

Reports 6

DCI/IC-75-0526

MEMORANDUM FOR: CNDR Olmer, PFIAB Staff

SUBJECT : Mr. Cherne's Questions re the Motion
Picture, "Scorpio"

1. Reference is your request for information on which to reply to questions posed by Mr. Leo Cherne of the PFIAB concerning the "Scorpio" motion picture.

2. The questions you posed, and responses are as follows:

a. How did it come about the movie was filmed in part at CIA Headquarters--an obvious break from past CIA practice?

The decision was made by Director Helms "as an exception" after the original request of 17 February 1972 from Senator John V. Tunney of California was followed by a meeting on 25 February between David Silver, production manager of the motion picture, and a CIA official, and then a letter of 28 February from Mr. Silver.

Senator Tunney wrote that he had been told the filming at CIA "would be a car driving through the entrance, past the guard gate; entering the building, walking down a hall and entering an office."

Mr. Silver's letter stated:

"The story deals with field agents of the CIA and while it must of necessity have commercial ingredients, it is in no way an exploitation film or designed for sensationalism.

"We hope to secure permission to photograph, in establishing long shots, entrances and exits of the building, and closer covering shots in the main entrance lobby."

Mr. Arthur B. Krim, Chairman of the Board of United Artists Corporation, and a personal friend of Mr. Helms, also requested that he agree to the filming at CIA.

It is believed that Senator Tunney was the main reason for the approval which was given.

b. What did CIA expect to get out of its cooperation-- since the motion picture has such an anti-CIA focus?

The correspondence never mentioned "Scorpio"--the title given was "Danger Field," with no reference to a novel or author. The production manager's letter said only:

"The story deals with their (CIA agents) work in the field and their relationship with their immediate superior, who, it is never suggested is anything but an executive in the Agency."

Senator Tunney's letter said, "There is a portion of the movie which deals with the Central Intelligence Agency."

Mr. Helms, in his letter to Mr. Kirm, in which he agreed to allow the filming, said, "I do want to be sure. . . that your associates are not under the illusion that we are changing our policy. We are not."

c. Did the author of "Scorpio"--Mike Roote--have any background in CIA?

He did not. The novel was published in 1972 with United Artists Corporation (which produced the film) listed as holding the copyright. Since correspondence re filming shots at CIA originated in February 1972, it is assumed the novel was developed from the film script.

(informed) John M. Glavin

[Redacted]
Associate Deputy to the DCI
for the Intelligence Community

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