

**The original documents are located in Box C36, folder “Presidential Handwriting, 3/8/1976” of the Presidential Handwriting File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

### **Copyright Notice**

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Gerald Ford donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections. Works prepared by U.S. Government employees as part of their official duties are in the public domain. The copyrights to materials written by other individuals or organizations are presumed to remain with them. If you think any of the information displayed in the PDF is subject to a valid copyright claim, please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 8, 1976

ADMINISTRATIVELY CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM FOR:

JACK MARSH

FROM:

JIM CONNOR *JCC*

SUBJECT:

An Oriana Fallaci Interview -  
"The CIA's MR COLBY"

The attached article from the March 13th issue of THE NEW REPUBLIC was returned in the President's outbox with the following notation:

"Terrific interview. Might write letter  
to Bill Colby complimentary."

Please follow-up with appropriate action.

cc: Dick Cheney

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

Jack Marsh

Terrific interview.  
Might write the to  
Bill Lohby complimentary.

psychiatrization of the law have been for virtually every segment of American society, except the mental health establishment. More than a hundred years ago, this corruption was denounced by the managers of the New York State Lunatic Asylum, who were moved, in their 1873 annual report to the legislature, to offer this warning:

*It may not be amiss to observe that this matter of the testimony of experts, especially in cases of alleged insanity, has gone to such an extravagance that it has really become of late years a profitable profession to be an expert witness, at the command of any party and ready for any party, for a sufficient and often an exorbitant fee.*

Unfortunately, when Santayana warned that "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it," he did not count on the psychiatrists, who, like other Orwellian totalitarians, rewrite history, so that there is nothing left to remember. Thus I am bitterly opposed to forensic psychiatry not merely because it is a fraud, but rather because it is so profoundly inimical to the loftiest moral principles of Anglo-American criminal law. Those principles, summed up by the phrase "the Rule of Law," are, simply put, to acquit the innocent and to convict and punish the guilty, giving the defendant the benefit of the doubt, and the prosecution the burden of proving guilt. This sounds simple enough, and it would be without psychiatry. Psychiatry corrupts this process by confusing the issues—especially in much publicized cases of violent crime. The fundamental issue in such a case is whether the accused did or did not commit the acts with which he or she is charged. Forensic psychiatrists—masquerading as medical doctors, which technically they are, but actually are not—cannot add one iota to the accurate and fair determination of such facts. But

they can take away a great deal from this process. How? By offering strategically contrived speculations, disguised as medical determinations, about the "mental condition" and "responsibility" of the defendant.

In criminal trials such as the Hearst case, there are two types of psychiatrists: excusers and incriminators. The former, hired by the defense, are paid to offer psychiatric prevarications that tend to excuse the accused. The latter, hired by the prosecution, are paid to offer psychiatric prevarications tending to incriminate the accused. If a psychiatrist is unwilling to offer such testimony, he is not hired. To the extent that West or other defense psychiatrists claim that they are not excusing, protecting, or trying to help Hearst, they are deceiving the public. Similarly, to the extent that prosecution psychiatrists maintain that they are not accusing, incriminating, or trying to harm Hearst, they are equally disingenuous.

It is instructive and ironic to recall in this connection that this is not the first time that the paths of the Hearst family and forensic psychiatry have crossed. More than 50 years ago William Randolph Hearst had offered Sigmund Freud \$25,000 or anything he named to come to Chicago to "psychoanalyze" Leopold and Loeb. This offer, explains Ernest Jones in his biography of Freud, was made so that Freud could "presumably demonstrate that they [the murderers] should not be executed." To his credit, Freud, though in straitened circumstances, declined the offer.

West, on the other hand, seems to have solicited, and eagerly accepted, the opportunity to testify in the Hearst trial. Perhaps he and Dr. Lifton know something about human behavior that Freud didn't. In any case, at least they and their colleagues are presumably recouping some of the financial loss that psychiatry suffered when Freud refused an earlier Hearst offer.

Thomas Szasz

## An Oriana Fallaci Interview

# The CIA's Mr. Colby

Oriana Fallaci, the Italian journalist, spent "one long Friday morning and a long Sunday afternoon" in February interviewing former CIA Director William Colby at his home in Washington. She regards the

encounter as an "exhausting and nasty fight" between spy and victim. But it was a strange fight. While her voice "trembled with rage," Colby was unperturbed—cool, controlled, polite—as he answered her ac-

cusations. She thought she saw anger occasionally in his blue eyes, but "his lips did not stop smiling, his hands would not stop pouring coffee in my cup."

