

SECRET

51076.2605

1 MAY 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: Angus MacLean Thuermer  
Assistant to the Director

FROM: [redacted]  
Chief, East Asia Division

VIA: Deputy Director for Operations

SUBJECT: Response to Mr. Julian Goodman, NBC,  
Concerning NBC Correspondent Welles  
Hangen

REFERENCE: Angus MacLean Thuermer memorandum for  
DDO, April 13, 1976, Subject: NBC  
Correspondent Welles Hangen

1. The attached draft letter for DCI signature reflects  
the following: [redacted]  
discussion with [redacted]

[redacted] at the time of Mr. Hangen's disappear-  
ance, inquiries to State, DIA and NSA; review of retired  
files concerned with Prisoner of War intelligence; review  
of earlier DCI correspondence on this subject; and discus-  
sion with Office of General Counsel in relation to Privacy  
Act.

2. We have coordinated with NSA on the possible public  
use of the attached draft, including reference to NSA infor-  
mation. The mention of NSA, as shown in this draft, is  
acceptable to NSA.

3. This draft exhausts all the material which is  
considered pertinent. With several weeks additional time  
further research on fringe information could be undertaken.

[redacted]  
the reporting on prison camps and Communist

E2 IMPDET  
CL BY 057498

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order of battle in the Takeo area could be reviewed. None of this information seemed significant to the case in the past; it was not reviewed for this summary because of the time limitation. If further research should be needed, please contact [redacted], on extension [redacted]

25X1  
25X1

[redacted]

Attachment  
As stated

25X1

cc: DDO  
OGC

25X1

CONCUR:

[redacted]

Office of General Counsel

25X1

3 May 76  
Date

[redacted]

3 MAY 1976  
Date

SECRET

Att

4 May 1976

Mr. Julian Goodman  
Chairman of the Board  
National Broadcasting Co., Inc.  
30 Rockefeller Plaza  
New York City, New York 10020

Dear Julian,

When we met in your office on April 13, you gave me a memo dated April 12, 1976, from Susan Grossi Forsyth to Jay Gerber, summarizing information gathered by NBC on Mr. Welles Hangen.

At my request thorough checks were made in the files of Department of State, Department of Defense, and National Security Agency, as well as CIA. No significant information was turned up which was not referred to in the NBC summary. No confirmed, definite information was found as to the fate of Mr. Hangen. The same leads and disappointing efforts at follow-up are mentioned in U.S. Government files as in the NBC summary.

30 April 1976

Mr. Julian Goodman  
Chairman of the Board  
National Broadcasting Company, Inc.  
30 Rockefeller Plaza  
New York City, New York 10020

Dear Mr. Goodman,

It was a pleasure meeting you again on the 13th of this month in New York City. You asked me to review intelligence information on Mr. Welles Hangen, the NBC correspondent who was captured by Communist forces near Takeo, Cambodia, on May 31st, 1970. You also gave me a memo dated April 12th, 1976, from Susan Grossi Forsyth to Jay Gerber, summarizing information gathered by NBC. At my request thorough checks were made in the files of Department of State, Department of Defense, and National Security Agency, as well as CIA. No significant information was turned up which was not referred to in the NBC summary. No confirmed, definite information was found as to the fate of Mr. Hangen. The same leads and disappointing efforts at follow-up are mentioned in U.S. Government files as in the NBC summary.

One of the senior American officials in Cambodia during 1970 was interviewed in connection with this review of available information. He confirmed from his own memory that no information was found which indicated Mr. Hangen's fate. As your summary states, Welles Hangen was riding in an NBC car driven by a Cambodian named Chay You Leng. Leng was captured with the three NBC newsmen and subsequently escaped. Leng stated that Welles Hangen was captured alive and was last seen alive on Monday, June 1st, the day after capture. No source was able to say positively that Mr. Hangen was seen alive after that date.

