

Dr Smiley

Memo to: E. U. Condon

12 August 1968

From: R. J. Low

Subject: Army Intelligence

David Bettis and Herb Walker, 113th Military Intelligence Group, U.S. Army, (297-4243) Denver, visited Low unannounced at 3:05 p.m. August 5 in Low's office in Regent (306-K).

Low mentioned that he had an appointment with Dr. Manning at 3:30 so that time was limited. They said there was a question of contacts Low had with foreign embassies. Could we cover the subject in that time? Low said that subject could be covered in a few seconds.

Low commented that they were a little late in looking into the security matter, because we no longer have access to classified information. The "need to know" expired on June 30, 1968.

But, Low said, within the short time available he would try to answer their questions. They said they also wanted Low to provide a written statement. Then they read (Bettis read), saying that they were required to do so, the Fifth Amendment; they indicated that Low had the right to be represented by counsel; they said Low could refuse to answer questions.

Low replied that they were becoming terribly legal. Since they were, Low indicated that he had better do likewise. Low therefore said he would like to consult his lawyer before talking to them. We made a date for 9:30 am Tuesday for the interview.

At 8:45 am Tuesday, Bettis called to say that, since Low was no longer active on the UFO project, they had decided to call off the investigation. Bettis asked if Low had consulted the individual he indicated he wanted to talk to. Low replied that he had not bothered to, that he had decided that the need to read the Fifth Amendment, etc., was due to recent Supreme Court decisions. Since Low would be glad to talk to them about his activities he didn't feel it would be necessary to consult a lawyer and he did not.

Low corrected Bettis's statement that Low is no longer with the project. Bettis answered that he had checked with the University and learned that only 10 per cent of Low's time is charged to the project. Low commented that it required only 1 per cent to acquire secrets, but there was a legitimate reason for not carrying the investigation forward. Project members no longer have access to classified information because the need to know no longer exists.

Subsequently Condon learned that, although they told Low they were discontinuing the investigation, they contacted Roy Craig on two occasions after Low was told the investigation was being terminated. Moreover, Craig was asked whether he would recommend Low for a sensitive position within the government. Low, however, is not considering, nor has he made any inquiry about, such a position.

Condon asked Low to find out exactly who Bettis and Walker are. Low asked Virginia Stone at Office of Research Services to do that. Mrs. Stone

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initiated the inquiry but was out of the office when the reply came back. Someone else in the office took the message, which was that Bettis and Walker are with the 113th Military Intelligence Group in Denver and that we should call if we want additional information.

On Thursday, August 8th, Bettis called - in response, he said, to Low's call. Low said he did not call, that ORS had called for information and that that call was made because Condon was dissatisfied with the Army's handling of the matter. The investigators should have checked with the Project Director before contacting one of his staff. They said they had tried to do that but that Condon was tied up. So they saw Gillmor instead. They asked Low to please convey their apologies to Condon.

At this point, Low indicated that, since there was apparently derogatory information in his file, he wished to make a statement about it. Bettis said he would be glad to have it (belying the statement that the investigation had been abandoned) and that he would call back to make an appointment.

Walker called on August 9th, but Low was out. Low called back but then Walker was out, but Low's call was given to another Walker (not Herb). An interview was scheduled for 9:30 am August 14th. Later after talking with Condon and Ratchford, Low called the other Walker to ask that Herb Walker (Bettis was scheduled to be on vacation the week of August 12th) call Ratchford at 202-694-5588 and that the interview be cancelled and not be rescheduled unless, as a result of the consultation between Walker and Ratchford there appeared some reason to go ahead with it.