*Oriana Fallaci: The names, Mr. Colby. The names of those bastards who took CIA money in my country. Italy isn't some banana republic of the United Fruit Company, Mr. Colby, and it isn't right that the shadow of suspicion covers a whole political class. Don't you think that Mr. Pertini, the president of the Italian Parliament, should have those names?*

*William Colby: No, because our House has said by vote that those reports must remain secret. CIA should protect its associates and people who work for them. Of course the decision to give or not to give those names does not depend on CIA; it depends on the government of the United States and I am not speaking for my government; I'm speaking for CIA. But my judgment is no; my recommendation would be no. No names. It's the only thing I can do to maintain my agreement with the people I worked with. . . . Those who feel covered by the shadow that you talk about only have to stand up and deny [involvement]. They only have to say, "It isn't true, we didn't get the money." It's fine with me. I cannot sacrifice somebody for this theory that somebody is under suspicion. I have promised those men to keep the secret and I must maintain it because, if I break my promise, when I go to someone new he'll say that my promise is no good. Why don't you ask the Soviet government for the names of the Communists who take Moscow's money in Italy? The Soviets are doing exactly the same.*

*Fallaci: We'll talk later about the Russians, Mr. Colby. Now let's talk about CIA. Tell me, please, if I came here, as a foreigner, and financed an American party, and 21 of your politicians, and some of your journalists, what would you do?*

*Colby: You would be doing an illegal thing and, if I found it out, I would report it to the FBI and have you arrested.*

*Fallaci: Good. So I should report you and your agents and your ambassadors to the Italian police and have you all arrested.*

*Colby: I won't say that.*

*Fallaci: Why not? If it is illegal that I come here to corrupt your politicians, it is as illegal that you come there and corrupt my politicians.*

*Colby: I am not saying that you would corrupt. I am saying that it is against our law for you to come and do that.*

*Fallaci: It is also against mine, Mr. Colby! And I'll tell you more: there is only one human type that is more disgusting than the*

*corrupted one. It is the corruptor.*

*Colby: We don't corrupt at CIA. You may have a problem with corruption in your society but it was in existence long before CIA got there. Saying that we corrupt is like saying that we give money to do things for us. That isn't why we give money. We give money to help somebody to do what he wants and cannot do because he hasn't enough money. We are basically supporting the democratic countries and, of all the countries that should understand this, Italy should. Because the American assistance in Italy helped it from becoming an authoritarian Communist state for 30 years. . . .*

*Fallaci: Your clients, as you call them in the Pike report. Tell me, Mr. Colby, what do you mean by the word "clients"?*

*Colby: Well. . . what is an attorney doing when he deals with a client? An attorney helps a client.*

*Fallaci: I see! You consider yourself the attorney of the Christian Democrats and of the Social Democrats in Italy.*

*Colby: Right. Well, no. . . I will not comment about any particular situation.*

*Fallaci: Why? Had you answered with a lie when saying "right"?*

*Colby: I don't lie! And I suffer when they accuse me of lying. . . . Sometimes I refuse to give information; sometimes I keep a secret; but never lie. My Congress won't let me, my press either. The head of intelligence in America cannot say that it is not true when it's true. Our intelligence is under the law, not outside the law. Anyway, I want to put a question to you: would it have been right or not if America had helped the democratic parties against Hitler?*

*Fallaci: Here is my answer, Mr. Colby. There is no Hitler in Italy. And the \$800,000 that Ambassador Graham Martin wanted to give to Gen. Vito Miceli, with Kissinger's blessing, did not end up in democratic hands. It ended up in the hands of Hitler's followers, the neofascists.*

*Colby: I will not discuss any specific CIA operation. First, I have great respect for Ambassador Martin. We have been together in different parts of the world and I have always found him a very strong ambassador, always taking positions and responsibilities in the interest of the United States. Secondly, I believe that in this kind of activity CIA can have a view and the government can have another. It is up to the President to decide. In any of these kinds of operations, CIA follows the directions of its government. . . . Until a year ago, the President could call the head of CIA and say to him: "Do that and don't tell anybody."*

*Fallaci: Good, good. So it was really Nixon, with Kissinger of course, who wanted to give that money to Miceli. If you see them, please thank them for the bombs that neofascists built with that*

money.

Colby: I cannot talk about that. I don't know. But I know that neofascists in your country represent only eight percent and I know that the real threat in Italy comes from the Communists. Since the end of World War II we have been helping the various democratic forces against the Communist threat. And this lasted for 25, no, 30 years.

Fallaci: And the result of that help, Mr. Colby, is that the Communists are now at the borders of government. Let's be honest: do you think all that money was well spent? Do you think that your intelligence has been acting intelligently?

Colby: Usually we don't spend money for foolishness. And you cannot judge things from one factor alone, like the last elections in Italy. Maybe American activities in Italy haven't been perfect, since World War II, but they have been useful. Yes, positive. This includes NATO, the Marshall Plan, CIA. When I was in Rome, in 1953, people were riding Vespas. Now they are in cars. You live better today than you would have lived if you had had a Communist government in 1948. Or in 1960. The average Italian has a better life than the average Pole. So the American policies have not been a mistake in Italy. We did a good job. In Italy you always see things catastrophically. In 1955 Italians said that Italy was going to collapse, that the government was no good, hopeless. Now I hear the same words I heard in 1955. But you did not collapse then and you will not collapse now because there are good Italians.

Fallaci: Not certainly those who serve you as clients, Mr. Colby.



'Hands Off, Sweetheart—I'm CIA!'

Colby: I'm talking of the ordinary people.

Fallaci: Tell me, Mr. Colby. Who was the man that you liked best when you lived in Italy?

Colby: De Gasperi, I would say. But I cannot mention names. I must not. Besides I did not know many people. I was a junior officer, I was interested in collecting information . . . because I spoke Italian. But I can tell you that yes, I was for an opening to the left at that time. I mean to the Socialists. I respected them; I still do because the Socialists are Western Europeans. They are liberal; they are not authoritarian as the Communists are. They can be trusted.