On August 24th, 1970, the former Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, Mr. Richard Helms, wrote to Mr. Robert E. Kintner, summarizing information available at that time. A copy of that letter is attached for your information. Director Helms noted that the most substantial information came from the NBC driver. His letter also extracted information from a Cambodian army (friendly forces) report, dated June 20th, 1970, of the sighting of American, French, and Japanese journalists captured by the "aggressors a few weeks ago". In that report, "aggressors" implied the Vietnamese Communist forces operating along the eastern border of Cambodia, in the Takeo area. The Cambodian army report

said the captured journalists had been seen near the coast between Kampot and Kep. The location of these towns is indicated on the attached map. This information is no longer sensitive and may be used as you see fit. We have no way to evaluate the information, except that it does accurately reflect the composition of Hangen's group, probably was not produced simply to please an American official, does not contradict the few items of confirmed information concerning the captured journalists, and cannot be ruled out in terms of routes or areas denied to the Vietnamese and Khmer Communist forces at that time.

As your own NBC summary accurately suggests, the only other reliable information which was collected in the lengthy investigation was an interview in 1970 by an NBC interpreter who visited the town where the NBC driver said the journalists were first held. At considerable personal risk, the NBC interpreter, Mr. Chhun Bun San, interviewed the assistant village headman of Tnol Bot, learned that two correspondents had been killed near the village about the time of Mr. Hangen's disappearance, and recovered the two bodies. The remains were analyzed for dental characteristics by experts in Saigon, and it was established that neither set of remains could be those of Mr. Hangen. One of the skeletons was definitely Asian, and the other was probably Asian, possibly of mixed descent. One skeleton reflected a height of 5'6", the other 5'7".

I mention these details because Director Helms considered as a hopeful aspect of the case the fact that Roger Colne was captured with Welles Hangen; Colne had considerable area knowledge and language ability. Our information concerning Roger Colne ends on the same note as the NBC summary - no definite information of survival or death, simply a blank.

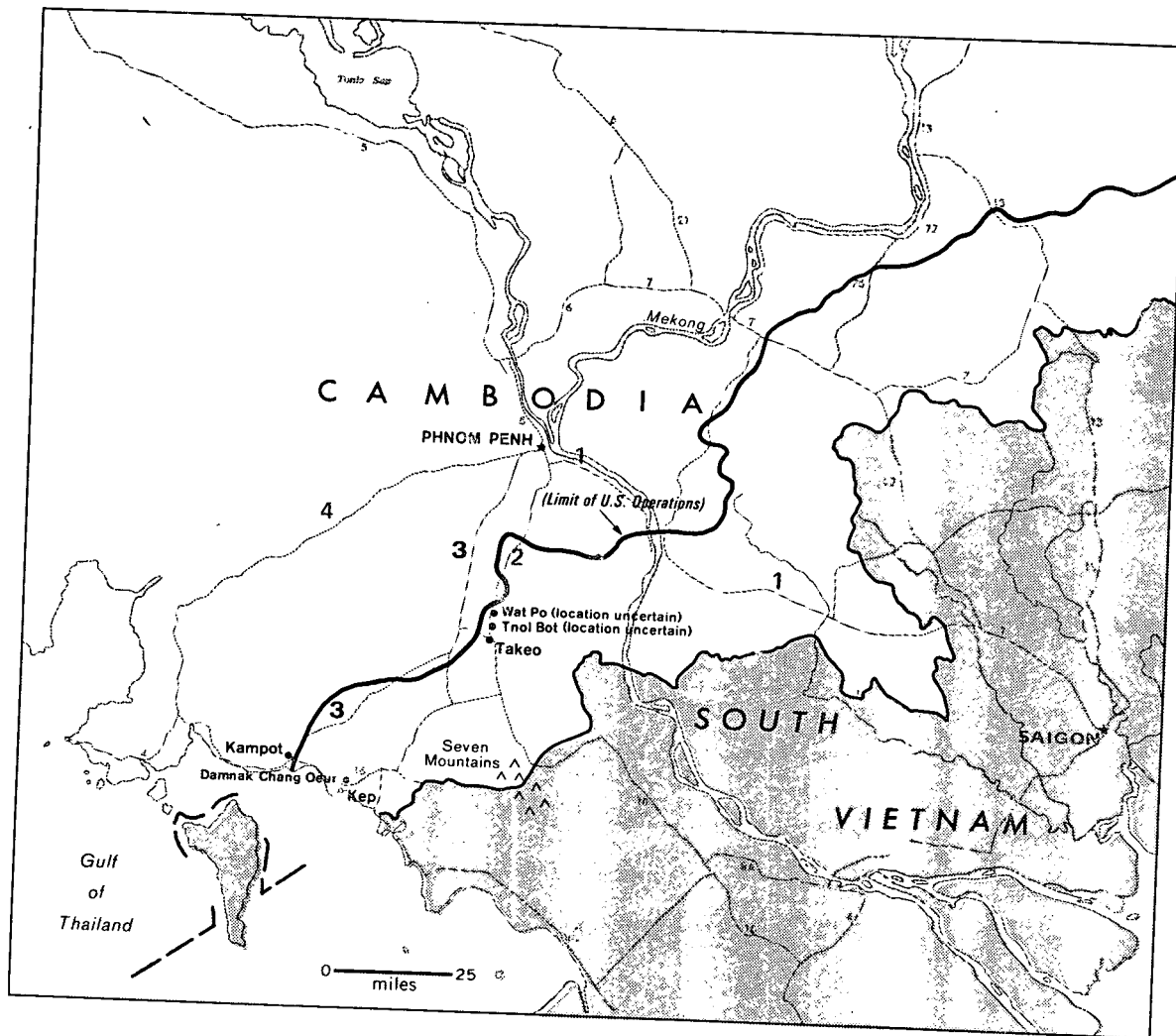
You may have noted that General Vernon A. Walters, Deputy Director of CIA, testified on March 17th before the House Select Committee on Missing Persons in Southeast Asia. He testified that the North Vietnamese had maintained a very detailed record of Americans captured, and that these records were believed to be held in the Enemy Proselyting Branch of the Policy Office of the Ministry of National Defense. This information may be pertinent to Mr. Hangen's case, since he was apparently captured by Vietnamese forces and remained alive long enough so that records of some kind may have been produced and forwarded to Hanoi through the Vietnamese military channels.

