

The New York Times**August 7, 2009**

LETTER

Secrets and the C.I.A.

To the Editor:

Re "[Obama Administration Weighs In on State Secrets, Raising Concern on the Left](#)," by Adam Liptak (Sidebar column, Aug. 4):

My 24 years as an analyst at the Central Intelligence Agency (1966-90) taught me that national security is only the ostensible reason for using the state secrets privilege in cases before the court. The real reason usually has more to do with national embarrassment and not national security.

National embarrassment is the reason we have not seen the additional photographic evidence of torture and abuse; the C.I.A. investigation from 2004 on detentions and interrogations; a C.I.A. investigation on the agency's role in the downing of a missionary plane in Peru in 2001; and numerous documents that reveal the C.I.A.'s politicization of intelligence on the Soviet Union and Central America in the 1980s.

If Congress ever got around to giving genuine whistleblower protection to members of the intelligence community, this country might get some idea of the extent of the perfidy and duplicity of some government officials.

Melvin A. Goodman
Bethesda, Md., Aug.
4, 2009

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