

1/15/73

Ms. Barbara Epstein, editor
The New York Review
250 W 57 St.,
New York, N.Y. 10019

Dear Ms Epstein,

With a still-breaking story that is getting considerable spot-news attention and has been and where the material available is book-length a lead-and-summary that may seem apt today may appear dated tomorrow. So, I write you a letter about what has come to be known as "The Watergate Caper" instead.

The government can control what is allowed to be known and will, as to a large degree it has.

It is a story of hidden and illegal CIA domestic intelligence.

E. Howard Hunt, also known as Robert Dietrick, John Baxter, Gordon Davis, David St. John, Earl Warren and Edward L. Warren, among others, the man who almost launched World War III, counsellor to the President and giving his address as The White House, was engaged in domestic intelligence for the CIA, using a literary agency as a cover.

As of the time of the arrests, despite White House lies, he was still working for the White House. As of the time he says he retired from CIA, he was and had been vice president and a director of the public-relations agency which represented him as no more than a hired pen. It had and has secret government contracts at least one of which was with the CIA. While he was with CIA it and he had the same cover address and phone in Washington Long after it claimed to have fired and broken all relations with him, he was still getting mail and phone service with it other than at its listed office.

CIA domestic intelligence operations, supposedly illegal, are practised against writers. I have carbon copies of reports to it, of transcripts of my own appearances in connection with my books. They have a cover of their own for such intrusions into first-amendment rights. I have copies of bills rendered to this CIA front for spying on writers by the commercial agency used, checks in payment, envelopes in which the checks were mailed, a transcript ~~about~~ of a phone conversation about spying on me ("That old nemesis of the CIA, Mr. Harold Weisberg, is coming to town next week", response, "O, Goodie!"), even a tape of my own conversation with the national manager of this commercial agency in which he says I hold the all-time track record for CIA interest. My first book did say Oswald was intelligence. There is a prima facie case, if not definitive proof, that Hunt killed a deal I had for it in 1965.

If it seems inconceivable that a man with Hunt's past could be allowed into the White House, leave alone working as a counsellor, he was the man then in charge of this deep subversion for which the CIA had trained him. This is less unusual than it seems. For one example, there have been bombings within the United States by CIA-trained people using CIA-supplied explosives. There are others.

Although the Department of Justice omitted it from the indictment, those it could not avoid indicting were all federal spooks. Of the seven, six had CIA pasts, three FBI. They included the two top Bay of Pigs men, not just mercenaries, and their communications expert. One had in his possession a fake CIA passport made out for Hunt, although it is claimed Hunt was no longer with CIA. I am suggesting that these spooks permeate our society more than we realize. I've had one Cuban tell me that, after the Bay of Pigs and flying for the CIA in the Congo, years later he was still under CIA protection. The man

who was James Earl Ray's first lawyer was a CIA lawyer in clandestine Bay of Pigs operations and thus the assassination of Dr. King remains unsolved. The largely-successful efforts of CIA Cubans to misdirect the investigation of the JFK assassination are unknown publicly, but I have perhaps a hundred pages of FBI reports on this, perhaps a dozen on two of the Watergate figures alone.

For a book-length treatment, the material is almost limitless and is largely fresh.

For a shorter treatment, the angles are many, from the CIA in the White House to the trial as a power struggle between the CIA and the White House in an effort by each to exculpate itself in this rotten mess. Even the lawyers in this case are not without CIA links. Hunt's, the man who made the deal that eliminated most of the testimony that can be adduced in court, is a former federal prosecutor (Bobby Baker and Jimmy Hoffa cases, both involving denied wiretapping/bugging). His firm has handled CIA cases. If you examine Henry Rothblatt's Vietnam cases, you will see that his defenses tended to blame the Army for the excesses initiated by the CIA. We had a former CIA agent locally, one of their right-wingers. He claimed to have information linking it with the JFK assassination. His will directed that it be given to Rothblatt on his death. Rothblatt's announced defense of his four Cuban clients was that they were only patriotic soldiers taking orders. This could be only from the White House.

Any treatment makes possible use of the Freedom of Information law, although success would mean going to court. I have taken the initial steps with some suppressed information. In denying it to me, the White House has confirmed that Hunt was in its employ at the time of the arrests, although it said otherwise to the press. I am in a position to take two viable FOI cases against the White House on this into federal court immediately.

After the end of the trial there can be a lengthy magazine piece on just what the government suppressed in the trial, meaning what the Nixon administration suppressed to protect itself and its deep subversions. I think it is probable that the case against the two remaining defendants, both former FBI agents, will be reversed if for no other reason because of deliberate errors by the judge, who is an administration hack. Much less can now be entered into evidence with them the only remaining defendants and again Nixon is the beneficiary. (I have now pending before the U.S. Court of Appeals in Washington an appeal from an incredible decision by this same judge. I do expect him to be reversed. This will probably be one of the precedent Freedom of Information law cases. If he is reversed, I expect the Department of Justice to take the case to the Supreme Court.)

This rambling has two purposes, to give you an idea of what can be said and to see if you could be interested. I hope you will be.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg