

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

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24 SEP 1974

Honorable John C. Stennis, Chairman
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate
Washington, D. C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Per our conversation, please let me reiterate in writing my conception of my responsibilities to you as the Chairman of the Armed Services Committee charged with oversight of the Central Intelligence Agency.

As you know, CIA testifies before a number of committees of the Senate, both in open session and in executive session as appropriate, in order to make available to them CIA's information and assessments about foreign situations and in order to respond to questions when such testimony will not disclose intelligence sources and methods. By what I believe is the long-standing precedent of the Senate and this Agency, however, such testimony does not cover the CIA's operational activities, budget matters or intelligence sources and methods.

With respect to you and to the Subcommittee on Intelligence (and the equivalent in the Appropriations Committee), I have taken the public position many times that CIA has no secrets. Thus, I believe that I must be responsive to whatever question you ask in whatever detail you desire it. Beyond that, however, I believe it my responsibility to assume the positive obligation to raise with you any matters of possible interest to you or to the Congress. I have tried to apply this principle from the time of my confirmation hearings and assure you of my commitment to it in the future.

As noted above, these arrangements follow my understanding of the long-standing precedent and will of the Senate in this regard. Proposals have been made at various times to change this arrangement. With respect to such possible changes, I have no position, as I believe these are purely matters for the determination of the Senate itself. In the absence of such change, however, I will follow the above procedures.

Sincerely,

SIGNED

W. E. Colby
Director

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