R. J. Low

cc - Dean Manning
- Dr. Ratchford

Dr. Smiley

MEMO TO: E. U. Condon

FROM: R. Craig *RC*

SUBJECT: U.S. Army Intelligence, Personal Security Investigation of
Robert Low, August 5, 6, 7 1968

DATE: August 9, 1968

On Monday afternoon, August 5, two men were introduced to me as military investigators by Mr. Dan Gillmor, who said they would like to talk with me. The men, Mr. Walker and Mr. (David or Daniel) Bettis, showed identification as U.S. Army Intelligence investigators, and said they were updating the security clearance of Mr. Robert Low. They wished to speak with me about Mr. Low. Questions were along the line of when I first met Mr. Low; how frequently I saw him; who else worked closely with him; when I saw him last; was I on friendly relations with him; did I visit his home for cocktails or parties; did I have reason to question his integrity, morality, or loyalty; how did he get along with his family; did he drink excessively; had he ever travelled outside the U.S.; did he make any contacts with foreign embassies; had he gone behind the iron curtain; did he have foreign visitors; what was my opinion of his ability; would I recommend him for positions of responsibility; would I recommend him for the job he held on this project.

My answers to some of these questions were to the effect that I don't really know. I did tell them that Low had, as they knew, gone to Europe last summer, and commented that names of places he visited there were available to them from other sources if they needed that information. I told them Low had, to my knowledge, written to officials in Norway and Sweden, at my request, for information related to our study. He had been visited here once or twice by European newsmen, but there had been no obvious traffic of sinister characters into his office.

I did answer, to the question of whether I would recommend Mr. Low for the job he held on this project, "No, but this is a very special and unique situation. For most situations, he may well receive my recommendation." At this point, Mr. Bettis expressed great interest in having me sign a statement to the effect that I would not recommend Mr. Low for this job, and wished to probe deeply into the reasons for this. "It's our regulations that any derogatory information must be in a signed statement." While I do not recall the questions Mr. Bettis asked in the probing, I did tell him that I wouldn't answer such questions; however, any lack of recommendation would merely be based on Mr. Low's reaction to criticism, and nothing more serious. If he wanted anything signed by me, he would have to write it out and let me see what it said before I could decide whether or not to sign the thing.

On Tuesday afternoon, August 6, Mr. Bettis appeared at the office, this time alone, with a typed statement, on an official investigation form, for my signature. I told Mr. Bettis I had heard they had discontinued this investigation, and I was, therefore, surprised to see him again. He responded that the discontinuance was true, but they

still had to submit a report on the part of the investigation that was completed. I then asked him why this was an Army investigation, rather than Air Force, and he said the Army had accepted the responsibility for all security clearance work for all the services, to avoid duplication of effort.

As I recall the statement he presented to me, besides saying when I met Mr. Low, how frequently I saw him, and that I had no reason whatsoever to question his morality, character, discretion, integrity, loyalty, etc., said: "I would not recommend Mr. Robert Low for any responsible position in the U.S. Government because of his inability to accept criticism." The statement itself also included a stipulation that I was willing for Mr. Low to know what I was saying in this statement, and that I was willing to testify before a hearing or court to present the contents of the statement.

My reaction to this statement was that it reflected neither my comments of the previous day nor my true attitude, and I would not sign such a statement. Mr. Bettis then urged me to write out a statement in longhand to substitute for this one. I told Mr. Bettis I considered this a waste of my time and felt I had ^{too} many more urgent things to write to bother with this. After a brief discussion of what he or others might mean by such words as character, discretion, and integrity, during which discussion Mr. Bettis mentioned specifically the Look magazine article, I altered the statement by scratching out the word "discretion", marking out the entire comment about recommendation, and substituting the statement (as best I recall the wording), "Mr. Low executes certain administrative duties quite skillfully. While I would not recommend him for a position in which he had to deal with people in special, emotion-laden situations, he would receive my recommendation for responsible positions of other types." I also indicated verbally that any comment about my willingness for Low to know what I said or willingness to testify at a hearing would have to appear as questions separate from the statement, and my response to these questions would be, since the statement was quite innocuous anyway, "yes."

I felt the statement now was so innocuous that Mr. Bettis would no longer be interested in my signature. However, shortly after 9 am on August 7, he reappeared at the office with the revised and retyped statement, which I signed, at his request, in several places -- marking all unused portions of the form "not used" and initialling or signing them, and initialling the bottom of each ^{page of the single} sheet, as well as ^{initialling} an article printed on the form which expressed a 5th amendment protection. I was irritated at the interruption of my work, and did not take time to read the printed material on the form carefully. Mr. Bettis left with the signed statement without offering me a copy.