

CIA-Domestic Intelligence-Hunt- who leaks? HW 1/19/75

Reading Hersh, NYTimes 12/31/75 after reading the first half of Hunt's Undercover is more informative than reading the news story when it first appeared. It provides leads and clues on what I have earlier described as the orchestration of what has come out.

Actually, there is nothing new of substance in either the Hersh story or the Hunt testimony described as "unpublished" before the Earvin committee 12/18/73. That was in executive session and in fact is the kind of testimony that should have preceded his public testimony.

I will not here attempt a complete analysis but will rather try to recall the essence and the broader outlines as I recall them from this Hersh story and the book.

The Hersh story, except for the Continental News and Fodor names, adds nothing to what Hunt had in the book and little to what the Post printed under strange conditions long, long ago (ref my letter to Barry Sussman and several contemporaneous memos). Nothing except possibly serious error in locating this operation in the National Press Bldg only. It was earlier in the Munsey Bldg and later in 1750 Penna. Ave NW, under a military cover from the piecing together I did from the city directory (confirmed in personal interview by Marchetti).

Hersh says neither that the Post had earlier disclosed the essence of this nor that it had already been published, in Hunt's book if not by the Committee. If he had not restricted himself to what Hunt said about the location of Continental News, the Nat. Press Bld., he would have checked the city directory, as Lesar did, and found it was first in the Munsey Bldg.

However, the leak to Hersh was not of anything new. The only new was added by Hunt, not the leaker, the two names and them entirely incompletely.

In all of this Hersh was and so far as I know remained quite uncritical. An example is the alleged purpose of the publishing and news operations (there was more than the one news agency, according to the book). The sole purpose was not "manipulation of the news" and the rest of this quote, which makes it read "manipulation [of] publishing organizations" could not have been only to get the kinds of books CIA wanted printed put out. (Again, my letter to Sussman and memos.) That is subsidy, not manipulation.

(But there was no welkin ringing over this official propaganda. Praeger admitted about 15-16 books. There were probably more. And the Continental News put news out for foreign use, according to Hunt, or more propaganda and the normal function of USIA.)

"Manipulation of book publishers is not the way to describe subsidizing them to print what CIA wanted printed.

It is not a full explanation to suggest that the Domestic Operations Division was not started until 1962 and then for jobs for those involved in the Bay of Pigs. The CIA could have shuffled them to other posts without starting a new unit. The unit was started for the purposes it served, not to create soft berths.

What is odd in all of this is the connections I had with this setup and vice versa. Again wrong dates, quoting Hunt on "his projects" from 1962 to 1966" whereas Hunt's book has him in Spain and on allegedly other work in 1965, beginning at an undisclosed date that from the writing seems to have been warm weather or summer. The earlier Times Sunday story set the date of DOD at 1964. In this one Hersh sets the date of the "failure" of the April Bay of Pigs operation as "in late 1961." Elsewhere it was set at 1965. Here and in the book there is pre-election allegedly for LBJ anti-Goldwater work.

However, beginning in 1965 and including for the period he was in Spain, Hunt had the 500 Fifth Ave NYC cover address, later in DC, until into 1969 in Who's Who and in actuality until The Watergate.

I went to Praeger after the son of Prince Obolensky broke his contract for Whitewash.

The White Russian prince had been in OSS. I went to Praeger because the lawyer friend from Senate investigation days to whom I went after the contract was broken had a friend and former associate at the ADL at Praeger. Mort Puner was as I recall his job "director of special projects" and had ghosted Humphrey's campaign biography. (His wife later did a sex book for or about young women.)

Praeger was in San Francisco that day. (Hunt gives SF as one of the cities in which the CIA had domestic stations.) Puner read the ms overnight and was enthusiastic about it but indicated he did not expect this enthusiasm from Praeger personally. Praeger refused the book. The explanation Puner gave me is that I was not a recognized scholar and these were the only authors Praeger printed. In his enthusiasm Puner had told me that ordinarily he could make such decisions and after reading the book he'd have expected a first-print of about 25,000 which is rather large. (Actually, the night before he left for Washington, the day after which the Obolensky contract was broken, John Medes, Obo's vice president, had told me that the advance-sale indications were 35,000, which he then described - as I drove him to a post office at suppertime - as "a gold-plated best-seller.") In this case, Puner told me, Praeger would have to make the decision. (My recollections of this are so clear I can describe the office setup and where Puner's was and the position of his desk and where I sat with respect to him.)

It was not long after I was at Praeger, which was very early in 1965 - and note the coincidence here with Hunt's New York cover - that I was at McKay (Fodor's travel guides). How I got there is similar, referred there but in this case not by an old friend but by a wheeler-dealer type.

I had no trouble getting to see the editorial chief, Howard Cady. Again the recollections clear enough to describe the office layout. Cady remembered me from OSS, where he was in headquarters, from the Paris case. We had never met but he knew my name after so many years.

Aside to JL: does it appear reasonable that a non-lawyer, Cady, would recall me and this case and performance and a lawyer, Warner, would not, as he claimed not to?

