

Trial of Ex-Agent Leads To Deeper CIA Problems

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By Robert Meyers

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When Edwin G. Moore II, was accused of arson in 1961, he was immediately suspended from his sensitive government job. Six years later following his acquittal, he was reinstated despite internal memos criticizing his work record.

Shortly thereafter, he was sent overseas into a war zone. After he was diagnosed as suffering from a "paranoid-like state," his tour of duty was abruptly cut short.

Moore, a father of five children, was nonetheless kept on the payroll, doing the same work in sensitive areas as before, until he retired with a disability pension in 1973.

In any other government agency, such events might be shrugged off as charity to a long-standing employee.

But Moore's agency was the Central Intelligence Agency, and there anything less than the most flinty-eyed

consideration of the national security of the United States is not supposed to be tolerated.

Now Moore, 56, whose 22 years of CIA employment span virtually the entire history of the secretive agency, is accused of trying to sell classified documents to the Soviet Union. A former director of the CIA has testified that Moore's alleged actions might have endangered the safety of the United States. A high-ranking CIA official has testified that Moore's alleged actions might have endangered the lives of undercover agents around the world.

Yet long after the jury has decided whether Moore is innocent or guilty of the charges against him, the CIA probably will be asked to review again and again questions only partially answered by their official courtroom responses:

See CIA, A14, Col. 1

CIA, From A1

- Why does it distribute throughout the agency classified telephone directories containing the names and phone numbers of employees who may someday be sent into dangerous undercover assignments?
- Why was Moore kept on the payments for nearly two years after a CIA psychiatrist wrote that he was suffering from a "paranoid-like state?"
- When Moore was fired from the agency in 1963, following his conviction for arson—a conviction later was overturned—why was he permitted to leave the agency without signing the secrecy agreement required of every departing employee?
- Why was Moore's name on a list of at least five "disgruntled" former CIA employees the agency immediately gave to the FBI when it learned at last December's alleged espionage

attempt? Was it because CIA officials believed he was responsible for an unsigned letter that the prosecution alleges Moore mailed in 1975 to then-CIA director William E. Colby threatening to turn the names of 5,000 CIA employees over to "the opposition"? If the agency did suspect him of writing the letter, why did it not fully investigate the matter, an investigation that might have revealed the cache of documents the prosecution claims was found at Moore's home following his arrest last year?

• How did Moore, whom the prosecution contends squirreled those documents away in his home, manage to get those classified papers out of the agency since he had been rehired in 1967 only with the stipulation that he work under "close supervision and scrutiny"?

"The CIA is a strange world of delusion, deception, provocation, and disruption," Moore's attorney, Courtland K. Townsend Jr., told the jury during

opening arguments. "The implausible can become the plausible."

Moore has pleaded innocent by reason of insanity to the charges of espionage and unauthorized possession of classified documents and government property. Townsend said his client will take the stand to relate how he was approached by someone whom we will not be able to produce in court who asked Moore to work with him on a CIA-sponsored project. That person provided Moore with the documents found in his home, Townsend said.

The jury also will hear testimony this week from psychiatrists on the subject of paranoia and delusion and will be asked to decide if Moore's delusions could have been so great as to encompass insanity, according to Townsend.

The CIA can take little comfort in the trial, regardless of its outcome. For implicit in the trial is the CIA's failure to adequately protect itself from one of its own, a man who a CIA psychiatrist diagnosed as having paranoid tendencies and yet who may have remained privy to some of the Agency's best kept secrets.

The CIA was established in 1947. It has a current budget of more than \$750 million and employs 15,000 people around the world, about 5,000 of whom are regarded as working clandestinely—undercover—according to knowledgeable sources.

Its telephone directories, classified as secret, are maintained for the convenience and information of CIA employees, Robert W. Gambino, the agency's security chief testified.

Although they do not list the names of undercover agents, they list the names of people who may eventually become undercover agents, he said. Agents of a "hostile" nation who those people are, he added.

In fact, apparently because of the Moore case, the CIA now is consider-



By Harry Naltchayan—The Washington Post

Edwin G. Moore of Bethesda is led from arraignment last December after arrest.

ing abolishing the phone books altogether, he said. However, Moore's personnel file shows he properly returned all the phone books he possessed, Gambino testified.

Both prosecution and defense attorneys raised the question of security at CIA offices. Gambino said it depended mainly on the "trustworthiness of employees."

There are periodic checks of briefcases, but these are basically to remind employees that they are not to take documents out of the building, he testified.

So far, there has been no testimony as to how Moore — or anyone else — obtained the documents Moore is accused of offering to the Soviets.

When Moore was convicted of arson

in 1963, he was fired, or terminated, as the agency puts it. This was done, according to a later memo, over the signature of the then-director, John A. McCone. When he was acquitted of the arson charges, in 1967, after three trials, he was reinstated over the signature of Richard Helms, who then headed the CIA.

A CIA spokesman declined to say whether low-level employees (Moore was a GS 9) are routinely hired and fired with the direct involvement of the agency's directors.

When Moore was reinstated, he was given \$38,902.31 in back pay. Fred E. Lott, chief of the personnel section's special activities division, testified that he did not know of any other employee even being given back pay under similar circumstances.

The check itself is unusual because it was drawn on an account at the Schroder Trust Co., in New York. Testimony today is expected to explain why this procedure was used, according to Assistant U.S. Attorney Thomas L. Crowe.

Two years after being rehired, the man with a "barely adequate"—according to testimony—fitness record was sent to Vietnam to work in the CIA's supply section. He returned to Washington 18 months later, complaining of "anxiety" but diagnosed by a CIA psychiatrist as suffering from a "paranoid-like state." He was too unstable to be told of the diagnosis, the report stated. Nevertheless, he continued to work for an agency so concerned about secrecy that, until a few years ago, it did not even post road signs bearing its name outside its suburban Virginia headquarters.

The prosecution attempted to link Moore with a 1975 letter to then-CIA director William S. Colby. The letter threatened to turn classified CIA documents over "to the opposition" unless veteran CIA employees including those who had retired, were promoted.

The letter is a study in frustration and pathos. "I have been a loyal employee (staff) of the Agency for many, many years," it reads, "in fact, longer than you have . . . It has disenchanted me completely to see how you and others, especially your stupid inbred legal aides have allowed that 'teachers-pet' Marchetti and that draftdogger (sic) Marks from State to 'blow their guts' to the world . . . (I have been) without a promotion for 15 years . . . REMEMBER THIS . . . MY FAMILY HAS BEEN UNABLE TO HAVE THE FINER THINGS OF THE AMERICAN DREAM, BECAUSE I CAN NOT EARN A DECENT SALARY . . . Gosh, it seems strange to be a CIA defector," the letter states.

The prosecution claims Moore is linked to this letter in part because portions of papers found with it in 1975 match portions of papers found at his home in 1976.

However, apparently no one was ever prosecuted for this direct threat to give secret CI documents to "the opposition." Moore is not charged for it now.

Moore's name was one of five the CIA immediately gave to the FBI when the FBI was investigating the offer from an unknown person to sell CIA documents to the Soviets, according to FBI agent Cornelius G. Sullivan. The CIA also gave FBI agent Gerald P. Nichols a photograph of Moore, before Moore was arrested, to assist in Nichols' stake-out of an area across from Moore's house.

There has been no testimony as to when, or why, Moore's name was placed on the CIA's list of "disgruntled former employees," or what, if anything, the CIA did to protect national security from the would-be threats of these alleged "disgruntled" persons. The CIA has declined comment on the trial, which is expected to continue for at least another week.