

Ms Mary McGrory  
Washington Post  
1150 15 St., NW  
Washington, D.C. 20071

10/7/86

Dear Ms McGrory,

We agree, re Bob Woodward's important story on this administration's disinformation program, that "We need more like that." We could have had more only papers like the Post were not interested. Please, I'm not complaining against you for you are one of the few bright spots I find in the Post, which I've been getting since the early 1930s, when I was on the Wilmington Morning News. (The other out-of-town paper I then got and read before I went to bed was the old Phila Record.) What, if I remember correctly, I was saying is that the press and the country are in bad shape if the press makes the government immune in its lying, in my current litigation felonious lying to procure restraints on information. I suggest that when this happens, the government is encouraged to lie more and such evils as Woodward exposed are more certain. The Woodward expose was different and probably a leak rather than diligent searching for a story. Today, I regret I believe, the press is too often willing to prostitute itself voluntarily but resents being prostituted.

In today's radio news I hear that one of our planes was shot down where it is not supposed to be, doing what it is not supposed to be doing, in Nicaragua. Several years ago the same thing happened in El Salvador, within sight of the capital but at night. Because the dedicated spooks have so little to worry about from the press their cover story was transparently false. One part, on the origin and equipping and on where that was done, should have raised questions but didn't. It would almost certainly have led to definitive exposure of that wrongdoing if it had been followed up, and that, save for what the CIA could hide as "national security," would have been easy. So, I phoned the national desk and it ended there. And thus where such planes are outfitted and their ownership is hidden and the law is violated remains unexposed. If it had been leaked, maybe that story would have appeared and our involvement in that terrible swamp might have been less certain. As an indication of how the national desks have surrendered their critical faculties and news judgments, can you believe that our government financed a modern airstrip at Blackbird, Delaware, for the convenience of corporate planes for which the Philadelphia airport was too crowded? That far away from Philadelphia? With that many small airports so much closer? Even with the underused Wilmington commercial airport closer - and existing?

The occasional and fine exposures like Woodward's are important but too often the press today constitutes itself an arm of government. The Post said it learned its lesson over the Bay of Pigs but it forgot that lesson too soon and I'm unhappy about it. Maybe I'm an old fogie who can't adjust, maybe I just don't want to. Maybe, too, I've been too immersed in a study of official corruption when it was faced by that most subversive of crimes, the assassination of a President. How the press failed us then! And since, to now. How much that changed the country and the world and how much the failures of the press made that possible and perpetuate it. What by traditional standards if it is newsworthy hasn't changed, only the policies of the press have changed.

I don't know whether it might interest you as column material or might be of interest to anyone you know, but the arrest today of Ray Frankhouser in the Larouche matter, their association with his past, ought to be readily available, by no more than a phone call. Years ago, when I was exposing Nazi cartels, I worked closely with the Washington office of the Anti-Defamation League. It then had a startling collection of information about our own native Nazis, of whom this character was one, with caches of explosives and arms. Those files were largely in the New York City office. This information included what had been published and what was obtained by other means.

Yeats ago I also knew people in the New York office but they are all gone. I do think, though, that if there is any interest a phone call ought produce quite a story about Funkhouser. If I remember correctly, Esquire did a long piece on him. Maybe it was Playboy in its earlier days. Native Nazis were news then. Today they are so-called soldiers of fortune and they are not news because they seek private pursuit of national policy. (Robert K. Browne, publisher of Soldier of Fortune, was promoted from captain to major by the Army after he was propositioned to kill JFK, about 10,000 Jews and the members of Americans for Democratic Action and did not report it. He also published a magazine in which he told his kind how to spy on those they did not like, how to kill, how to make and use explosives against those they didn't like, how to use foreign-made arms, etc.) Today these characters violate the neutrality act with more than immunity, with the thanks of the government.

Thanks again for all the good things you do and please do not feel that this needs a response. Instead please spend that time on your good things.

Sincerely,



Harold Weisberg

Later. I've heard on CBS the Nicaraguan claim that the living man claims to be part of the military assistance group based in El Salvador and Schultz's claim that the plane is not government property and the men had no connection with the government but separating the CIA from the Army and saying that the men were not employed by CIA. Maybe I'm reading too much possibility into it but the CIA and the rest of the government regard those under contract with the CIA as not in its employ. How provocative it would be if that plane could be traced to the Dupont service operation near Blackbird or if it had the kind of equipment installed there.

On deniability, I enclose two pages from a Warren Commission executive session transcript that I obtained via FOIA and published. They were troubled by reports that Lee Harvey Oswald had worked for the FBI or CIA. The first page picks up with Francis Gary Powers' role, from preceding pages.

~~TOP SECRET~~

Rep. Boggs. There was no problem in proving he was recruited by the CIA.

Mr. Dulles. No. We had a signed contract.

Rep. Boggs. Let's say Powers did not have a signed contract but he was recruited by someone in CIA. The man who recruited him would have, wouldn't he?

Mr. Dulles. Yes, but he wouldn't tell.

The Chairman. Wouldn't tell it under oath?

Mr. Dulles. I wouldn't think he would tell it under oath, no.

The Chairman. Why?

Mr. Dulles. He ought not tell it under oath. Maybe not tell it to his own government but wouldn't tell it any other way.

Mr. McCloy. Wouldn't he tell it to his own chief?

Mr. Dulles. He might or might not. If he was a bad one then he wouldn't.

Rep. Boggs. What you do is you make out a problem if this be true, make our problem utterly impossible because you say this rumor can't be dissipated under any circumstances.

Mr. Dulles. I don't think it can unless you believe Mr.

Hoover, and so forth and so on, which probably most of the people will.

Mr. McCloy. Allen, suppose somebody whom you were head of the CIA came to you, another government agency and said specifically, "if you will tell us", suppose the President of the United

States come to you and says, "Will you tell me, Mr. Dulles?"

Mr. Dulles. I would tell the President of the United States anything, yes, I am under his control. He is my boss. I wouldn't necessarily tell anybody else, unless the President authorized me to do it. We had that come up at times.

Mr. McCloy. You wouldn't tell the Secretary of Defense?

Mr. Dulles. Well, it depends a little bit on the circumstances. If it was within the jurisdiction of the Secretary of Defense, but otherwise I would go to the President, and I do on some cases.

Mr. Rankin. If that is all that is necessary, I think we could get the President to direct anybody working for the government to answer this question. If we have to we would get that direction.

Mr. Dulles. What I was getting at, I think under any circumstances, I think Mr. Hoover would say certainly he didn't have anything to do with this fellow.

Mr. McCloy. Mr. Hoover didn't have anything to do with him but his agent. Did you directly or indirectly employ him.

Mr. Dulles. But if he says no, I didn't have anything to do with it. You can't prove what the facts are. There are no external evidences. I would believe Mr. Hoover. Some people might not. I don't think there is any external evidence other than the person's word that he did or did not employ a particular man as a secret agent. No matter what.