Cady's is one of the unidentified letters on the inside back cover of Whitewash.

When we discussed the book, which was prior to his reading it (evaluation fine), he asked me if I would object to his having a friend he regarded as an expert and I think a man writing a similar book read it. I said no objections - and he then told me this friend was Isaac Don Levine. (This is how I know that Levine had a farm in Maryland south-east of Washington.)

With what Whitewash then alone said about intelligence connections, does it seem likely that with or without Levine McKay would not have let his subsidizer, CIA, know?

Now in May of 1965 I got strong encouragement from Johnny Appleton, then articles editor of The Saturday Evening Post, who led me to believe that they would go for serial use and that he wanted to deal with me through an agent. I was referred to Appleton by the editor, as I recall one Fredericks or Friedrichs. Appleton sent me, of all places, to Max Wilkinson personally at Littauer & Wilkinson. I have correspondence and notes (intended for a planned book Dick Daring in the Hell-Box; or How I Got Rich in Six Months, in a separate file). What Wilkinson, after initial excitement, told me is factually wrong and made no sense. Wilkinson, not Littauer, was also Hunt's agent as he was the cover address. And from unreported Watergate committee files, Hunt at this period had a New York phone service that he answered in Washington. Wilkinson then also handled the appearance of Lucy Freeman's book on the shrinkery, which amounts to official propaganda anti-Oswald.

My recollection of what Cesar told me of his city directory check may not be precisely accurate, but that in what follows is the part that relates to the Continental News (Hunt) DC address.

I first met public-relations man Dave Pollard in the late 1950s, some time after Lil and I had won national cooking championships. I had a friendly relationship with Elinor Lee, then WxPost Food Editor. We usually chatted when I delivered to the Post

newsroom, where I had customers. One of those days she introduced me to Holland. Until Whitewash Dave knew me only as a farmer. We had had an intermittent friendly relationship since, but not intimate. Dave also knew my p.r. skills and when he was doing publicity for the movie Father Goose he asked me if I'd travel with it with some of my geese.

When I got the approach for a movie from Don Freed I decided to ask Dave to represent me, having no agent and knowing his skills and connections (in both movies and publishing). He was part of the Executive Action publicity and had last been in touch with me on it. (I made one of the two appearances on TV but declined invitations to the movie.) Dave and I had a meeting with Freed in DC right after Dave's wife had a brain-tumor operation. Dave was clearly exhausted. Could hardly keep his eyes open.

At the beginning, Freed bypassed what Dave then set as a minimum condition, so I was not uneasy about non-performance then. Thereafter I attributed it to his being both overly busy (recently on publicity on Towering Inferno) and preoccupied with his wife's apparently terminal condition and spending more time with her. However, in recent months this is not an adequate explanation, and I have wondered.

Whether or not Dave and Continental News had adjoining offices in the Munsey Building, they did have them when both moved to the National Press Bldg. I think Lesar said Dave was then in 1046. (In more recent years he was had a 12th floor office, but I am pretty sure that in my early efforts with Whitewash he was on the 10th, I think but am not sure in the north corridor, and I'm certain on the south side, a divided office, which is to say of two rooms. In recent years he has maintained the WPB office but has had a more private one in the Madison Hotel, not listed. He gets messages through his answering service.)

I remember in those pre-pub Whitewash days that Dave did not use some of the connections he had, as with a vice president of McMillan, but the cause could have been my not authorizing it. I'm not sure on this.

But more recently this is no explanation. Not in particular of when I sent him a copy of the written offer from Freed's lawyer about a month ago and have had no response. Not when he said he was a friend of Lewis, who plans a competitive movie, and has been silent on that score, too.

Maybe this is coincidence. It is an encapsulation, but with the adjoining offices and with the joint shift of offices, I note it.

And I'll phone Dave later this morning. It is Sunday, bad driving with snow and ice, so probably he'll be home.

Back to the stories and book. Hersh here uses what the Post did and Hunt does in his book to explain this CIA domestic activity in a way that tends to ease the Nixon load and carry out the Hunt doctrine of dump it on the "New Frontier." He was spying on Goldwater for LBJ. I don't believe it and Chester Cooper wrote a denial to the Times. With what Goldwater was preaching during that campaign the CIA would have had a natural interest in keeping up and would on its own have wanted and gotten what Hunt appears to have obtained, no more than the advance releases. No secrets. Maybe the White House did ask this but it is more likely that CIA or Hunt independently got the stuff. It then would not have been unusual, given Goldwater's political and Southeast doctrines, to provide it to the White House, any White House. Goldwater was influencing national policy. And doing this for the WH not only curried favor. It entrapped, as this use shows.

Before getting on to other work and breakfast, I ask Lesar to compare this with how fast we got to see Warner and how uneasy he appeared to be - and how without any time pressures. Also how long it has been without his getting back to Lesar, as we'd left it after I gave him enough specifics for him to use as supposedly needed leads.

None of the stories have said much about Fodor or why the CIA should subsidize him or his travel guides (a fine cover for operatives). I think that as of his European period Fodor may have been a Hearst correspondent. Or, both Hearst and CIA.