

General Summary of the CIA
Relationship with Robert R. Mullen Co.

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(b)(3)Wrap-Up of the Agency's Association With
Robert R. Mullen and Company(b)(1)
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I. General

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The Agency's relationship with the Mullen Company and its principals primarily relates to the Agency's need for cover for employees assigned abroad. However, over the years there have been other contacts not strictly limited to cover matters.

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II. Cover

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The willingness of the Mullen Company to provide cover was first broached in 1963 by a representative of another bona fide firm providing cover for Agency employees. Over the years there have been starting in October 1963 some [redacted] different cover slots with Mullen Company with last such association ending in August 1972.

A. Cover Placements:

- (1) An office was opened in [redacted] and terminated in [redacted] at the Agency's request. The business produced by the office did not justify its maintenance by the company on its own account, and it was closed. (b)(1)
(b)(3)
- (2) [redacted] an office was opened in [redacted] which ultimately provided [redacted] cover slots. It was closed in [redacted] when there was no longer a need for these cover slots and the company could not maintain the office on its own account. (b)(1)
(b)(3)
- (3) Another cover slot was maintained in [redacted] from [redacted] until [redacted]. (b)(1)
(b)(3)
- (4) From [redacted] until [redacted] the company provided cover in [redacted] and this office, too was closed with the withdrawal of the Agency employee. (b)(1)
(b)(3)
- (5) Another office was opened in [redacted] and although the cover was terminated in [redacted] the office was not final disposed of by the company until [redacted] because of the problems related to the lease and disposal of office assets. (b)(1)
(b)(3)

The above cover arrangements were provided by Mr. Mullen at actual cost until November 1967 when a fee of [redacted] per year was paid for each slot. Mullen named certain incumbents in the cover slots to a Mullen subsidiary, Interprogres, which was set up to foster East/West trade. This enhanced individual cover slots, but no use was made of the corporation for other Agency purposes.

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- B. First Contact with Bennett - Upon the resignation of Robert Foster Bennett from the Department of Transportation on 1 January 1971 to become a director and vice president of Mullen Company, the Agency cleared and on 30 April 1971 briefed him on the current cover arrangements. (b)(1)
(b)(3)

- C. Witting Mullen Company Employees - A number of employees of the company have become aware of the Agency's association with the company over the years. These include Amanda Abernathy, Mr. Mullen's personal secretary, [redacted] a retired Agency employee who was hired by Mullen as the company's accountant, and [redacted] another ex-Agency employee who succeeded [redacted] and [redacted]. (b)(1)
(b)(3)

III. Other Agency Contacts

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- A. Mr. Mullen apparently had an association with Mr. Richard Bissell, a former Deputy Director for Plans. As a result, Mr. Mullen was in contact with the Agency in connection with his travel to [redacted] and this contact continued from 1959 through June 1961. (b)(1)
(b)(3)
- B. The Mullen firm was hired to provide promotional support to the Cuban Freedom Committee for [redacted] per month plus expenses. (b)(1)
(b)(3)
- C. In March 1965, the Agency purchased from Mullen [redacted] a dormant company, the Intercontinental Research Company, Inc., for around [redacted] and it was used as [redacted] abroad but was dissolved in 1968. (b)(1)
(b)(3)
- D. In July 1970, Mr. E. Howard Hunt advised that cover was available with the [redacted] but the Agency was not interested. (b)(1)
- E. In addition to the above contacts: (b)(3)
- (1) Mr. Karamessines in October 1971 (then the DD/P) was invited to lunch by Mr. Hunt. Mr. Hunt expressed Mr. Mullen's concern with the effect on his company of the closing down of overseas offices established for the Agency after relatively short periods of operation. As a result, Mr. Karamessines instructed that the [redacted] office be maintained for a minimum of five years. (b)(1)
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- (2) ~~Mr. Cord Meyer, Jr.~~ Mr. Karamessines' deputy, met with Messrs. Mullen and Hunt concerning a possible cover arrangement in [redacted] (b)(1)
(b)(3)
- (3) Other contacts include a January 1966 debriefing of Mr. Mullen concerning [redacted] and a September 1964 debriefing concerning a [redacted] organization. (b)(1)
(b)(3)

