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MEETING WITH THE  
OLSON FAMILY

MONDAY - JULY 21, 1975  
The Oval Office.  
2:00 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN.....

OLSON FAMILY

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

July 16, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

THROUGH: JERRY JONES  
JAMES CONNOR

FROM: RODERICK HILLS R. H.

SUBJECT: Scheduling of Meeting re Invitation to  
Mrs. Frank Olson and her three  
children to meet with the President

The circumstances of the death of Dr. Frank A. Olson are described in a previously submitted memorandum, a copy of which is attached (Tab A). His widow and her three children have indicated their shock and outrage at the circumstances surrounding Dr. Olson's death and the fact that the details have been concealed from them for 20 years (See news story at Tab B). The Olson family has hired David Rudovsky to represent them and he has indicated the intention of the family to sue for several million dollars. This memorandum will deal with the question of what considerations are relevant in deciding whether the President should meet with Mrs. Olson and her three children to express his sympathy on behalf of the American people and his apology on behalf of the United States Government.

1. The fact that the President expresses his own outrage at the circumstances of Dr. Olson's death could be some encouragement to the family's determination to sue and could also raise their expectation as to the amount of money they expect to receive in settlement of that law suit. It could also affect the judge who tries the case and will have the authority to set damages.

While this is a factor in determining whether or not to meet with the Olsons, it is not, in our judgement, a conclusive factor, given the circumstances of this incident.

2. The intensity of the family's reaction and background of the lawyer they have hired do raise some possibility that they may react discourteously toward the President's invitation. This factor, however, we do not regard as material, since any such reaction would be more harmful to them than embarrassing to the President. However, it is conceivable that their lawyer may insist that he be present at such a meeting. We recommend that it be made clear that the lawyer not be invited.

3. The Civil Division of the Department of Justice in its initial memorandum (Tab A) stated "upon preliminary review" it is their opinion that any tort action against the United States by the Olsons would be barred by the Federal Employees Compensation Act on the ground that he was injured "in the course of his official duties" and, therefore, the family is entitled to survivors' benefits and nothing more. My further discussion with the Civil Division has led both them and me to conclude that the defense is not conclusive because:

(i) The bizarre circumstances of his death could well cause a court of law to determine as a matter of public policy that he did not die in the course of his official duties.

(ii) Dr. Olson's job is so sensitive that it is highly unlikely that we would submit relevant evidence to the court on the issue of his duties.

The latter circumstance may mean as a practical matter we would have no defense against the Olson law suit. In this connection, you should know that the CIA and the Counsel's office both strongly recommend that the evidence concerning his employment not be released in a civil trial. You may wish to discuss this matter in more detail at this time.

There is a statutory provision saying that the finding by the Bureau of Compensation is conclusive but we have some doubts both as to its applicability and constitutionality in this case.

4. If there is a trial, it is apparent that the Olsons' lawyer will seek to explore all of the circumstances of Dr. Olson's employment

as well as those concerning his death. It is not at all clear that we can keep such evidence from becoming relevant even if the government waives the defense of the Federal Employees Compensation Act. Thus, in the trial it may become apparent that we are concealing evidence for national security reasons and any settlement or judgement reached thereafter could be perceived as money paid to cover-up the activities of the CIA.

5. For all of the above reasons we recommend that the Attorney General be authorized now to seek to negotiate a settlement with the Olsons' lawyer.

(a) The Civil Division has advised us preliminarily that the case has a settlement value between \$500,000 and \$1 million. I have asked for a final recommendation.

(b) The Civil Division also has stated that any settlement may require a private bill to approve the settlement, but they are re-considering this decision in view of point No. 3 above. A private bill in the House would be introduced in Congressman Walter Flowers' subcommittee which probably would not encourage any in depth hearings about Dr. Olson's job. In the Senate the Judiciary Committee assigns private bills to the staff for recommendations back to the full committee. Again, we would expect that there would be only a small chance of extensive hearings on the underlying facts.

(c) Depending upon the exact amount of the settlement and a final decision from the Department of Justice, it may be possible for the Attorney General to approve a settlement and pay it without a private bill.

DECISION:

1. Should Mrs. Olson and her children be invited to a meeting at the White House to receive from the President an expression of sympathy on behalf of the American people and an apology on behalf of the United States Government?

Recommendation: We see no significant objection to such an invitation.

