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OLC 74-0561

29 March 1974



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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Conversations with Senator Stuart Symington re
 Senator Howard Baker's Plans to Recommend
 Sanitization of CIA Documents Pertaining to
 Senator Baker's Inquiry

1. I called Senator Stuart Symington this morning to tell him that while I was aware that the Director had seen him at a social engagement last night and mentioned some of the developments yesterday regarding Senator Baker's proposal to raise with the full Ervin Committee (probably Wednesday) the problem of sanitizing all documents pertaining to Baker's inquiry into CIA and Watergate, the Director suggested I call him to be sure we had covered all of the details. I proceeded to recap Baker's call to the Director yesterday and the Director's telephone call with Senator Stennis. I told Symington that in this latter conversation the Director had advised Stennis of the request from Baker that we sanitize our material and Stennis told the Director that he would not accept Baker's proposal for transfer of his report and investigation to the Senate Armed Services Committee if Baker planned to proceed with the Select Committee to sanitize the Agency documentation. In furtherance of this position, Stennis had returned the copy of Baker's summary report to the custody of George Murphy, Joint Committee on Atomic Energy staff.

2. Senator Symington said he was glad I called because it also gave him an opportunity to advise me of a letter which he (Symington) has drafted and proposed to send to Baker. (I gathered from some of Symington's remarks that Baker had sent him a letter indicating his intention to raise the question of sanitization of CIA material with the Watergate Committee next week and had solicited Symington's views. I gather further that Symington had told Baker he could not really focus on this issue without having access to a copy of the summary report, which Baker has now made available to him.)



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3. Senator Symington read to me at least portions of his letter to Baker which said in effect he sees no great problem from a security standpoint in the sanitization of the summary report, but has raised a question with Baker concerning a statement (item 10 in the "Miscellaneous" section) referring to statements made by Ambassador Helms in his recent appearance before Baker and members of his staff. Symington said the report mentions an unnamed person whom Helms said had contacts within CIA and the FBI. The summary also made reference to a memorandum supposedly being prepared by this individual. Symington asked me if I knew who the individual was. I told him I could not be certain but I would look into it and be back in touch with him. Symington's letter to Baker suggests this matter be clarified in the record and the name of the individual concerned be provided.

4. Late this afternoon, after reviewing Helms' testimony, Senator Baker's report and some of the documentation we provided Baker and his staff, I called Symington back. I told him the individual in question was James Angleton, Chief of our CI Staff, which was one of the most sensitive organizations within the Agency. I told the Senator the question he referred to in the Baker report came up toward the end of Helms' testimony and was in response to a question put to him as to whether he had ever discussed the Watergate breakin with Angleton. (I noted that it was significant that Angleton's name was not disclosed in the summary report.) I told Symington further it was obvious in view of Helms' request for discussion off the record that he was reluctant to talk about the functions of Angleton's office on the record in view of the sensitivities involved--not for any reason pertaining to Watergate. I explained further that the memorandum referred to was being prepared but has not been forwarded to the Select Committee. I said any pressure which the Senator may put on Baker for more specificity with regard to this matter might be turned against Helms with a request for further information on the record. Symington said he didn't think we should worry about this since Baker has now completed his inquiry. However, he said if we should get any requests from Baker or his staff with regard to Helms, he wants us to be certain to notify him (Symington).

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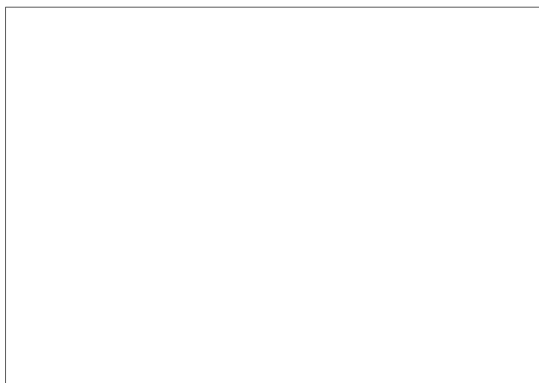
5. Commenting on the memorandum by Mr. Angleton, I told Senator Symington we had talked with Angleton who had indicated that he has had no conversation with any of the Watergate principals since the breakin although he may have had contact with some White House staff people, ultimately implicated in Watergate, in connection with their legitimate activities such as drug enforcement and intelligence evaluation. I did my best to dissuade Symington from including in his letter any request for further specifics pertaining to the Helms item but the Senator feels the matter is a good issue on which to block publication of the summary report at least for the time being.

6. I told Senator Symington that I understand Senator Baker has invited the Director to comment on his summary report if he chooses and we were in the process of pulling together such comment. I said that while the review of the report is still underway, our preliminary concern is not so much with matters of security sensitivity since most of the sensitive items have been leaked to the press in one form or another. We are more concerned about some of the innuendos and half-statements which are in the summary report and which, in our judgment should not go unchallenged. Symington again made it clear in no uncertain terms that he feels we should give nothing to Baker. If we have any comments on the summary report we should make them to Stennis and McClellan.

7. I mentioned to the Senator I had obtained a copy of the Marquis Childs column which appeared in the Baltimore Sun on Friday (which the Senator had called to my attention in our earlier conversation today). The Senator said he thought Childs' article was indeed more serious as far as Baker was concerned than the Evans/Novak column this morning.



GEORGE L. CARY
Legislative Counsel



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