

MORI BUNDLE #

Approved For Release 2000/08/24 : CIA-RDP70-00058R000100130084-4

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CPYRGHT



A Few Clucks and Daggers.

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By TOM DONNELLY

CIA will put up its building on the other side of those trees. We own an acre in the trees."

RIGHT next door to the site of the proposed Central Intelligence Agency building at Langley, Va., is a handsome white house with blue shutters, occupied by two maiden ladies who keep a large, white dog, and move in an atmosphere of calculated obscurity that should be an inspiration to all cloak and dagger personnel.

I live in a two-room apartment myself, but I made an effort to enter into the spirit of a threatened property owner. "Do you suppose they'll do anything over there that will be—bothersome?" I inquired.

When I arrived at the blue-shuttered house, accompanied by a photographer, I was prepared to do a study of fragile old age, breathing valiantly behind the teacups, but touched with pain at the thought of the vast encroaching hand of change. Either that, or a study in wild, unreasoning, quavering defiance.

My guide said, "No doubt. The Federal Government does most anything it wants to, after all. It amends our constitution to its own designs, without consulting us, does it not? By the way, I assume you understand that you are not to infringe on my privacy in any way, in your publication? You are not to use my name, or the name of the lady who lives with me. We have lived here a long lifetime without the dubious benefits of publicity, and we intend to continue undisturbed. Those are our settled convictions."

I knocked at the door, and an elderly maiden lady presented herself and acknowledged that she was one of the owners of the premises, and that it was her understanding that the CIA would sooner or later set up shop, practically in her back yard.

PICTURE:

NO COMMUNICATION

The photographer said, after a moment, "We want to respect your wishes, of course, but would you mind if we got a picture of you down by the rail, looking across the pasture?"

"I haven't heard from any of those CIA people," she said mildly, "and I hope not to. What, precisely, is your object in coming here?"

I said hopefully, "We wouldn't have to show your face."

I said, "Oh, you know, we were wondering whether it would make a big difference to the people who live here, having the CIA so close and . . ."

The old lady said, "You might photograph those cows. I'm sure THEY would not object."

The elderly lady said, "Naturally it will make a difference, to have 15,000 people coming in here daily. . . I've heard that's how many there will be. I don't know the facts, of course, because I haven't made any particular effort to find them."

Presently we made our way back to the house. "Have you any idea of—of just what changes—if any—having the CIA on your—um—backyard could mean?" I asked.

I asked if she would mind indicating just where the installation would edge onto her property, and she invited me to accompany her to the pasture. I lowered the photographer's camera, and the dog followed us. Suddenly the dog went bounding off. "Fido," said the lady, "but that's all that's done. That's all that's done. The dog is bounding, and bounding."

The old lady said, "What happens will depend on the election."

"How so?" I asked. "Do you think the Democrats wouldn't?"

"Scarcely that," she smiled cryptically. "But . . . Allen Dulles? . . . I leave it to you. . . All right. Money and power!"

"Yes," I said. The photographer and I got into our car. The old lady went to the house. The white dog which had greeted us peacefully enough, followed the car, barking, as we drove into the bright countryside. I as . . . ate . . . cos