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August 2, 1973

Honorable John C. Stennis
3609 Cumberland Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008

Dear Mr. Chairman:

After talking with you on the phone this afternoon, I learned that you had been trying to reach me. I mention this only because I want you to know that I called indeed to pay my respects and would have been in touch with you before I left Washington in any event.

I have been thinking about our conversation, and have one observation that I would like to make. If you are going to employ a consultant to work on the CIA problem, I would suggest that you examine the possibility of using an individual who has retired from the agency or some other element of the intelligence community. I say this because I believe you would get more sophisticated and perceptive work from such an individual than you would from someone who would have to start from scratch and learn about the complexities of intelligence work. I can see a lot of spinning of wheels and wasted motion in this latter case. Therefore, may I recommend that you talk with Jack Maury or Lawrence Houston who, if not available themselves, might be able to suggest other names to you. In the last analysis, it is you Senators who are going to make the decisions. The staff man should be someone who is able to serve up practical and workable options.

Again, may I say how delighted I am at how well your health is progressing. May I extend my best wishes and all good luck?

Respectfully,

Richard Helms