Fallaci: To what extent did your work take place within the American embassy? Does it still?

Colby: Very much. Sure. I used to work a lot with the embassy. I was political attaché. We always work with the embassies. Most information we get through our embassies, of course.

Fallaci: But it isn't only through embassies that CIA works abroad. We all know that SID (Italian Secret Service) is the pied-à-terre of CIA in Italy. Now tell me, Mr. Colby, what right do you have to spy on me at home and use the secret service of my country? What right do you have, for instance, to control my telephone there?

Colby: I get news from around the world. There is nothing wrong with trying to understand what is happening in the world, what people are doing or thinking. It isn't a matter of invading others' privacy. It's a matter of looking to see if you have a pistol to

shoot me or another weapon to hurt me, and prevent it. You ask if a nation has the right to conduct clandestine intelligence activities in other nations? Well, there is a law in every country that says no, and almost every country does it. So do I have the right to try to find out what happens in order to protect my country? Yes, I morally have it. Though it is illegal.

Fallaci: Let's see if I have understood you. You're saying that it is illegal yet legitimate to spy on me in my country even through the secret service of my country. . .

Colby: It depends. Sometimes another intelligence agency will help you. It depends on a country's policy. Sometimes two countries have a mutual interest and they are very close to their allies and very concerned about penetration, so we work together.

Fallaci: As I said. Now tell me, is it or isn't it true that your best operation with SID was the case of Stalin's daughter, Svetlana? [Allegedly, the CIA and SID had cooperated in placing an Italian colonel close to Svetlana and charged with bringing her out of Russia.]

Colby: I couldn't tell. I have said . . . that we must not tell about our associates nor about our relationship with foreign intelligence services because if we talk about them they will not trust us anymore. An intelligence service cannot talk about its associates. You cannot imagine how much these leaks hurt around the world. A lot, a lot. There are people now saying: my goodness, can I have anything to do with you, can I trust my life to you, my job, or will you tell it to your Congress and leak it? People turned away from us, people who had been working with us said no, I am not staying with you anymore. Even other international intelligence services have said no, we used to give you very secret material but we are not going to give it to you anymore. We lost a few agents because of the fear that the secret wouldn't be kept.

Fallaci: Only agents or clients also?

Colby: Those too. Some have said, don't give me anything anymore because you will reveal it. People who were new and people who were old clients. They felt betrayed. We have fought very hard at CIA to keep those names, you know. Very hard. And we have won, I must say. But the publicity has hurt us all the same. These things do not happen with KGB. You have quite a few KGB agents in Italy and there are many Italians working for KGB of course. Yet nobody asks KGB to make those names public. One finds all these wrongs about CIA, and KGB—nobody accuses them.

Fallaci: You're wrong, Mr. Colby. We don't want either you or them. We are sick and tired of you both.

Colby: Fine, fine. Americans and the Soviets help about

the same in Italy. All the material that goes back and forth to the Soviet Union passes through agencies that give a percentage to the Italian Communist party. A good system. Complicated yet good. What would you say if a percentage of all American trade went to one party?

Fallaci: You don't need that, Mr. Colby. It's CIA that takes care of that, and your ambassadors like Graham Martin, and Lockheed and Gulf. . .

Colby: Wonderful how you rationalize and indirectly conclude that they are just nice fellows, just marvelously good people. In Poland. . . if they don't want to do what the Soviets want them to do, a delegation comes from Moscow, and it sits with the Central Committee of the party, and says that they better behave. Would you like Italy to be run like that? But suppose that the Communists are clean. And because of that you let them run the government? Are you going to run that risk, letting them run the government? Name a country that has been Communist and has then changed from Communism. Name one! Name one!

Fallaci: Mr. Colby, what would you do to us if the Communists win the elections in Italy?

Colby: Name a country! Name one!

Fallaci: Mr. Colby, would you punish us with a coup as in Chile?

Colby: Name a country. Just one! Romania? Poland? Czechoslovakia, Hungary?

Fallaci: Please answer my question, Mr. Colby. Another Chile?

Colby: And suppose there is not another election? The way it happened with Hitler and Mussolini? Don't you understand that they played at the democratic game all these years because they were a minority? Do you really think that when they are on the top they will still go on being democratic?

Fallaci: You could be right. Yet I remind you that it is you Americans who throw the countries into the arms of Communists, always. You who buy and corrupt and protect all the Fascists in the world. America, Mr. Colby, is the biggest factory of Communists in the whole world.

Colby: I don't accept that and I say that you are speaking out of your own ideological bias.

Fallaci: As you like. But tell me please: according to the information you had as director of CIA, do you see any difference between the Communist party of Cunhal and the Communist parties of Carillo, of Marchais, of Berlinguer?

Colby: The Italian Communist party is trying to build a bridge between the Soviet way and the Western way of life, trying to live in both camps. There is an ambivalence in them that the French and the Spanish

have just followed. The Italian Communist party has always pretended to be very revolutionary . . . at the same time it pretends to be very Italian . . . And if you ask me "Do you trust Mr. So and So when he says he is for pluralism," I answer: it is not a matter of trust in the individuals. It is a matter of political imperatives. At this time, with Western Europe reasonably united and strong and protected by American interests, the political imperative for the Communists is to join Western Europe, to be a part of it. But if the political imperative changes, if you have economic problems in Western Europe, or a change of leadership in the Soviet Union, their political imperative could change. And they could become more authoritarian and more loyal to the Soviets.