Agree

RRF

Disagree

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Should the Attorney General be authorized to attempt a negotiated settlement with attorneys for the Olson family?

Recommendation: We recommend that he be so authorized and further that the President during his meeting with the Olson family suggest that the Attorney General would be willing to discuss the matter generally with the Olson family attorneys.

Agree           *MAJ*          

Disagree \_\_\_\_\_

A



The Rockefeller Report states on p. 226:

"In the late 1940's, the CIA began to study the properties of certain behavior-influencing drugs (such as LSD) and how such drugs might be put to intelligence use. This interest was prompted by reports that the Soviet Union was experimenting with such drugs and by speculation that the confessions introduced during trials in the Soviet Union and other Soviet Bloc countries during the late 1940's might have been elicited by the use of drugs or hypnosis. Great concern over Soviet and North Korean techniques in 'brainwashing' continued to be manifested into the early 1950's."

Dr. Frank A. Olson, a bio-chemist, was a civilian employee of the Army working at Fort Detrick in a cooperative effort with the CIA. On November 19, 1953, at one of the periodic meetings of Ft. Detrick and CIA personnel, a dosage of LSD was placed by CIA personnel in drinks consumed by Dr. Olson and others, all of whom were members of the group. Prior to receiving the LSD, Dr. Olson had participated in discussions where the testing of such substances on unsuspecting subjects was agreed to in principle. However, neither Dr. Olson, nor any of the others was made aware that they had been given LSD until about 20 minutes after the fact.

During the next several days Dr. Olson developed side effects, as a result of which he was taken to New York City on November 24, 1953, to be treated by a doctor who was a consultant to the agency on drug-related matters, Dr. Harold A. Abramson. On November 24, 25 and 26, he met with Dr. Abramson.

After seeing him on the 27th, Dr. Abramson believed that hospitalization would be in Dr. Olson's best interest. Arrangements were made for a hospital room near Dr. Olson's home (in the Washington area), but his room could not be prepared until the following day. Consequently, Dr. Lashbrook, of CIA, and Dr. Olson stayed at the Hotel Statler in New York on the night of November 27.

Dr. Lashbrook reported that during cocktails and dinner Dr. Olson appeared cheerful and spoke freely of his forthcoming hospitalization. Lashbrook and Olson retired at about 11:00 PM. They occupied separate twin beds in the same room on the tenth floor. At approximately 2:30 Saturday morning, Lashbrook was awakened by a loud noise; he reported that Olson had crashed through

the closed window blind and closed window and had fallen to his death.

The CIA General Counsel rendered an opinion that the death resulted from "circumstances arising out of an experiment undertaken in the course of his official duties for the U. S. Government.

The Bureau of Employee's Compensation adopted this view, thus awarding survivor benefits to the widow and children. To date \$143,582.22 have been paid to the widow and three children. These tax-free benefits continue to be paid in the current total amount of \$792.00 per month. The payments to the children terminate when they reach majority (as two already have), but the widow's benefits continue until death or re-marriage, and are periodically adjusted for cost of living increases.

The CIA has never made any contact with the family. Prior to the publication of the Rockefeller Report, no government representative has ever disclosed the full details concerning Dr. Olson's death.

Upon a preliminary review of the facts, it is the opinion of Justice Department lawyers that any tort action against the United States arising out of the above-stated facts would be barred by the Federal Employees' Compensation Act, and specifically 5 USC 8116(c). This Act would not bar suit against any individuals.

B

## Family Plans to Sue C.I.A. Over Suicide in Drug Test

By SEYMOUR M. HERSH

Special to The New York Times

FREDERICK, Md., July 9—The widow and children of a researcher who committed suicide in 1953 after being made an unwitting participant in a Central Intelligence Agency drug experiment said today that they planned to sue the agency for his "wrongful death" death.

