

FBI files reveal attempt by ACLU General Counsel to get FBI to investigate critic of R.J. Reynolds TV show.

A recently released FBI letter dated August 22nd, 1955 reveals that ACLU General Counsel Morris Ernst tried to enlist the FBI in investigating Attorney Cameron Lillie, who had criticized a guest on the Gary Moore Television Show, a show sponsored by R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company. Ernst identifies the guest personality as Judith Anderson, and identifies her as Morris Ernst's client. In fairness of full disclosure Ernst does the right thing, but FBI officials seem aghast that Ernst thinks it is appropriate to contact the agency at all in a private legal matter. The FBI politely declines to investigate Lillie.

Atty. Lillie believed that Judith Anderson was a Commie, perhaps believing there was one hiding under every bed. Ernst's reaction appears to be overkill, but perhaps Ernst himself was paranoid. Maybe he had something to hide at the ACLU. Recently released KGB files revealed that ACLU board member, Corliss Lamont was a Soviet agent; not just a Communist.

After the FBI declined participation, Morris Ernst was able to get an apology from Lillie, and does get him to issue an apology to R. J. Reynolds. It appears that Ernst is more focused on getting an apology to Big Tobacco, than to his client herself. His attempt at getting the FBI to intimidate a critic of a tobacco company falls flat, but Ernst does seem successful in his attempt at intimidation even without the FBI cooperating. What remains unknown is what other threats ACLU General Counsel Ernst used. Critics for years have charged that the ACLU is in the pockets of the tobacco companies, and the ACLU has admitted that it has received such monies going back to the 1930's under the guise of 'smoker's rights.' The Chairman of the ACLU Board, Francis Biddle, was the defender of Big Tobacco though his Biddle Law Firm in Philadelphia. Biddle routinely contributed what they called 'grants' to the ACLU National Office. Biddle, cousins of the Dukes of tobacco fame, had never indicated any interest in defending the rights of non-smokers. Then again, there was no "non smoking lobby" paying any monies to defend the interests of non-smokers. Without someone paying for advocacy work, Morris Ernst was unwilling to go to bat for them.

George Orwell wrote *1984* in 1948. He had just finished working for British Intelligence in World War II. Rather than having British spying on Nazis in WW II, British intelligence had 1200 agents working in Rockerfeller Center, renting six floors of space in an agency they called the Bureau of Library Information (BLI). Orwell was just one of many writers, which also employed Roald Dahl, Ernest Hemingway, etc. The anecdotal story about Orwell is that he submitted the manuscript and the editor demanded changes. He supposedly changed the title from 1948 to 1984 and resubmitted it. Since anecdotal stories are almost never true, I think we can discard that one. Unfortunately, for us, the rest of 1984 was true; it just arrived earlier than we thought. Orwell was not a futurist; he was an historian.

Those British agents working in Rockerfeller Center were there to spy on Americans; any Americans who questioned war policy. At the beginning of the war Great Britain was not fighting at all. Not in Poland. Not in Czechoslovakia. Not in France. Not in Dunkirk. At Dunkirk, they would abandon their equipment on the playing fields. In a few short years, young Americans would be sent overseas to rescue Europe from itself. They, and their parents, would pay in blood and treasure for the job Great Britain refused to do. They would pay for American troops to fight. They would pay Great Britain to fight through billions in Lend-Lease aid.

They would pay for Stalin to fight through billions in Lend-Lease aid. And they would pay again to rebuild Europe at the conclusion of the war through the Marshall Plan. And what would the American taxpayer get for it?

The National Security State, which started before the war began, was used first against war protestors, and first started by an unworthy ally, Great Britain. The federal government in Washington in 1939 was a land of country bumpkins run by country bumpkins. The FBI, with its buttoned down agents, and their uniquely American viewpoints, were not equipped, both in numbers or outlook, to compete with British Intelligence. It had not occurred to FBI agents that you could simply kill civilians who opposed your war policies. And in actuality, those agents shared the same outlook as the war protestors. They did not trust the British either. They did not trust anything that went on in Europe.

However, another crowd had a different view. The intellectual elite in New York looked down on everything American; they looked to London, Paris, Berlin and Rome for everything sophisticated and refined; the same crowd who would soon incinerate Europe for the second time in 20 years. It took one of those agents, George Orwell, to tell us the truth about what was going on. Sadly, *1984* was not a novel. It was reality.

The intimidation attempted by ACLU General Counsel Morris Ernst of a critic of R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company is so chilling that if Orwell used that in his text, it would be unlikely it would get past his editor. It is not believable in bookdom or Hollywood. And if it did get past his editor, it is likely that R.J. Reynolds would simply make sure it got limited circulation, and virtually no media coverage. With huge ad buys, no media outlet is going to take the relatively small advertising revenue a book promotion could generate, and lose the ad revenue that R. J. Reynolds Tobacco could provide.