*Fallaci: Recently the Italian Communist party and the French Communist party, and the Spanish Communist party have clearly attacked the Soviet Union.*

*Colby: This is easy to do. They did it also in 1968 on Czechoslovakia. But they also support the Soviet Union in many situations, and they continue to have a good relationship with them. Their policy is that there shouldn't be NATO or the Warsaw Pact. But the easiest thing is to eliminate NATO. It is hard to eliminate the Warsaw Pact. And their policy is to reduce Italy's contribution to NATO. They say, well, we will get to the Warsaw Pact later. But what do you think the degree of collaboration would be between the Italian military and the American military, between the Italian government and the American government if you had a Communist prime minister? I have no doubt that there would be great difficulties.*

*Fallaci: Perhaps. And I insist you answer the question. What would the Americans do to us if the Communists came to power in Italy?*

*Colby: I don't know. This is the policy of the United States. I don't know.*

*Fallaci: Sure you know. Another Chile?*

*Colby: Not necessarily. This is an hypothetical question I cannot answer. It depends on so many factors. It could be nothing, it could be something, it could be some mistake.*

*Fallaci: Some mistake like Chile? Come on, Mr. Colby. Do you think it would be legitimate for the United States to intervene in Italy with a Pinochet if the Communists came to power?*

*Colby: I don't think I can answer that question. Your Pinochet is not in America. He's in Italy.*

*Fallaci: I know. But he needs you. Without you, he can do nothing. Mr. Colby, I am trying to make you admit that Italy is an independent state, not a banana republic, not a colony of yours. And you don't admit it. I am also trying to explain to you that you cannot be the policemen of the world. Chiaro?*

*Colby: Chiaro ma sbagliato. After World War I we said that the war had been wrong and badly fought, and we had a period of innocence. We reduced our army to something smaller than the Romanian army, 150,000, and we decided to have an open diplomacy, and the Secretary of State dissolved the intelligence service saying that gentlemen don't read others' mail. And we thought that we were going to live in a world of gentlemen, and that we wouldn't involve ourselves any more in foreign affairs. Then we had problems rising in Europe. But we did not intervene. And we had problems in Manchuria, it was too far away. But we did not intervene. Then Spain. And we were neutral. But it did not work very well, no, and we had economic problems; authoritarian leaders who believed they could dominate their neighbors. And then came World War II. And after World War II we did as we had done. In 1945 we dissolved our intelligence service, the OSS, and we said: peace again. But the cold war started and it was obvious that Stalin was . . . becoming a threat in Greece, in Turkey, in Iran. And we learned the lesson. And we applied the lesson. We collected our security again, and we attempted to contain the expansionist Soviet Union through NATO and through the Marshall plan and through CIA. Liberals and conservatives together, both of us convinced that we had to help. I was one of those liberals. I had been a radical when I was a boy and . . .*

*Fallaci: For Christ's sake! How could you change that much?*

*Colby: Clemenceau said that he who is not a radical when he is young has no heart; he who is not conservative when he's old has no brain. But let me go on. NATO worked. The containment of Soviet expansionism worked. The subversive plans of the Communists were frustrated. It wasn't the right against the left. It was a democratic solution. We decided that we would go any distance to fight for freedom. And in the course of this there were some situations in which local leaders were somewhat authoritarian or more authoritarian than people liked.*

*Fallaci: From Gen. Franco to Caetano, from Diem to Thieu, from Papadopoulos to Pinochet, without counting all the Fascist dictators in Latin America, the Brazilian torturers for instance. And so, in the name of freedom, you became the supporters of all those who killed freedom on the other side.*

*Colby: Like in World War II when we supported Stalin's Russia against a greater threat. We work now in the same way we worked with him then. In the '50s wasn't communism the biggest threat? If you support some authoritarian leader against a Communist threat, you leave the option that the authoritarian state could become democratic in the future. With the Communists, the future offers no hope. I mean, I don't see any scandal in certain alliances. One makes an alliance in order to face a bigger threat. My government*

recognizes Pinochet's Chile as the legitimate government. True. But don't I accept that 200 million Russians live under Soviet Communism? Pinochet is not going to conquer the world. Nobody is worried about Pinochet.

*Fallaci: I'll tell you who's worried about Pinochet, Mr. Colby. The Chileans, first, who are imprisoned and persecuted and tortured and killed by Pinochet. Secondly, those who really care about freedom. Thirdly, the countries that are afraid to become a second Chile. Like mine.*

*Colby: You're so wrong in choosing Chile. If you read carefully the Senate report on Chile . . . you'll find that from 1964 we helped the democratic center parties against a man who said that he was associated with Castro and the Communists. CIA had no part in overthrowing Allende in 1973. Read my denial in the Senate report when I say: "with the exception [of] about six weeks in 1970."*

*Fallaci: Sure. November 1970 when Nixon called Richard Helms and ordered him to organize a coup to overthrow Allende, who had just won the elections.*

*Colby: It only lasted six weeks . . . And we did not succeed . . . We had no part, later.*

*Fallaci: Really? Tell me about the financing of the strikes that ruined Allende's government, Mr. Colby. Tell me about the interventions through ITT.*

