 'Pickle Factory'

One officer talked about the "crisis-era zeal" he felt working in postwar Europe against Communist infiltration. Mr. Walters referred to the agency as a "tribe," but really, it is more like a secret society, with all its own rituals and privileges. The former station chief said that he had been recruited by old friends, much as if he had been tapped on the shoulder by the brothers in a fraternity.

The agency grew in power—and arrogance, some critics would add. One officer recalls being named station chief in a key country after an "old friend" had been named Prime Minister. For the officers, their sense of being special was enhanced by their isolation, by the dangers they had to face alone and the lies they had to tell their families.

When his children were young, Mr. Dawson referred to the agency as the "pickle factory" around the house. Later, his daughter conceded that she had been ashamed of him for years. She really thought he had worked in a pickle factory.

This helps explain why the officers feel so strongly about what is happening. Once they felt indispensable, now they are told that they are disposable. Even

worse, the culs are being made by an outsider—they insist on referring to him as "the admiral"—and in public. In short, they feel humiliated.

So now they sit in the houses they bought long ago, surrounded by trophies of their travel and adventure—a carved chunk of marble, a piece of Roman glass, a collection of porcelain snuff boxes. Pictures of the children, the ones who have grown up now and know what their daddies really do, peer down from the walls.

Some are retiring on their pensions, brushing up on their tennis and traveling with long-neglected wives. Men like Mr. Dawson have children in college and cannot afford the luxury of leisure. But there is not exactly a booming market in old spies.

Mr. Dawson "sterilized" his resume and had it approved by the agency, but he is not happy with it. "It's frustrating to write a resume in which you can't give them enough to really get a bite on," he said.

Mr. Walters, who once headed the agency's personnel office, says that former officers have a particular set of abilities. "What their job amounts to is recruiting unknown personalities, evaluating their strengths or weaknesses, and understanding their motivations," he said. "Whether it's aversive or political power, you have to find their chink, the trigger that makes them go."

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