

NYTimes

Letters to the Editor JAN 1 1975

Of the C.I.A. and Its Supervision by Congress

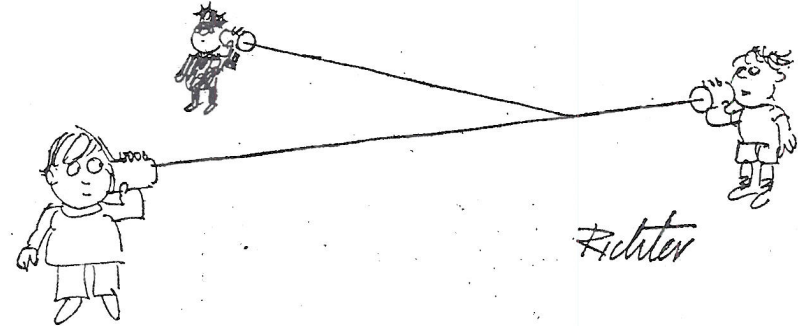
To the Editor:

The recent revelations in The Times about the C.I.A. violating its charter and "spying" on 10,000 Americans is undoubtedly going to stimulate calls for intensive Congressional investigations. I believe this entire area of C.I.A. and F.B.I. involvement should be aired and aired well, forthrightly and carefully as the Watergate investigation was so that we can end this chapter in our lives quickly, close the books and get on with the job of rebuilding our nation.

I suggest that instead of several Congressional committees that Congress create one committee—a joint committee to oversee both the C.I.A. and the F.B.I. A previous effort to create a joint committee on the C.I.A. was introduced by Senator Mansfield in 1956, but the resolution was defeated in the same year. [Editorial Jan. 26, 1956.]

If the C.I.A. violated its Congressional mandate to stay out of domestic matters, it is the fault of Congress. Almost thirty years ago in 1947 when the National Security Act creating the agency was written, members then knew as some members now know that in creating such an agency as this, responsible to the President and without Congressional supervision, power would flow to it.

Many of the members of Congress who were active in 1947 are now either retired or deceased. Many new members are not familiar with the Act, the law or the debates. Therefore, the bureaucrats, however well-intentioned they may be, begin to believe their own publicity. With a Government agency created by Congress, Congress must review it. Congress created the C.I.A. and the F.B.I., Congress must



supervise both. Congress does not properly supervise either one.

Every nation needs an intelligence agency and its internal security agency. But here, where we place such a high value on our personal liberties, we created two agencies to divide the power and the responsibility. And we did it for a good reason. It's high time that we stopped appointing "Hoover" Commissions as we did in 1955 to look at the C.I.A. It is Congress' responsibility to take a hard look at both the C.I.A. and the F.B.I., especially after Watergate, not necessarily to find fault with either, but to restore trust in them by the American people whom they are supposed to serve.

LAURENCE W. LEVINE
New York, Dec. 24, 1974

To the Editor:

Your Dec. 24 editorial "Unguarded Intelligence" refers to "unwise but not illegal covert activities abroad" of the Central Intelligence Agency. Indisputably Congress prohibited spying in the United States by the C.I.A. My research causes me to doubt even the legality of covert political operations abroad. Certainly such operations vio-

late principles of international law, the United Nations Charter, and in most cases the laws of sovereign nations where covert political manipulation is attempted.

I would point out that nowhere in the 1947 Congressional statute creating the C.I.A. or in later amendments can explicit authority be found for overseas covert political operations. All functions assigned to the C.I.A., even in the more flexible phrases of the statute, were explicitly to be related to intelligence.

Intelligence means information. Yet almost everyone, including the President, seems to be confused about the meaning of this word, intelligence.

Consequently, the intelligence world has become an Alice-in-Wonderland fantasy where words can mean whatever you want them to mean. We need to return to a world where words mean what they are supposed to mean. And we need to bring some intelligence to the Intelligence Establishment.

HARRY HOWE RANSOM
Nashville, Tenn., Dec. 26, 1974

The writer, professor of political science, Vanderbilt University, wrote "The Intelligence Establishment."