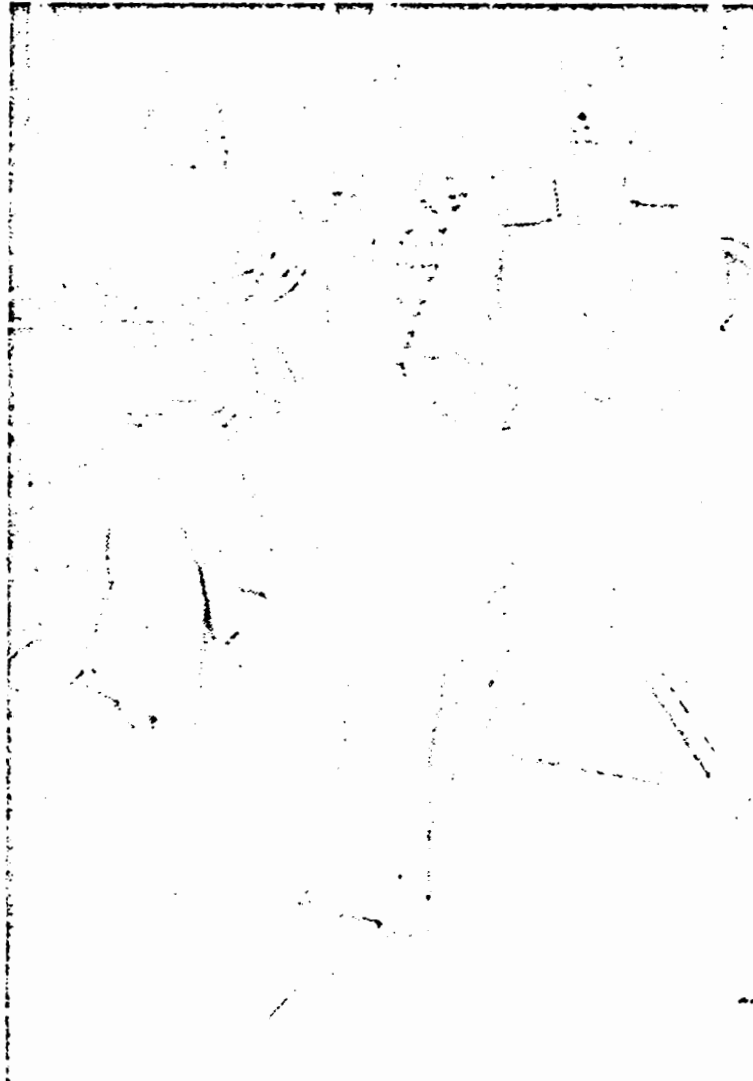
In an interview at their home here, Alice W. Olson and her three children said that they learned the circumstances of Frank R. Olson's death after the Rockefeller commission disclosed last month that C.I.A. files showed a suicide had occurred during a 10-year agency program of administering the drug LSD to unsuspecting subjects to learn its effects.

The commission's report did not identify the victim, who worked for the Army, but his family identified him today, and later, David W. Bellin, director of Vice President Rockefeller's panel looking into C.I.A. activities, confirmed that Mr. Olson had been the victim.

"I'm very angry at the C.I.A., because they let us grow up thinking our father had 'inexplicably' committed suicide," said Eric W. Olson, 30 years old, the eldest son, who is now a graduate student at Harvard.

After weeks of family discussions, Mr. Olson said, the fam-

Continued on Page 18, Column 3



Alice W. Olson, widow of Frank R. Olson, with her children, from left, Lisa W. Hayward and Nils W. and Eric W. Olson, at their home in Frederick, Md.



Frank R. Olson on his 40th birthday, in 1960, three years before death.

## FAMILY WILL SUE C.I.A. FOR SUICIDE

Continued From Page 1, Col. 1

ly decided "to get the story out, so our father's friends and colleagues—and also our friends—could know what the C.I.A. has done."

Until last month, the family members said, all they were told about Mr. Olson's death was that he "jumped or fell" to his death on Nov. 18, 1953, from the 10th floor of the Hotel Statler in New York.

"At no time since then, Mrs. Olson said, did the C.I.A. get in touch with her to explain the true circumstances of her husband's death."

"Shortly after dinner one evening during the meeting, Frank Olson and four special operations divisions scientists were told that they had been given lysergic acid diethylamide, and that their reactions would be observed," the statement added. "We do not know what occurred during the remainder of this meeting."

Mr. Olson continued to exhibit signs of imbalance at work the next week, the family statement continued, and a colleague—who was not identified by name—called two C.I.A. liaison men and made plans to fly the scientist to New York to see a psychiatrist, Dr. Harold A. Abramson, who held appropriate security clearances.

A few days later, the statement said, the family was told of Mr. Olson's death.

"An employee of the Central Intelligence Agency had been with Frank Olson in his hotel room the night he died," the statement said. "Olson's widow was later told that her husband's escort had awakened about 1:30 A.M. to see Olson going at a full run toward the window. He said he saw Olson go through both the closed window and a drawn shade."