I hope that this report will be of service to you and to the family of Mr. Hangen. May I extend to them through your courtesy my own profound sympathy and respect for their patient search. I am sorry that it ends on this inconclusive note.

Sincerely,

George Bush  
Director





<b>TRANSMITTAL SLIP</b>		DATE
TO: <i>ER</i>		
ROOM NO.	BUILDING	
REMARKS:		
FROM:		
ROOM NO.	BUILDING	EXTENSION

Executive Registry

76-69414

6 MAY 1976

Mr. Julian Goodman  
Chairman of the Board  
National Broadcasting Co., Inc.  
30 Rockefeller Plaza  
New York City, New York 10020

Dear Julian,

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Executive Registry  
Room 7-E-12  
Headquarters

-2-

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- 3 -

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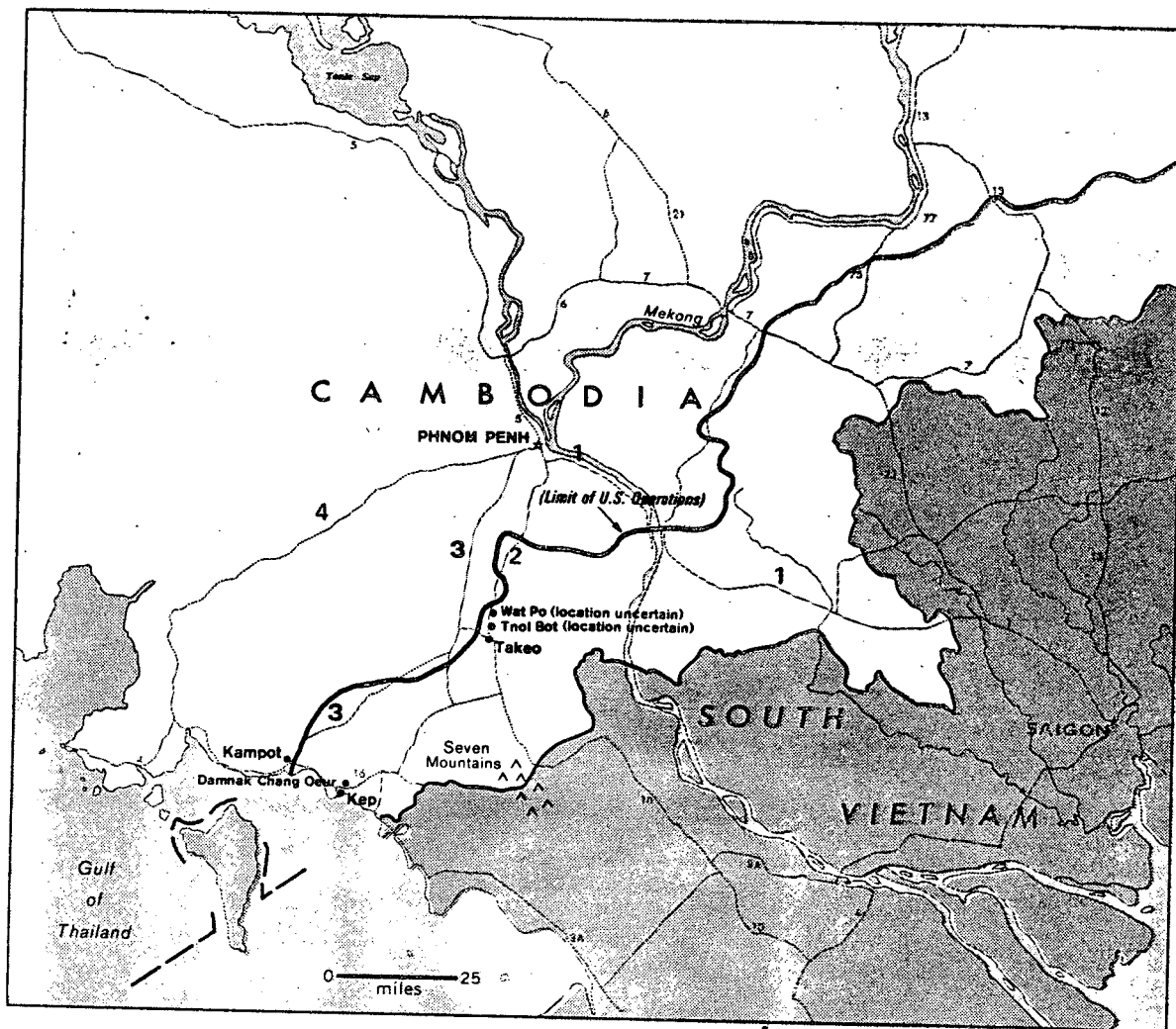
/s/ George Bush

George Bush  
Director

Encs.

A/DCI:mb (5 May 1976)

STATINTL 1-DCI   
1-ER  
1-A/DCI  
1-DDO/EA



24 August 1970

Mr. Robert E. Kintner  
2727 Q Street, N. W.  
Washington, D. C. 20007

Dear Bob:

I am writing in response to your note of 12 August 1970.

We have searched our records here for all information available on Welles Hangan and have also consulted with our colleagues in Saigon and Phnom Penh. I am afraid the ground is pretty thin with respect to solid information and most of what is known to us is probably also already known to you. To recap, however, this is what our inquiries have turned up.