*Colby: Well, we gave a little bit of money, yes. A tiny amount that, I remember, was about \$10,000. We gave it through other people. I mean we gave it to a group that passed it to another . . . The rest of our program in Chile was to support the central democratic forces from the threat of the left. The Senate Committee has found no evidence against us, except in 1970. It wasn't our policy to overthrow Allende in 1973. We were looking to the elections of 1976 where we hoped the democratic forces would win. Certainly we did not help Allende but we are innocent of that coup. The coup came from the fact that Allende was destroying the society and the economy in Chile, from the fact that he was not acting democratically as the Supreme Court of Chile and the Congress of Chile and the controller general said when issuing statements that Allende was outside the constitution. Even the free press had been suppressed by Allende . . .*

*Fallaci: What, Mr. Colby, are you out of your mind? But you cannot falsify history like that. The opposition press tormented Allende till the end.*

*Colby: The opposition papers had lots of difficulties under him. And saying that Allende was democratic . . . well, it is your opinion. There are his own words when he said that he wanted to suppress opposition. He was an extremist. And an oppressor. I have good informa-*

tion.

*Fallaci: If all your information is like that, Mr. Colby, I understand why CIA makes itself ridiculous so often. But here is what I want to know from you who claim to fight in the name of democracy: having won the elections democratically, did Allende have the right to govern his country? Yes or no? . . . Don't be silent, Mr. Colby. Do answer, Mr. Colby.*

*Colby: Didn't Mussolini win elections? Didn't Hitler become the chancellor of Germany in an election?*

*Fallaci: This is what I call bad faith. You know very well that those were not free elections, Mr. Colby. And you cannot, just cannot, compare Allende with Mussolini and with Hitler. This is pure fanaticism, Mr. Colby!*

*Colby: I am not fanatic. I believe in a Western liberal democracy.*

*Fallaci: What? In what way? Through killing, Mr. Colby? Tell me about the murder of Gen. Schneider in Chile, Mr. Colby.*

*Colby: CIA had very little to do with the assassination of Gen. Schneider. Very little. It's written in the Senate report. Apparently the group that tried to kidnap Schneider wasn't the same group that received money from CIA. Your view of CIA is purely paranoid. You behave like the American press when it got so excited about the Black Pistol [the poison dart gun]. We never used it. Never. It is you, the press, who give a false impression of CIA. Sure, somebody got killed in the course of our activities in the world! Our agents too got killed, and people on the other side. But no assassinations. I know those who work for me, I know them, and they are good Americans, real patriots who fight to protect their country. And it is their right, our right, to protect freedom in the world . . .*

*Fallaci: Why don't you take that right with Pinochet, Mr. Colby?*

*Colby: This is a matter of policy and it is up to the government to decide it. Each nation has a decision to make. You don't see it because you're being ideological in your logic. I am not being ideological, I am being rational and pragmatic. And, pragmatically, I say to you that it's up to the United States to decide where they want to help and where they don't. And it was our right to support the opposition to Allende as well as it is our right to help in Europe those who oppose the growth of communism. And CIA has done this for 30 years, I repeat, and does it well, and Italy is the best example.*

*Fallaci: Mr. Colby, you portray the CIA as an association of Boy Scouts mainly occupied reading books and speeches in some library. Let's be serious. To begin with, you are spies.*

*Colby: One moment. Yes, in the old image, intelligence used to be spying. Mata Hari and so on. Today intelligence is an intellectual process of assembling information from the press, radio, books, speeches.*

Which is why we're called Central Intelligence Agency. All this information is centralized and studied by people who are specialists in various fields. And then there are electronics, computers, technology. In the last 15 years technology has so changed intelligence that we don't need to spy to get secrets to give to generals to win battles. Intelligence is far beyond that. It is a technological phenomenon. We used to wonder how many missiles the Soviets might have. Today we don't wonder; we count them . . .

*Fallaci: Mr. Colby, CIA may be that partly. But it also is something worse, something dirtier. I mean a political force that secretly organizes coups d'état and plots and assassinations. A second government that punishes whoever is against the interests of the United States in the world. Spying is much nobler than that.*

*Colby: What you are talking about is five percent of our budget. Only five percent goes for any kind of political or paramilitary activity. And this is an activity that is necessary in the world we live in because a little help in some countries to some friends can avoid a serious crisis later. In the '50s this was 30 percent of our budget. In the '80s, if the world goes on facing totalitarian developments, we might go back to that 30 percent again or more. But now it is five percent, and all this excitement is about that five percent. Which is legitimate because isn't it easier than to defend ourselves with bombs and soldiers? Isn't it easier to help some political group?*

*Fallaci: Yes, but the point isn't financing here and there, or corrupting here and there to protect your interests that are not always noble interests. The point is the assassination of foreign leaders, Mr. Colby!*

*Colby: In 1973, long before this excitement started, I issued a directive against assassinations. I have turned down suggestions of assassinations on several occasions . . . saying that assassination is wrong. But there are people who will say to you that if Hitler had been assassinated in 1938, the world would be better.*

*Fallaci: Lumumba was not Hitler, Mr. Colby. Castro is not Hitler.*

*Colby: Well, Castro allowed the Soviet Union to place nuclear missiles in Cuba, which put American cities under nuclear threat.*

*Fallaci: And because of this you kill Castro.*

*Colby: In Italy, at the time of Renaissance, there were many people inside and outside the church who discussed the rights and wrongs of tyrannicide. And discussion had started long before the Renaissance; it isn't new. Yes, this assassination business did not occur in America yesterday, it's been a political tool for centuries. How did the princes die in the various states of Italy? How did Caesar die? Don't, as an Italian, stand on moral lessons on this. I don't accept moral lessons*

from you.

