

23 January 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR ; Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : New Book: Taint of Innocence
by Marquis Childs

1. This memorandum is for information only to invite your attention to a new novel by Marquis Childs entitled Taint of Innocence (New York: Harper & Row, 1967).

2. Taint of Innocence is a story of a CIA Station Chief, in the mythical Middle East country of Sibai, whose information and actions save an oil refinery owned by American Coastal from sabotage and destruction by hostile (Russian-backed) Arab mobs. Cairo Radio promptly puts out a broadcast blowing the Station Chief and accusing him of directing the shooting that killed several Arabs during the attack. Senator Blodgett, who is hostile to CIA, promptly makes a Senate speech based on this broadcast, and smears the Agency with it.

3. Senator Blodgett is described in the novel as having very bushy eyebrows and as coming from Oregon. He is a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and one of those who feels that the Committee should have some say regarding CIA. The DCI (unnamed) in the novel decides that he should set the record straight regarding the Agency's activities in the Sibai incident, and so he volunteers to appear before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. He is accompanied by the Station Chief and a senior Agency official named "Colby." There he tangles with Senator Blodgett who asks him whether he has not had a close business association with American Coastal. The DCI admits that about ten years ago he had built a few oil tankers for the company. He ably turns aside Senator Blodgett's other hostile questions about oil interests.

4. On balance, the book is not hostile to CIA, but on the whole, it is rather tortured and dull. The last third of the book is largely

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taken up with our Station Chief in the Middle East trying to make up his mind whether or not to get out of the intelligence business.

Walter Pforzheimer
Curator
Historical Intelligence Collection

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