IV. Hiring of Hunt

- A. [redacted] contacted Mr. Robert R. Mullen in March 1970 relating to the advice and assistance in obtaining a public relations position for Hunt. (b)(1)
(b)(3)
- B. On April 10, 1970, Mr. Mullen advised that he had decided to employ Hunt. Concern over the possibility that the employment of an ex-Agency employee might have an adverse effect on the cover arrangement of individuals with the Mullen Company, was in Mr. Mullen's mind negated. He had known Hunt since the early days of World War II, it was logical for him to employ Hunt and that Hunt could fuff his Agency background by claiming to have been an author who had published some 30 books. It was later understood from Mr. Hunt that his salary with the company was \$20,000 per year with the understanding that it would be adjusted upward in the near future. (b)(1)
(b)(3)
- C. After Watergate, Mr. Robert Mullen mentioned his hiring of Hunt for the Mullen Company on several occasions. He said that in retrospect he wished he had not hired him and recalled that [redacted] approached him concerning qualifications required for employment in public relations work and possible leads for employment for Hunt when he was about to retire from the Agency. Mullen stated that [redacted] "twisted my arm pretty hard" and he hired Hunt. Mullen said further that he believed that the DCI wished Mullen to employ Hunt, especially after receipt of a special letter of recommendation from Mr. Helms who later personally expressed his appreciation to Mullen for hiring Hunt. Mullen said he honestly believed because of the pressure exerted by [redacted] that the Agency wished him to resolve problems attendant to Hunt's retirement by hiring Hunt. (b)(1)
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- D. In a 20 July 1973 meeting with Mr. Mullen the Helms letter was raised and Mr. Mullen recalled that Mr. Hunt in addition to the letter from Helms had also exhibited a copy of a letter of recommendation by Helms to a company which Mr. Mullen believed was ~~Allied Chemical~~. Mr. Mullen also recalled that at a function at the Kennedy Center he had seen Mr. Helms. They were not able to converse, but Mr. Helms had winked and given a hand signal to Mr. Mullen which Mr. Mullen had interpreted as an approval of hiring of Hunt. Mullen attempted to get the Helms letter but said his secretary reminded him that the entire file concerning Hunt had been given to the U. S. Attorney's office by Mr. Bennett during the investigation of the "Watergate incident" during the summer and fall of 1972. On another occasion Mullen observed that in view of Hunt's admitted forgery of State Department cables he wondered whether the letter was authentic. An exhaustive search of the Special Prosecutor's files was conducted and it was reported by Mr. Merrill of the Special Prosecutor's staff that the letter could not be found.

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V. Post Watergate Contacts

As a result of the jeopardy to the cover arrangements from the Watergate incident and another unrelated incident which threatened to compromise a number of operational interests of the Agency, contact with Mr. Bennett who had assumed ownership of the company circa June 1972, was maintained. Mr. Bennett was extremely cooperative and in addition passed along information which he received from his various sources concerning the Watergate affair, E. Howard Hunt, his association with the Howard Hughes interests with which he had obtained a public relations contract for the Mullen Company, allegations concerning dishonesty of Robert A. Maheu whose company formerly had handled many matters for the Hughes interests, and other matters.

A. One such meeting occurred on 10 July during which, among other things, Bennett informed the Agency representative that he had worked out an arrangement with the U.S. attorney in connection with the Grand Jury proceedings of the previous week which would permit him to answer a question concerning the Agency's relationship with the company without divulging the cover relationships.

B. In connection with an alleged leak from the Justice Department concerning the Mullen/Agency relationship, Mullen and Bennett were permitted to review the memorandum to Acting Director FBI from the Agency concerning the Mullen Company relationship in an effort to determine the source of the alleged leak.

C. Mr. Bennett, in anticipation of a Grand Jury appearance, secured the services of a Washington law firm. In view of his representations that he could not have handled the questions concerning the Agency adequately without the advice of counsel, the Agency reimbursed him for one-half of the attorney's fee. The reimbursement was \$440.

D. On 19 October 1973 we advised Bennett that should he be interrogated by the Special Prosecutor he should explain his full knowledge of the Agency's relationship with the Mullen Company. Bennett said he had already been twice interviewed and that he had stated he could not discuss these matters because he was bound by a secrecy agreement.

E. On 7 September 1973 Mr. Mullen contacted the Agency concerning an upcoming interrogation by the Select Committee of [redacted] and was advised that she should answer all questions truthfully to the best of her knowledge.

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