*Fallaci: Caesar was not killed by an American. He was killed by some Romans. The Medici, in the Renaissance, were killed by the Florentines not by Americans. And Pericles erected monuments to the Greek who killed the tyrant, not to the Americans who killed a Cuban in Cuba.*

*Colby: I tell you that this has always happened and I say that it is difficult for any country to give moral lessons to another.*

*Fallaci: By God, Mr. Colby! It is you who claim to be more moral than others. It is you who introduce yourselves as the Angel Gabriel sacrificing for democracy and freedom.*

*Colby: Maybe our morals are not perfect but they are better than others. American policy is regarded all through the world as a pillar of freedom. There are a few things, over 28 years, that we shouldn't have done. Like opening the mail. Yes, there was a period in the '50s when we opened the mail to and from the Soviet Union. And we shouldn't have done it, though one can understand why. There were Soviet spies running all over America. However we shouldn't have done it and . . .*

*Fallaci: Come on, Mr. Colby, I am not talking about opening letters! I am talking about murdering people!*

*Colby: CIA has never assassinated anybody. Including Diem. Saying that CIA does assassinations all the time is unfair. There were a few occasions in which we wanted to try, and none of them worked.*

*Fallaci: Even if you spoke the truth, Mr. Colby, which I doubt, isn't it shameful enough for CIA to plan such projects like Al Capone?*

*Colby: People do it all over the world. Lots of different countries, whether it's wise or not. Personally I was always against it. People came to me with such proposals and I said: "You will not do it." But I recall that Jefferson said: "The tree of freedom has to be watered every 20 years by the blood of tyrants."*

*Fallaci: In other words, once in a while is all right. Are you religious, Mr. Colby?*

*Colby: Sure I am. I'm a Catholic and a rigid one.*

*Fallaci: One of those who go to church every Sunday?*

*Colby: Yes, sure.*

*Fallaci: One of those who believe in Hell and in Paradise?*

*Colby: Yes, sure. I believe in everything the Church teaches.*

*Fallaci: One of those who love people as Jesus Christ wanted?*

*Colby: Yes, sure. I love people.*

*Fallaci: I see. Tell me about the Mafia; I mean the use CIA makes of the Mafia.*

*Colby: One case. Only one case. 1960 for Castro! After Castro took over Cuba there was some consideration given to working with some people who . . . whose friends were still in Cuba. Friends who had been in the Mafia and who would try to kill Castro. And it was very . . . well, it did not work. Allen Dulles and then [John] McCone were directors of CIA at that time. And McCone said later he did not know about it.*

*Fallaci: Bobby Kennedy knew. And that allows one to think that John Kennedy knew as well. Who is the more discredited by these revelations, CIA or the American presidents?*

*Colby: The revelations show that CIA was working as part of American policy. I mean, CIA was not a wild elephant, or a separate state or a state in the state, or a government in the government. And now that the country is going through a process of revisionism, CIA in a way is the scapegoat of that revisionism. The evidence that presidents wanted specific things is not very clear. In some cases it isn't even clear whether the president knew it or not. The facts simply indicate that CIA was operating within a policy that seemed to allow it to go in that direction.*

*Fallaci: Which means that, from Eisenhower to Nixon, none of them come out totally clean. What happened under Johnson? Oh, yes. Papadopoulos' coup in Greece.*

*Colby: CIA did not support the colonels' coup. No, it didn't. When the colonels ran Greece, we had a liaison for exchanging information, yes. We did not reject them, it's true, but we did not support them either. We just worked with them and the rest is myth. Dealing with authoritarian leaders doesn't mean to support them.*

*Fallaci: You are the one who opened up. Don't you ever regret that you told those things to the congressional committees? Could you have refused?*

*Colby: No, I don't think I could have. I don't think I would be allowed to. I did not have much choice. But certainly I don't regret having told the truth. There was no doubt in my mind. Not that I expected things to stay secret, but I did not appreciate the way those cases were sensationalized. The point is that there are some problems with living in a society as open as the American society. Just consider the case of Richard Welsh, the CIA officer they killed in Athens. An officer named John Mark wrote an article in a magazine here in Washington alleging that he could tell how to identify CIA people in the embassies. And he did so. An American. So they started the publication of names and we couldn't forbid it. We have very weak legislation in that sense, legislation that doesn't take care of the fact*

that we cannot run serious intelligence unless we protect some of our secrets. And Welsh was killed by some terrorist. And it took Welsh's death to make people understand the problem, for the Congress to stop the Pike report's publication. And it was a great loss, the loss of Welsh. He was an extremely good officer.

