Written by **Thomas R. Eddlem** on June 17, 2011

# CIA Agent: Bush Admin. Used CIA “To Get” Michigan Professor

The paper reported that David B. Low, the National Intelligence Officer (NIO) for Transnational Threats at the National Intelligence Council, asked Carle in 2005: “What do you think we might know about him, or could find out that could discredit him?” After being rebuffed for making an inappropriate request, Low continued: “But what might we know about him?” Carle said Low asked: “Does he drink? What are his views? Is he married?”

Carle rebuffed the request again, stressing that it was illegal. But the next day, Carle explained that "on his way to a meeting in the C.I.A.’s front office, a secretary asked if he would drop off a folder to be delivered by courier to the White House. Mr. Carle said he opened it and stopped cold. Inside, he recalled, was a memo from Mr. Low about Juan Cole that included a paragraph with 'inappropriate, derogatory remarks' about his lifestyle."

“I couldn’t believe this was happening,” Carle told the *Times*. “People were accepting it, like you had to be part of the team.”

Lowe denied ever making such a request, but other details of Carle's account were confirmed by the *Times*. The CIA also denied that the described use of intelligence to destroy the President's critics ever happened. “We’ve thoroughly researched our records, and any allegation that the C.I.A. provided private or derogatory information on Professor Cole to anyone is simply wrong,” CIA spokesman George Little told the *Times*.

Juan Cole — the target of the CIA's political dirt, called the spying "outrageous." Wired.com's Spencer Ackerman summarized that "[B]ewilderingly, all Cole did was say mean things about the Bush team on the internet. He wasn’t a militant, he wasn’t even an activist. He blogged. To devote precious intelligence resources, especially from counterterrorism officials, to silencing him is laughably solipsistic."

Cole explained,

> What alarms me most of all in the nakedly illegal deployment of the CIA against an academic for the explicit purpose of destroying his reputation for political purposes is that I know I am a relatively small fish and it seems to me rather likely that I was not the only target of the baleful team at the White House. After the Valerie Plame affair, it seemed clear that there was nothing

> those people wouldn’t stoop to. You wonder how many critics were effectively "destroyed." It is sad that a politics of personal destruction was the response by the Bush White House to an attempt of a citizen to reason in public about a matter of great public interest.

*The New American* has reported that U.S. intelligence agencies currently have the capacity to download everything on the Internet, including private e-mails, web traffic, and telephone records. According to a *New Yorker* article by Jane Mayer last month, the NSA has indexed private Internet data in a "Google-style" searchable database for intelligence agencies to use. The Juan Cole case is the first public instance where the office of the President allegedly used U.S. intelligence agencies to gather dirt on its critics in the media or of rival politicians since Richard Nixon's "enemies list" in the 1970s.

"The Congress should revisit the PATRIOT Act in the light of the revelation of what was attempted in my regard, and should repeal the damn thing," Cole wrote on his blog, *Informed Comment*. "Failing that, the federal judiciary should find it unconstitutional, which it is. But one of the things that worries me is that some of the key political and judicial personnel who might want to move against it may themselves already have been victims of surveillance, entrapment and blackmailing. Just how corrupt has our whole governmental apparatus become, that clear violations of our Constitution are blithely accepted?"

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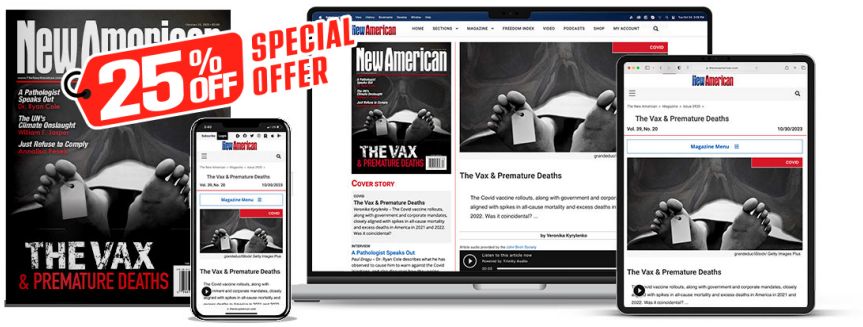


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