

FBI - II  
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'A Friend,' the F.B.I.

To the Editor:

The F.B.I.'s poison-pen letter tactics are not of recent origin. As I related in my book "On Doing Time," I received such letters in 1952 while incarcerated in the Federal Detention House, pending appeal, even though my mail was supposed to be restricted to members of the family. The letters were signed "A Friend."

The object of the letters was to create a schism between my wife, Helen, and myself. At the time she was leading a fight to save the lives of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, and evidently she was being too effective for the taste of the F.B.I.

The letters were crude and tried to appeal to my presumed racism, telling me how Helen was compromising herself with a black man. After I returned the fourth letter, unopened, they stopped coming. But the F.B.I. didn't give up. It tried to use other tactics to split us.

MORTON SOBELL

New York, Feb. 7, 1975