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A Lauder, Geo.

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Phone: (703) 351-7676

8 May 1986

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Mr. Strobe Talbott
TIME Magazine
1050 Connecticut Avenue
Suite 850
Washington, D.C. 20036-5334

Strobe,

The Director asked me to ensure that Ralph Davidson and Henry Grunwald get copies of his speech to the American Society of Newspaper Editors. They are attached.

While there is a clear need for the administration to go after its leakers in a vigorous way and for the Congress to do the same, it seems to me the media has some responsibilities in this area, too. Attached is a recent letter I sent to USA TODAY. It went apparently--and not surprisingly--into the newspaper's "circular file."

I have tried for two and a half years to bring the media to an understanding that this is their intelligence service and that it helps protect the very freedoms the media enjoys. I have had some success. Nonetheless, with others it has been like peeing into a gale. There is a lot of arrogance out there and total contempt for the need to protect intelligence agents and unique technical collection systems which are extremely difficult to create and replace. These sensitive systems cost billions and it takes years to redo them in some novel way to circumvent the countermeasures our adversaries place in our way, thanks to the help that the media provides them. In the meantime, once they are compromised by the media we are deprived of the information they can provide on early warning, arms control, terrorism and other priority national intelligence needs.

This country can have a free press--it certainly needs one--and a superb intelligence service. It needs that, too. We have to work together--you in the media and we in the intelligence business--to iron out our problems. That takes a willingness to listen, not lecture. The media tends to be better at the latter than the former in matters of this type.

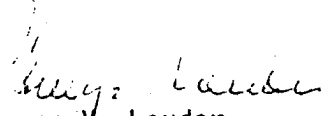
Mr. Strobe Talbott

-2-

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The Agency had under consideration your request for the particulars of any complaint we might have against TIME. Before we could arrive at a decision as to how we should respond, Henry Grunwald issued a statement to the press saying that the Agency would not provide TIME with the information it requested. Since he appears to know everything, including what we are going to do in the Agency before we decide ourselves, perhaps we should let his omniscience take precedence over our decision-making process.

Sincerely,


George V. Lauder
Director, Public Affairs