Welles Hangan was one of a multi-national party of eight newsmen and cameramen that disappeared on 31 May about thirty miles south of Phnom Penh. Apparently, the group was travelling along Route 3 on a journey from Phnom Penh to Takeo. The party was in two vehicles, one a jeep, the other an Opel sedan. With the jeep leading, the two-vehicle convoy ran into trouble along Route 3 about thirty miles outside of Phnom Penh. The jeep was apparently ambushed and all of its passengers were killed, including CBS correspondent George Sylvester, whose body was found and recovered near the Route 3 ambush site a few days later.

Several days after the incident the Cambodian driver of the Opel, in which Hangan was riding, reappeared in Phnom Penh. He claimed to have escaped from the group's Communist captors and said that whereas all persons in the jeep were killed, the group in the Opel (including Hangan) had been captured and taken away. He further claimed that at the time of his escape they were all alive.

Nothing really positive has turned up since then.

STATINTL

25X1

- 2 -

25X1 [redacted] While this imprecise and undetailed report does accurately reflect the composition of Hangen's group, it does not reflect what we would regard as a probable movement direction for a group of foreign prisoners captured where Hangen was ambushed. Although we are perhaps blinded by our own preconceptions, we would have expected the Communists to move the group in a northeasterly direction toward northeastern Cambodia or Laos, rather than southwestward toward Kampot. (I am appending a map to make these locations and directions a little clearer.)