Compensation Pledged

"We have agonized over the question of what kind of horrid 'nightmare' or 'event' could have driven him to hurl himself at a full run out of a 10th story window, and how this 'suicidal nervous breakdown'—the term we have always used—could have developed so suddenly, so devoid of connec-

suicide." At the time he died, Frank Olson's wife was 38 years old, his eldest son was nine years old, his daughter seven and his youngest son five. Now, 22 years later, we learn that this death was the result of C.I.A. negligence and illegality on a scale difficult to contemplate.

"Suddenly, we learn that Alice Olson's being left in early adulthood to raise a family alone, her children left to grow up without a father—we learn that these deprivations were not necessary.

"And we suddenly learn that for 22 years we were lied to, led to believe that Frank Olson had a fatal nervous breakdown. Thus, Frank Olson's children grew up under a double shadow, the shadow of their father's suicide and the shadowy inexplicability of that act."

Eric Olson said that the family's lawsuit was "a way of holding the C.I.A. publicly accountable for what they did."

The Olson's attorney, David Rudovsky, of Philadelphia, was

Until last month, family members said, all they were told about Mrs. Olson's death was that he "jumped or fell" to his death on Nov. 18, 1953, from the 10th floor of the Hotel Statler in New York.

At no time since then, Mrs. Olson said, did the CIA get in touch with her to explain the true circumstances of her husband's death.

"I was stunned" after learning of the CIA's experiments on her husband, Mrs. Olson said. "It never occurred to me that there could be such a play."

William E. Colby, Director of Central Intelligence, could not be reached immediately for comment, but a spokesman for the agency declined to comment on the authenticity of the report.

In a statement to be distributed at a news conference tomorrow, the family relates that Mrs. Olson, then a 43-year-old high-level civilian researcher in biological warfare at nearby Fort Detrick, suddenly began showing symptoms of anxiety and became "uncharacteristically withdrawn" after a week-long work conference.

#### Series of Meetings

The conference was one of a series that Mr. Olson and some of his colleagues held with CIA personnel in the office of the special operations division at Fort Detrick, apparently to discuss CIA needs in biological warfare research.

Not until publication of the Rockefeller commission's report and subsequent discussions with one of Mrs. Olson's former colleagues, the family's statement said, did it learn that Frank Olson had, without his knowledge or consent, been given LSD by two CIA employees during their research meeting.

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#### Compensation Pledged

"We have agonized over the question of what kind of horrid 'nightmare' or 'event' could have driven him to hurl himself at a full run out of a 10th-story window, and how this 'suicidal nervous breakdown'—the term we have always used—could have developed so suddenly, so devoid of connection to anything we or his friends had known of him."

The family was notified shortly after the death that they would be paid compensation, because the death was the result of a work-related accident.

For the next 22 years, the family recalled in today's interview, the Olsons were unsure whether to recall the death as suicide.

There was some "snooze" over their father's death, the children recalled.

"We friends would ask 'How did your daddy die?'—that's always been a tough one," said Mrs. Elsa W. Hayward, the 29-year-old married daughter of Mrs. Olson.

"I used to say, 'He died of a concussion.'" Nils W. Olson, the younger son, a 27-year-old dental student at the University of Maryland said.

In the statement, the family described the impact of the recent disclosures, saying:

"Since 1953, we have struggled to understand Frank Olson's death as an inexplicable

to believe that Frank Olson had a fatal nervous breakdown. Thus, Frank Olson's children grew up under a double shadow, the shadow of their father's suicide and the shadow of inexplicability of that act."

Eric Olson said that the family's lawsuit was "a way of holding the CIA publicly accountable for what they did."

The Olson's attorney, David Rudovsky of Philadelphia, was unable to say when he would file the suit against the agency.

The Olson family also said that it would seek further facts about the role of Dr. Abramson, the New York psychiatrist who had "several long sessions" with Mr. Olson.

Dr. Abramson, reached at his office, refused to discuss the issue.

"I'll have to consult a lawyer because this is a serious matter," he said. "I'm being accused of something I did 22 years ago."

The Olsons also charged that investigators for the Rockefeller commission had failed to check out some of the CIA's information about Mr. Olson and had not informed the family of the true circumstances of the death.

In its report, the commission said in a footnote that there were "indications in the few remaining agency records that this individual [Mr. Olson] may have had a history of emotional instability." The report also noted that two CIA employees had been reprimanded.