*Fallaci: Let's talk a while of the Pike report, Mr. Colby. Because, if in the Church report CIA sounds so bad, in the Pike report it looks rather ridiculous. Is it true as Pike remarked that, if America were to be attacked by another country, CIA would not know of it in advance?*

*Colby: The House Committee report is totally partial, totally biased, and done to give a false impression of CIA. The Church report, that is the assassination report and the Chile report, well . . . I think they were reasonably fair. Yes, fair reports. Also the Rockefeller commission's report is a fair report. Pike's report is not a fair report. And that Pike remark . . . it's nonsense. He did not publish things we did right. He chose what we had done wrong. For instance, in the spring of 1973 we told our government that, unless there is movement on a political level, there probably will be a war in Middle East. And we helped our government follow everything that was happening. On October 5th in the evening we made an assessment: "There are certain signs that indicate that there shouldn't be a war. In balance we think that there will not be a war." Well, this was a mistake. Why did we make that mistake after having given good advice? Well, we don't have a crystal ball, we don't know 100 percent what is going to happen.*

*Fallaci: Let's face it, Mr. Colby. Saying that war is not going to happen when it's about to happen doesn't reflect very well on what you portray as the "best intelligence in the world." Nor was it the only case. Take Portugal, for instance. You hadn't the vaguest idea that the army would overthrow Caetano.*

*Colby: We did know something, despite Pike's report. We knew that there was unrest and dissent in the army. We reported it. But, as with the Arab-Israeli war, one may know the general background and then make a mistake on little things. The fact is that Mr. Pike takes the little thing and applies it to the whole. It isn't true, as he says, that we had a total ignorance of the Portuguese situation . . . People see CIA under every sofa. People see CIA all the time, even in a contest for the best sheepdog. . . . We really haven't the time to be in every village. It is reasonable to think that, later, in Portugal, we had to work harder on what was happening.*

*Fallaci: A little help here, a little help there . . .*

*Colby: No comment. Not on Italy, not on Portugal, not on any specific country.*

*Fallaci: Mr. Colby, you don't want me to believe that Italy was the only country in Europe where CIA spent billions. Let's take*

Germany . . .

Colby: You cannot compare things, they are quite different. Each country is a different case. We worry and have been worrying about all Europe of course. All of Europe is very important to the United States. And I don't think that Italy was the country where we had more work to do. But I will not comment on any specific operation. What I can say is that the place where CIA policy has been more successful is Western Europe. A real success program. I'm glad you did not mention Vietnam.

The fact about Vietnam is that we made some major mistakes, and the first mistake was to turn against President Diem. We did it, saying that he was too authoritarian, and, first of all, he was not. He was not a dictator. Secondly what did we get from opposing him? We got five years of instability. Only at the end of those five years did we have a reasonably steady government under President Thieu, who was very much like Diem. The next mistake we made in Vietnam was to fight a military war when the enemy was fighting a people's war. The technique in a people's war is to get people on your side, like the Communists were doing with a combination of nationalism and discipline. And they did it pretty well. Diem had begun a program to get people on his side in 1961 with the strategic hamlets. The overthrow of Diem was the end of that approach. Because of that we had to fight the war on a military level. Only in 1967 did we decide on the pacification program to get people on our side and . . .

Fallaci: It went so well that in 1968 you had to suffer the Tet offensive. Come on, Mr. Colby.

Colby: The pacification program really started in 1968—organizing the villages, having elections in the villages. Shortly after the Tet offensive the proposal was made to give guns to the people in the villages to defend themselves. And many people said that it was a bad idea because the people would give the guns to the Communists. But President Thieu decided to provide those guns, and he gave out 500,000 of them. And it worked. The people did not give them to the Communists. They did defend themselves. And then there was the economic aid, and you will agree when I say that there were no guerrillas in the 1972 attack.

Fallaci: Sure. You had exterminated them with the Phoenix program, Mr. Colby.

Colby: Now, you are wrong. They were not exterminated. They turned to their government. The Phoenix program did not exterminate. It was a necessary program to identify who the Communists were, who the leaders were. We were not interested in the followers. And the program was so organized in such a way that we had to have three different reports, not just one, to determine whether a man was a leader or a cadre or a follower. And we had limits on how long

a man could be kept in jail without a trial; the followers would have a maximum six-month sentence. Were you in Vietnam then?

Fallaci: I was in Vietnam in 1967, and 1968, and 1969, and 1970, and 1972, and in 1975, Mr. Colby, and I know enough about that dumb war to have a good fight with you about what you are saying. Please do not try to tell me stories as you did about Chile! The murders of your Phoenix program. . .

Colby: I lived continuously in Vietnam for seven years. I have worked on Vietnam for 12 years altogether. And I tell you that the Phoenix program was not a secret program. It was publicized with posters carrying the photos of leaders and saying, . . . "and, Mr. Nguyen, if you want to come as a Chou Hoi, you may come in and you will not be punished." And a lot came.

Fallaci: Not a lot, Mr. Colby. A few, despised by everybody as cowards or deserters. Even the American soldiers rejected them. I remember being in the field in 1970, in the fishhook area, and. . .

Colby: 200,000 came.

Fallaci: And you won the war in Vietnam.

Colby: We did not lose the war. I mean, we won the guerrilla war, we lost the military war. Just as France had lost the military war. The fact is. . . Well, President Thieu expected the main attack to occur in 1976 when the Americans would be holding elections. So he had to save equipment for that time. And when the attack came in 1975 he decided to withdraw and return to a more restricted area in order to. . .