25X1

[redacted] all of our sources come up blank. We have tapped contacts in both Cambodia and Vietnam, including indigenous assets involved in screening the flow of refugees out of Cambodia. So far, we have been unable to pick up even any new rumors. We understand that various approaches have been made by private individuals, including persons affiliated with NBC, to the Poles, to other Communist sources and even to Sihanouk -- to no avail.

The only solid lead so far would appear to be the Cambodian driver who, if properly interrogated, might be able to shed a little further light on the identity of Hangen's captors and the direction in which the group was headed at the time of the driver's alleged escape. NBC's own people in Phnom Penh who have already talked to the driver and have direct access to him are in a much better position to do this discreetly than we are.

I realize that the above sheds little new light and provides no comfort. Our best guess -- and remember, this is only a guess -- is that if Hangen survived the first half hour or so after his immediate capture, he is probably still a prisoner and, in that sense, probably all right. As you well know, the Communists did take reasonably good care of and eventually released the separately captured trio of Richard Dugman, Elizabeth Pond, and Michael Morrow.

Let me end this letter on one very mildly upbeat note. At the time of his capture, Hangen appears to have been accompanied by a French national and long-time resident of Cambodia named Roger Colne who was serving as Hangen's cameraman. Colne has considerable linguistic ability in Cambodian and Vietnamese and a very detailed

PERSONAL



- 3 -

knowledge of the whole area. His presence could be a strong plus factor in Hangen's chances for survival.

If anything useful comes to our attention, I will let you know immediately.

Always cordially,

(Signed) Richard Helms

Richard Helms

Enclosure - 1 map

PERSONAL

UNCLASSIFIED

INTERNAL USE ONLY

ROUTING AND RECORD

**PRIORITY**

SUBJECT: (Optional)  
Response to Mr. Julian Goodman, NBC, C  
Welles Hangen

FROM: [Redacted]  
CEA

EXTENSION  
DATE  
1 MAY 1976

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE  
RECEIVED  
FORWARDED

OFFICER'S INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

1. DDO  
7E26

3 MAY 1976

[Redacted]

Executive Registry  
76-16941/3

2.

3. Angus MacLean Thuermer  
Assistant to the Director

4. DCI

5. good

6. RE NBC correspondence

7. Welles HANGEN - DRAFT  
FOR YOUR APPROVAL.

8.

9. TO C/EA

10. [Redacted]

11. [Redacted]

12. [Redacted]

13. [Redacted]

14. EXECUTIVE REGISTRY

15.

3-4  
This is in response to Julian Goodman's query. Draft text for your letter is as prepared by staff which did research except for 1st page where I did it to make it bit shorter and to read "Dear Julian" instead of "Dear Mr Goodman".

4 MAY 1976

24 August 1970

Mr. Robert E. Kintner  
2727 Q Street, N. W.  
Washington, D. C. 20007

Dear Bob:

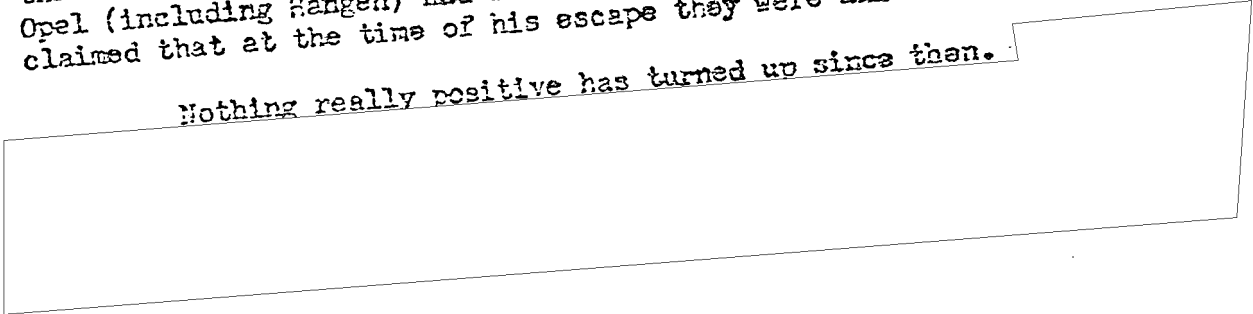
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25X1

25X1

- 2 -

25X1

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PERSONAL

- 3 -

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Always cordially,

(Signed) Richard Helms

Richard Helms

Enclosure - 1 map

PERSONAL

SENDER WILL CHECK CLASSIFICATION TOP AND BOTTOM					
	UNCLASSIFIED	CONFIDENTIAL	SECRET		
<b>OFFICIAL ROUTING SLIP</b>					
TO	NAME AND ADDRESS	DATE	INITIALS		
1	DCI				
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>ACTION</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>DIRECT REPLY</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>PREPARE REPLY</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>APPROVAL</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>DISPATCH</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>COMMENT</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>FILE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>RETURN</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>CONCURRENCE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>INFORMATION</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>SIGNATURE</b>
<b>Remarks:</b>					
<b>FOLD HERE TO RETURN TO SENDER</b>					
<b>FROM: NAME, ADDRESS AND PHONE NO.</b>				<b>DATE</b>	
ADCY					
	UNCLASSIFIED	CONFIDENTIAL	SECRET		

25X1

25X1  
25X1



Executive Registry  
~~76-6441~~

76-6441/2

Before DCI  
See Goodman & Co  
East Asia Division of  
ADO might be asked  
What latest -- very  
old, I'd expect --  
news is on NBC man  
Hals Hanger. This  
is Goodman letter.



19 Feb. 1976

25X1

Pub Affs

**SENDER WILL CHECK CLASSIFICATION TOP AND BOTTOM**

<del>UNCLASSIFIED</del>	CONFIDENTIAL	SECRET
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## OFFICIAL ROUTING SLIP

TO	NAME AND ADDRESS	DATE	INITIALS
1	Angus Thuermer		
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			

ACTION	DIRECT REPLY	PREPARE REPLY
APPROVAL	DISPATCH	RECOMMENDATION
COMMENT	FILE	RETURN
CONCURRENCE	INFORMATION	SIGNATURE

**Remarks:**

**FOLD HERE TO RETURN TO SENDER**

NAME AND PHONE NO.	DATE

<del>UNCLASSIFIED</del>	CONFIDENTIAL	SECRET
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FORM NO. 1-67 **237**

Use previous editions

\* GPO : 1974 O - 535-857

(40)

*Paul [Signature]*

25X1



STATINTL

[Redacted]  
February 18th

Executive Registry

76-6941/1

Angus:

Mr. Bush talked with Julian Goodman today about the possibility of getting together on Monday, February 23rd. Mr. Goodman will be out of the country on Monday but will contact me upon his return re. setting up a meeting.

Will keep you informed.

STATINTL

[Redacted]

Executive Registry

76-6941

NBC

National Broadcasting Company, Inc.

Thirty Rockefeller Plaza  
New York, N.Y. 10020 212-247-8300

Julian Goodman  
Chairman and  
Chief Executive Officer

February 9, 1976

The Honorable George Bush  
Director  
Central Intelligence Agency  
Washington, D. C. 20505

Dear George:

Again, our congratulations now that you have been formally sworn in. You are probably immersed by now in paper, so you don't have to reply to this, but I do hope you will give us a call when you are next in New York and sit down and talk with a few of us -- Herbert S. Schlosser, President of NBC; Richard C. Wald, President of NBC News -- about some of our common concerns.

We are naturally distressed by the degree to which the use of reporters by the CIA reflects upon and endangers our reporters all over the world. I mentioned to you Welles Hangen, missing seven years next May in the fighting in Cambodia. During our early and still unavailing efforts to find out anything about him, we were advised to make the strongest representations on his credibility as nothing more than a working newsman and not an agent of a government. We would like to discuss anything that is on your mind, but this is certainly one of the things on our minds.

We enjoyed being with you at the Washington Press Club dinner January 28, and my wife asked me to convey her apologies for her early departure, but (no reflection on women's lib) Lee Valeriani's cigar was beginning to get to her.

Best regards, and best wishes.