The President met with the family of Dr. Frank Olson (Mrs. Frank Olson and her three children -- Mrs. Lisa Haywood, Nils Olson, and Eric Olson) at 2:00 p.m. this afternoon. He expressed the sympathy of the American people and apologized on behalf of the U. S. Government for the circumstances of Dr. Frank Olson's death in November 1953. The Olson family asked that they be told of all the facts about Dr. Olson's death. The President told the family that he had instructed his Counsel's Office to make information available to them at the earliest possible date. He has also informed the Olson family that the Attorney General has been asked to meet with their legal representatives to discuss the claims they wish to assert against the Central Intelligence Agency by reason of Dr. Olson's death. The Olson family asked that the following statement be released on their behalf:

"We deeply appreciate President Ford's expression of sympathy and apology to our family. His concern and his invitation to meet with him are of great value to us.

Frank Olson's death was a tragic loss to his family, his friends, and his scientific colleagues. As previously unknown circumstances of his death have been revealed, the American people have been deeply moved. We are heartened by this response and encouraged that this experience has provided an impetus in our country for reflection on fundamental issues important to us all as a free people.

We are grateful that President Ford has given us his support for our effort to be fully informed about Frank Olson's death and to obtain a just resolution of this entire matter. We hope that this will be part of a continuing effort to insure that the CIA is accountable for its actions and that people in all parts of the world are safe from abuses of power by American intelligence agencies."

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3 PM  
Buckley

Jim -

This came down in  
outbox --

What is the story?

Does the Press  
Office have this?

Trudy

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN....

*P. has approved*

The President met with Mrs. Frank Olson and her three children -- Mrs. Lisa Haywood, Nils Olson, and Eric Olson -- at 2:00 p.m. this afternoon. He expressed the sympathy of the American people and apologized on behalf of the U. S. Government for the circumstances of Dr. Frank Olson's death in November 1953. Mrs. Olson asked that she and her children be told of all the facts about her husband's death. The President told her that he had instructed his Counsel's Office that such information be given to her at the earliest possible date. He has also informed Mrs. Olson that the Attorney General has been asked to meet with her legal representatives to discuss the claim she wishes to assert against the Central Intelligence Agency by reason of her husband's death. Mrs. Olson asked that the following statement be released on behalf of herself and her children:

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Jim -

The Olson announcement is on  
track in Press Office - Ron Nessen is  
handling personally.

Trudy

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN....

FAMILY STATEMENT BY THE WIFE AND CHILDREN OF FRANK R. OLSON

Alice Wicks Olson

Eric Wicks Olson

Lisa Wicks Olson Hayward

Nils Wicks Olson

We are the family of Frank R. Olson. Frank Olson -- a civilian biochemist working for the United States Army -- died shortly after midnight on November 28, 1953, when he plunged to his death from a window on the 10th floor of the Hotel Statler in New York. The death certificate states that Frank Olson "jumped or fell" and cites "multiple fractures, shock and hemorrhage" as the causes of death.

An employee of the Central Intelligence Agency had been with Frank Olson in his hotel room the night he died. This man was accompanying Frank Olson when Olson was taken to New York to consult a psychiatrist. Olson's widow was later told that her husband's escort had awakened about 1:30 A.M. to see Olson going at a full run toward the window. He said he saw Olson go through both the closed window and a drawn shade. For twenty-two years, the only details the family knew of the immediate circumstances surrounding Frank Olson's death were that he was taken to New York to see a psychiatrist and that he "jumped or fell" to his death. But Alice Olson



was convinced that her husband's death was not a deliberate or willful act. She felt that he must have plunged through the window in a state of panic brought on by she knew not what. This was the impression she conveyed to her children.

On June 11, 1975, we suddenly learned something new. On that day the Washington Post published a report of the Rockefeller Commission's disclosure of an "LSD suicide," the result of a secret CIA test on unsuspecting persons. This CIA drug test was part of a program conducted from 1953 to 1963 when it was discovered by the CIA's inspector general and stopped. One of Frank Olson's colleagues -- himself a victim of the CIA drug test -- has confirmed to us that the man we were reading about in the newspapers was indeed Frank Olson. After twenty-two years Frank Olson's children at last had something of an answer to the question they had asked their mother for so long: "How did our father die?"