Fallaci: It was not a withdrawal, Mr. Colby! It was a shameful disordered flight, with the South Vietnamese generals trying only to save their lives and their property, with the soldiers killing civilians to scramble onto the planes and the helicopters. We all saw that. You cannot change history like that, Mr. Colby!

Colby: Listen, I know a lot about Vietnam. I'm writing a book about Vietnam too and. . .

Fallaci: Oh God! Will you write that you had the right to be there?

Colby: I have no doubt, even today, that we Americans had to be there. And when you say that it was none of our business you are saying that Manchuria was too far away.

Fallaci: Mr. Colby, why don't you talk about Watergate instead of Manchuria?

Colby: CIA had two contacts with Watergate. Just two. Howard Hunt used to work for CIA; he came to CIA with Ehrlichman's request. And CIA gave Howard Hunt a couple of things like that speech device. We also produced photographs for him. But we didn't know what Hunt was doing in that psychiatrist's office in Los Angeles. We did not know. And when Hunt asked for

several other things, CIA said no. We said: it isn't our business. The second connection we had was when the White House asked CIA to write a psychological profile of Ellsberg. And we did it. He was an American and we shouldn't have done it. They also tried to get us to stop the FBI investigation, but we said no.

Fallaci: OK, Mr. Colby, OK. Let's forget now this old bitterness of yours. There is another thing that puzzles me when you say that CIA is the best intelligence in the world. Is it really? Hasn't KGB been more successful than you?

Colby: Oh, no. Besides, it's so different, you can't compare. Most of the work of KGB, for instance, takes place inside the Soviet Union: they are the FBI, the CIA, the State police, the Carabinieri, everything. And most of its effort is there. Well, when they used to spy here they had some good operations, some very impressive ones. I mean the atom spies. When they recruited a young lady from the counterespionage section of our Department of Justice, for instance. She told them everything we knew about their spies, and this was a good operation indeed. And when they put a bug inside the shoe of one of our diplomats. That was very impressive too. Very. You know, those people are serving their government and I disagree with their philosophy, but about their professional side I must say that they can do a good job.

Fallaci: How interesting. I smell a touch of professional admiration in you.

Colby: Well . . . the fact that they can do a good job doesn't mean that . . . I mean, one must distinguish between the ability and the end. The ability may be good and the end may be bad. Our philosophical justification is a good end: the self-defense of our country. Theirs instead is . . .

Fallaci: . . . the self-defense of their country. Mr. Colby, who wanted you out of CIA? Was it Kissinger?

Colby: No. Kissinger has always been a great supporter of intelligence and, though sometimes I agree with Kissinger and sometimes I disagree, we are not enemies. Both Kissinger and Rockefeller have been nice to me, and I think that Kissinger has been a brilliant Secretary of State. I also say that he deserves another Nobel Prize for the Middle East. I am out of CIA because the President indicated that he wanted to offer me another job and . . . The President may have many reasons why he wants somebody else as head of CIA. It is his privilege. He is the President, not me. Make a change? Fine. Besides I knew it would happen. I had said many times that I would probably be replaced when this investigation came to an end. Then the President offered me many jobs, good jobs, but I said that I could help more if I write a book about what intelligence really is. As I am doing. One on CIA and one on Vietnam.

Fallaci: And you do not feel bitter.

Colby: Not at all. I do not feel like a scapegoat.

Fallaci: Do you feel relieved then?

Colby: Neither bitter nor relieved.

Fallaci: Sure. What could shake your icy imperturbability? You never show your emotions, do you?

Colby: I am not emotional, I admit it. Just a few things bother me. For instance, what happened when I was nominated and some people put posters around Washington—posters illustrated with a very poor picture of me, by the way. They called me a murderer. And my children had to live with that. But it didn't really bother me. Not much. Oh, don't watch me like that. You're looking for something underneath which isn't there. It's all here on the surface, believe me. There is nothing behind or underneath. There are not two or three layers. I told you: I'm religious, I'm conservative. . .

Fallaci: Do your children ever call you "reactionary" or worse?

Colby: No. We have different views. They were against the war in Vietnam. We discuss things at the dinner table. And I admit that . . .

Fallaci: . . . you like Nixon?

Colby: I voted for him. He appointed me. And I think that, in international politics, he did a splendid job. Splendid. Just think of China, of the SALT agreement.

Fallaci: Just think of Chile, of Cyprus. Mr. Colby, I'm exhausted. Only when I interviewed Cunhal did I suffer as much as I did today with you.

Colby: Tell me, tell me: what kind of fellow is he?

Fallaci: I told you. In the end, a type like you.

Colby: What?

Fallaci: Yes, a priest like you. Oh, Mr. Colby! You'll never know how much you two resemble each other. Had you been born on the other side of the barricade, you would have been a perfect Stalinist.

Colby: I reject such a statement. But . . . well . . . it might be. No, no. It might not. And I am not a priest. At the most, I'm a puritan. Any other question?

Fallaci: Only one, Mr. Colby. Can I see the file that CIA keeps on me?

Colby: Under American law, you can write a letter to CIA and ask for anything they have on you. They must charge you a little, but then they will give it to you, unless they have some reason to keep it secret.

Fallaci: I think it is disconcerting. But everything you said was disconcerting, Mr. Colby. And very, very sad.