

3/22/76

Mr. Randolph Hearst, Publisher  
San Francisco Examiner  
San Francisco, Calif.

Dear Mr. Hearst,

If the name of the prosecution psychiatrist in your daughter's trial was not Dr. Fort, then this is not relevant. If my recollection is not incorrect, it still may not be relevant. However, on the chance it may be, I write.

A Dr. Fort, not otherwise identified except with a psychiatric institution and then not positively as on its staff, figures in the story of Dr. Frank Olson who was permitted to commit suicide when, as is not generally known, he was working for the CIA while engaged in bacteriological warfare as an Army employee. If you do not recall the case that was much in the news last year, the CIA gave Olson LSD in 1953, told him about it afterward, had him accompanied by at least one other CIA agent all the time, and he is said to have jumped from a New York hotel window the night before he was to have been hospitalized at Chestnut Lodge, Rockville, Md.

The agent with Dr. Olson at the time of administration of the drug and at all times after it was apparent Olson was reacting badly is Robert Lashbrook. News accounts report he is teaching high school science in your area. From his lack of cooperativeness with the New York police, reports of which I also have, I am not suggesting he would be inclined to be helpful now.

Lashbrook took Olson from here in Frederick all the way to New York to see another CIA agent, Dr. Harold A. Abramson, officially described as what he is not, a psychiatrist. After the lapse of some critical time during and after which all of this was kept secret from even Olson's family, on November 27 the day before the morning of the death, Lashbrook and Abramson made arrangements for Olson's hospitalization at Chestnut Lodge. The CIA report that includes this information is headed Case No. 73317. It has no office of origin and the signature of the Special Agent in Charge is masked. The reference to Dr. Fort reads:

"At that time, arraignments [sic] were made for the deceased to enter the Chestnut Lodge, Rockville, Md. under the supervision of a Dr. FORT."

Other documents in the file give the reason for Lashbrook's not taking Olson to Chestnut Lodge on the 27th., when arrangements had been made as the institution's inability to receive him.

Of course all of this is a strange matter characterized by the most dubious ethics. Selection of Chestnut Lodge is, superficially, reasonable as presented in these reports. However, the special selection is apparent to one who knows more.

Dr. Olson had an Army disability discharge, ulcers. He could have been hospitalized in either Walter Reed in Washington or the Veterans' Administration Hospital or the Naval Medical Center there or, closer to his home, the ~~MEM~~ Veterans' Administration Hospital at Hagerstown. However, it is these CIA agents, including the user of and the experimenter with LSD, who arranged for only Dr. Fort to be in charge of Olson.

I have spent the past dozen years in an intensive investigation of the FBI and the CIA. In World War II I was an analyst in OSS. Based on this I believe it is a reasonable possibility that this Dr. Fort was also CIA. I know that when our intelligence was relatively primitive there was then heavy psychiatric involvement. All subsequent indications are of heavier CIA use of psychiatrists. And whether or not valid, rumors of the intelligence use of Chestnut Lodge go back for decades.

I do not know what of Dr. Fort's past came out in the trial. Nor do I know what the ethical standards are, professionally rather than in human, compassionate terms. But I do know that the Olson family was deceived and lived under a cloud; that Mrs. Olson had a rough time raising and educating three youngsters one of whom I know; and that nobody ever told her the truth.

I have proposed a story on other parts of these records to a publication which could not have received what I sent before today. However, if any of this is of interest to you, you are welcome to it. Selling a story is not as important to me as the possible serving of justice. I have observed far too many prosecutorial abuses of the law and individual rights and I know of none in office whose primary dedication is, as the canons dictate, to seeing to it that justice is done rather than obtaining a conviction. I regard the bugging of your daughter as an irremedial violation of her rights. It is not at all uncommon, either. I am investigator on a sensational case in which the offenses were greater - and immune. Neither justice nor freedom can survive such practises.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg