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7 September 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR : Chief, TSD/LSS

SUBJECT : Mitchell L. WerBell

1. On the morning of 10 August 1967 several Department of Defense, ARPA (Advanced Research Projects Agency) personnel and myself were assembled in a Pentagon office to witness a demonstration of some silenced handguns.

2. A Mr. Mitchell L. WerBell entered the room carrying a small black handbag. WerBell is a short, stocky, flashy individual who sports a large handlebar mustache and experiences no difficulty in letting people know he is around.

3. After introductions WerBell whipped two 22 cal. handguns equipped with silencers from his bag and fired a clip of live rounds from each gun into a telephone book he had tossed on the floor. Both guns, one using 22 cal shorts the other 22 long rifle cartridges, were well quieted. Although WerBell passed the unloaded weapons around for inspection he wouldn't permit anyone to disassemble the silencers stating that the system was proprietary and he didn't want the technique for quieting disclosed before he had it patented. He spared no words in extoling the superiority of his technique stating that it was far better than anything CIA has, e. g. he said the screen rubber-washer system that CIA used on the 22 cal. Hi Standard was much inferior to his.

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4. Upon inquiry by me as to his affiliation with CIA he hedged by answering that he had been with OSS and of course involved with the Dominican Republic fracas. He had photos of himself he said were taken in the Dominican Republic during the disturbance picturing him with a Dominican General and also with some American Army personnel. He stated that there are a large number of weapons stored in the Dominican Republic. He really stated nothing specific but played mostly on the listeners' imagination.

5. WerBell's visit to the Pentagon to demonstrate his wares was prompted by the fact that he had obtained information that the Army had a requirement for a silencer for the M-16 rifle. WerBell was looking for a contract and any help he could get.

6. He also demonstrated his silencers to some JCS military personnel in the afternoon.

7. I declined WerBell's luncheon invitation and borrowed his bag and guns during the period he was at lunch and ran a firing check and inspection of his equipment.

8. During a general discussion in the afternoon I informed WerBell that the Navy had no existing requirement for silenced handguns or the M-16 rifle. I advised him to contact Rock Island Army Arsenal as they had initiated the requirement for the silenced M-16.

9. I can best describe WerBell as a "PEST". He has no reservations about imposing himself on anyone in order to achieve his end, e. g., he phoned my home at 10:00 P. M. on Friday, 11 August asking me to accompany him on Saturday morning to see General Greene, Commandant of the Marine Corps with whom he stated he had an appointment. I declined in a somewhat less than gracious manner. I didn't believe he really had an appointment but hoped he could use me to see the Marine General because I know the General. He had obtained this information from a Marine Colonel. I later verified the fact that he didn't see the General.

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10. The following week WerBell made numerous unsuccessful attempts to contact me. He again phoned my home late one evening. I wasn't home and he left a message to call him at his office the next day. I called his office in Atlanta, Georgia, the next day but didn't contact him. I left a message for the secretary to pass to him that I preferred to have no more calls made by WerBell to my home and also that I could do nothing for him. WerBell called back and apologized. He informed me that he had contacted Rock Island Arsenal regarding the M-16 silencer. He stated he would keep me informed which I said wasn't at all necessary.

11. I have not heard from him since.

12. I used my Navy cover and was just another military officer at his demonstrations.

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([redacted])
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