Sincerely,

*Julian Goodman*  
Julian Goodman

SENDER WILL CHECK CLASSIFICATION TOP AND BOTTOM					
UNCLASSIFIED	CONFIDENTIAL	SECRET			
<b>OFFICIAL ROUTING SLIP</b>					
TO	NAME AND ADDRESS	DATE	INITIALS		
1	Mr. Thuermer				
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>ACTION</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>DIRECT REPLY</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>PREPARE REPLY</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>APPROVAL</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>DISPATCH</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>COMMENT</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>FILE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>RETURN</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>CONCURRENCE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>INFORMATION</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>SIGNATURE</b>
<b>Remarks:</b>					
<p>Could you respond to this, advising that Mr. Colby is no longer Director and suggesting that, if they wish to invite him to speak as a private citizen, they contact him at <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 150px; height: 1.2em; vertical-align: middle;"></span></p>					
<b>FOLD HERE TO RETURN TO SENDER</b>					
FROM: NAME, ADDRESS AND PHONE NO.				DATE	
D/ES/ <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 200px; height: 1.2em; vertical-align: middle;"></span>				25 May 76	
UN <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 200px; height: 1.2em; vertical-align: middle;"></span>				SECRET	

FORM NO. 237 Use previous editions  
1-67

(EXECUTIVE REGISTRY FILE *Paul A. [Signature]*)

25X1

25X1

(40)

**THE  
COMSTOCK  
CLUB  
INC.**

2206 K STREET • SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95816 • PHONE 442-4608

"SEARCHING FOR FACTS"

5 MAY 76

Executive Registry
76-9270

*XR 75-6000 sub 1B  
Pub Affairs*

May 5, 1976

Mr. William Colby  
Director  
Central Intelligence Agency  
Washington, D.C. 20505

Dear Mr. Colby:

The Comstock Club is still very much interested in having you address our membership. Therefore, I am again renewing our invitation.

At the time of our previous correspondence, you were unable to fit a visit into your schedule since you had no immediate plans to be in California.

The Comstock Club, through its open forum, has become a vital force in northern California because it brings to its membership and the citizenry at large, a deeper insight into the basic issues facing our democratic society.

We heartily look forward to the day when you can be with us, Mr. Colby, for we value your responsible ideas based upon valid experiences and informed speculation.

Perhaps later this year you can include an appearance before the Comstock Club during one of your trips to the West Coast.

Very truly yours,

*Thomas J. MacBride*  
Judge Thomas J. MacBride  
President

TJM:jj

Executive Registry  
74-9207/A

May 4, 1976

Dear Mr. Lininger,

Thank you for your thoughtful invitation inviting me to speak to the Tucson Rotary Club. I'm going to keep this in mind. Perhaps you and I can discuss it at the Grove this summer. I will be there the second weekend staying at my camp - Hillbillies. I'd like to come back to Tucson, if for no other reason than to check up on my great friend John Haugh.

Warm regards,

Sincerely,

/s/ George Bush

George Bush

Mr. Schuyler Lininger  
Patron Grande  
The Lodge on the Desert  
306 North Alvernon Way  
Post Office Box 6669  
Tucson, Arizona 85733

DCI/GB/dlg  
Orig - Adse  
1 - DCI (w/basic)  
X - ER  
1 - A/DCI (W/basic)

*Pub. 9/1/76*

Executive Registry

76-9207

## The Lodge on the Desert

306 north alvernon way

tucson, arizona 85733

post office box 6669

(602) 325-3366

April 27, 1976

Mr. George Bush  
5161 Pallisade Lane, N. W.  
Washington, D. C. 20016

Dear Mr. Bush:

Our mutual friend, John Haugh, suggested that I drop you a brief note. As a fellow Bohemian, I have received the announcement that you are going to be speaking in San Francisco today.

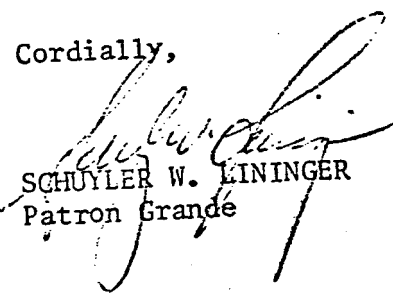
I thought how nice it would be if you could try to tie that in with a talk to our Tucson Rotary Club, which has about 250 members. I happen to be President of the club this year and of course Doc is one of our members.

I would appreciate it very much if you would consider coming to visit us and I am sorry that you are unable to do it at this time. Doc thought a gentle reminder might induce you to keep us in mind for a Wednesday some time in the future.

Incidentally, if you are at The Grove this summer, I am a member of Faraway which, as you know, is at the end of River Road.

Thank you again, and with best wishes, I remain,

Cordially,

  
SCHUYLER W. LININGER  
Patron Grande

SWL/ad

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