Frank Olson was not a CIA or Army officer, but a civilian biochemist, a high level research scientist and administrator at Camp Detrick (later renamed Fort Detrick), the Army's biological warfare research installation located in Frederick, Maryland. He had been among the first scientists to come to Camp Detrick during the Second World War (1943) when the Army established its bacteriological warfare research program.

There, in a division called Special Operations, under extremely stringent secrecy and security regulations, Frank Olson and his colleagues did research on the most lethal microorganisms known to humanity, those that transmit such diseases as bubonic plague.

Prior to June 11, 1975, we had known that during the weekend preceding his death Frank Olson had been very distressed. He had returned to his home near Frederick from meetings with members of the Special Operations research group which had lasted from Monday until Friday at a mountain retreat. During the weekend following the meeting he expressed to his wife great concern about something that had happened at a meeting the previous week. He conveyed self-doubt, self-recrimination and great anxiety. Throughout the weekend he was often silent and his wife did not know how to interpret his sudden apprehensiveness and his uncharacteristically withdrawn behavior. He did not discuss the sources of his distress. His wife attributed his lack of communication to the secrecy required by his work. She attempted to comfort him and by the end of the weekend he had decided to quit his job on Monday morning.

Frank Olson went to work on Monday morning prepared to resign. That day he was reassured by his colleague. Monday

night he related this conversation to his wife. He seemed to accept his colleague's reassurance and appeared more relaxed. Tuesday morning he returned home from Camp Detrick at 10:00 A.M. He told his wife that he had been advised that he needed to see a psychiatrist and that his colleagues feared that he might do her bodily harm. At this moment she realized for the first time that her husband was not himself. She was stunned to hear her husband say that she might not be safe with him.

That same morning a car driven by a Special Operations division employee arrived to take Olson to Washington where he would be flown to New York to see a psychiatrist. Alice Olson accompanied her husband to Washington and never saw him again.

Not until June 11, 1975, did we learn that Frank Olson had, without his knowledge or consent, been given LSD by two CIA employees during the research meeting. These CIA employees, who were liason people to a Detrick project, were conducting the meeting to discuss on-going biological research being done by the Special Operations division under contract with the CIA. Shortly after dinner one evening during the meeting Frank Olson and four other Special Operations division scientists were told that they had been given

lysergic acid diethylamide and that their reactions would be observed. We do not know what occurred during the remainder of this meeting.

We do know that one of the other four subjects in the experiment was still hallucinating when he left the meeting. This man, the one who confirmed that Frank Olson's death occurred as a result of this experiment, felt himself to be experiencing direct and indirect effects of the drug for several weeks after the meeting. He worked closely with Frank Olson and, upon observing him the Tuesday morning following the meeting, judged him to be exhibiting drug-related psychiatric symptoms requiring professional help. This colleague then called one of the two CIA liason men in Washington to inform him of Olson's condition. Plans were made to fly Olson immediately to New York to see a psychiatrist with a high security clearance. According to the colleague Olson was accompanied on this trip by both the agent and the colleague.

Olson had several very long sessions with the psychiatrist, including one session that lasted most of one day. He planned to return to Maryland on Thursday to spend Thanksgiving with his family. According to the colleague he did return to Washington but felt himself to be unstable and thought he might become irrational in front of his

children. So without going home he returned to New York to see the psychiatrist again. This time he was accompanied only by the CIA employee. Olson telephoned his wife Friday evening, spoke of being at home on Saturday and mentioned plans that he would enter a psychiatric hospital the following week.

Early Saturday morning Frank Olson's family was notified by the colleague (who had been notified by the CIA employee) that Frank Olson was dead. For twenty-two years we have not known whether it was appropriate to call that death a "suicide". We have agonized over the question of what kind of horrid "nightmare" or "event" could have driven him to hurl himself at a full run out of a 10th story window, and how this "suicidal nervous breakdown" -- the term we have always used -- could have developed so suddenly, so inexplicably, so devoid of connection to anything we or his friends had known of him.

Within one week of the death the family was notified that employee's compensation (figured on the basis of two-thirds of Olson's salary) would be paid because the death was the result of a work-related accident.

The news we received on June 11, 1975, had a dramatic effect on this family. Since 1953, we have struggled to understand Frank Olson's death as an inexplicable "suicide".

