

CRYPTOME

16 September 2010

Source: CIA Freedom of Information Web Site: <http://www.foia.cia.gov/>

Director of Central Intelligence on Unauthorized Disclosures

December 17, 1986

The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505


17 DEC 1985

The Honorable Frank C. Carlucci
Assistant to the President for
National Security Affairs - Designate
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Frank:

I would like to take a few moments to apprise you of a situation I have discussed many times with the President, the Secretaries of State and Defense, the Attorney General, and the NSPG--the problem of unauthorized disclosures of classified intelligence in the news media. This has become one of the most severe, enduring, and intractable problems we face in this business. You are intimately familiar with the damage such disclosures cause to our technical collection systems, human sources, information exchanges with foreign intelligence services, and the security system that protects sensitive secrets, not to mention the heavy burden in cost to the taxpayer that results.

The disclosure of classified intelligence to the media is endemic to Washington. During my tenure alone, we have detected more than 500 such incidents.

We have taken a number of procedural steps to alleviate the problem, and have obtained the support of the Attorney General and the Director of the FBI. Attorney General Meese has speeded up Justice Department transmittal of leak reports to the FBI, and Director Webster has designated a special team for leak investigations. Nevertheless, there appears to be a widespread lack of security discipline and the political will to act against those who give classified information to the media. Strong examples and strong measures are needed to provide leadership in this area.

You are in a position to help with this problem, early on, at least in the NSC Staff and, perhaps, throughout the Government. In the NSC context, you could, among other things:



FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

- Establish a requirement that all NSC personnel be polygraphed before assignment and/or agree to undergo polygraph examination upon direction.

~~_____~~
~~_____~~

- Revitalize the need-to-know principle with a policy that anyone discussing classified matters with someone without an official need to know will be reprimanded and, in the case of a further offense, removed from the NSC Staff.
- Establish strict document control, giving the NSC Registry full authority to trace all documents in the staff. Fortify this with a complete review and inventory of the present document holdings of each staff member.
- Establish a strong, experienced, professionally-staffed security office for the NSC responsible for the security of all assigned personnel. It would report directly to you on security issues, updated investigations, potential problems, and adherence to security principles and procedures.
- Require that all inquiries from media representatives be reported to the NSC Security Officer and that continuing contact with media representatives be made a matter of record with the NSC security office.

*Frank
 we had
 full - for
 Security
 the matter
 I was not
 NSC would
 Nixon, Ford*

I believe such steps would go far to change the present permissive atmosphere on the NSC Staff and demonstrate that you are serious about ensuring that the Staff is not the source of damaging leaks.

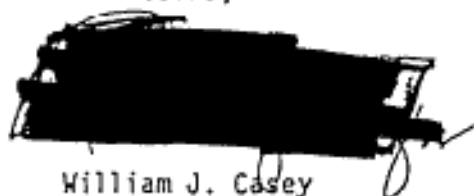
Other basic needs in the broader struggle to counter the unauthorized disclosure of classified information would benefit greatly from your support. These include such things as:

- More effective legislation to penalize the unauthorized disclosure of classified intelligence by federal employees. Use of the Espionage Act for this purpose is controversial and ineffectual (one conviction in almost 70 years).
- Government-wide acceptance of a polygraph examination as a requirement for access to sensitive compartmented information.

- ~~TOP SECRET~~
- A strict policy, with implementing procedures, requiring the coordination of classified information before it is released to the news media to ensure that damage is minimized and, in the case of intelligence information, that sources and methods are protected.
 - A uniform, Government-wide policy on media relationships, including contacts, "backgrounders", attribution, anonymity, and other factors possibly conducive to unauthorized disclosures.
 - The application by agency heads of more manpower to preliminary investigations in support of the enhanced FBI effort on leaks.

We are already at work on most of these initiatives. Your support would be invaluable in furthering these efforts to stem the flow of properly classified information to the press and into the hands of hostile intelligence services and terrorist groups. Our goal is to protect against disclosure of classified information to unauthorized individuals, not to interfere with those who have legal responsibilities for overseeing our activities. I and my staff would be glad to pursue this subject further with you at an early opportunity.

Yours,


William J. Casey

Bill might not sign these exact words but the problem and the specific measures suggested are things he feels very strongly about and will press.

Rg.