At the time he died Frank Olson's wife was thirty-eight years old, his eldest son was nine years old, his daughter seven, and his youngest son five. Now, twenty-two years later, we learn that this death was the result of CIA negligence and illegality on a scale difficult to contemplate. Suddenly we learn that Alice Olson's being left in early adulthood to raise a family alone, her children left to grow up without a father -- we learn that these deprivations were not necessary at all. And we suddenly learn that for twenty-two years we were lied to, led to believe that Frank Olson had a fatal nervous breakdown. Thus Frank Olson's children grew up under a double shadow, the shadow of their father's suicide and the shadowy inexplicability of that act. In the years following 1953, Alice Olson lived with the inevitable trauma and day-to-day consequences resulting from her husband's bizarre death.

We feel our family has been violated by the CIA in two ways. First, Frank Olson was experimented upon illegally and negligently. Second, the true nature of his death was concealed for twenty-two years.

We come together as a family now to tell this most personal and painful family story because we feel it is our responsibility to do so. This is an intimate family story but it is also very much a part of an unfolding American story.

The Rockefeller Commission's disclosure of the LSD suicide received a great deal of coverage in the press because it is, in media terms, a very sensational story. The public has reacted to this disclosure with a mixture of poignant shock and utter disbelief. As one person said, "After learning of this, one wonders whether there is anything the United States government is not capable of doing?"

But horrible as this event was in its depiction in the mass media, the accounts given of it there had a surreal quality which rendered it, like so much of this nation's recent history, impossible to feel and absorb. Both Time and Newsweek had in their June 23 issues freakish artists' impressions of the LSD suicide victim hurling out of the 10th floor window. We believe that Frank Olson's death has meaning only when it is placed in the context of a family story on the one hand and in the context of global CIA misconduct and immorality on the other. In telling our story we are concerned that neither the personal pain this family has experienced nor the moral and political outrage we feel be slighted. Only in this way can Frank Olson's death become part of American memory and serve the purpose of political and ethical reform so urgently needed in our society.

The Rockefeller Commission report revealed a wide array of CIA violations of the rights of American citizens. These have included illegal forms of domestic spying, maintaining thousands of files on individuals, interception of mail and phone taps on newspeople. The drug testing program itself continued for ten years after Frank Olson's death. And that program was part of a much larger study, about which very little has yet been publicly disclosed, of methods to control human behavior -- including radiation, electric shock, psychiatry, psychology, sociology, and what the report calls "harassment substances". In light of these patterns of CIA activity which have persisted for many years we have concluded that it is not appropriate to regard Frank Olson's death merely as an aberration, an incident unrelated to what have been characteristic forms of CIA procedure. Though it was envisioned as an organization which would protect the freedom and security of Americans, the CIA has in fact substantially threatened these values.

When one begins to think critically about the CIA's domestic activities one is led also to question the legitimacy of many CIA operations abroad. We cannot expect that everyone in this nation will be as critical of the CIA as we have become; no other family has been violated in quite



the same way. But as we have seen how the CIA has undermined the rights of Americans we have been given an eerie glimpse into the dark side of American policies in other countries as well.

We are one family whose history has been fundamentally altered by illegal CIA activity, the family of the only American so far identified as having died as a result of CIA treachery. In this we have something in common with those families in Chile whose hopes for a better life were destroyed by CIA intervention in elections, in attempted economic reform, and in the effort to establish a non-capitalist form of government. We have something in common with those families in Cuba whose struggles for a better life, free of the dominating exploitation of multinational corporations, has been made so much more difficult by CIA plots and schemes. And we have something in common with those families in Southeast Asia whose heroic efforts to be free of foreign interference has had to cope with CIA subversion.

In comparing our life as a family with these Third World families we do so humbly, well aware of the difference between struggles undergone in relative affluence and those endured in poverty and war. But we think it is crucial to point out the connections between American treachery and immorality abroad and those same tendencies evident at home. The

immorality of American policies in Vietnam and the immorality of Watergate are part of a common phenomenon -- the phenomenon of massive governmental deception and unaccountability. Frank Olson's death as the result of an illegal LSD experiment illustrates the CIA's capacity to ignore humane constraints and ethical boundaries. The CIA that participates in the assassination of foreign leaders is the same CIA that infringes the rights of American citizens.

We intend to sue the Central Intelligence Agency for the wrongful death of Frank Olson. In so doing we hope the full story of Frank Olson's death will emerge. We hope that the CIA will be held publically and punitively accountable for its actions. We hope that this legal process, painful as it will certainly be for this family, will lessen the chances that other families, other persons, will have to suffer such abuses.