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8-10-83

Dear Mr. Blackwell,

file Springer

I hope this clears up any misunderstanding and questions that you may have had regarding this incident. Any assistance in this matter would be greatly appreciated.

Best Regards

Eddie Springer

EDWARD SPRINGER

213 762-9554

August 5, 1983

The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.
Washington, DC 20500

Attn: Bill Cotter, USSS/TSD Pass Section
Old EOB, Rm. 23

Re: Supposed "Security Breach" at the White House involving
Edward Springer and unescorted movement within EOB

Dear Mr. Cotter:

Regarding the incident of August 1, 1983 which involved the removal of myself from the White House and West Wing Lobby two times on the same date, within the same hour, and my detention by yourself for approximately one hour. This whole incident, if I might add, was extremely embarrassing and depressing. I would like to give you a little background on myself regarding my past visits to the White House, which should help you understand my movements within the House on said date.

It is obvious from what you told me that, on this day, the two pertinent problems were my unescorted movement within the EOB and my entrance into the West Wing Lobby which was said to be a "breach of security."

I was first invited to the White House by Brig. Gen. Joe Blasingame, at that time Commander of White House Communications Agency. On that same trip I was also interviewed by Mr. Billy Shaddix for the position of White House photographer.

I do not think it is necessary nor pertinent to go into the detailed information which we had discussed in your office regarding the personality clash between myself and the Los Angeles agent while I was working for Mr. Jim Kuhn with the Advance Staff, which understandably added to your concern for this matter upon hearing of it. I do emphasize personality clash, because in no way can it be looked upon as anything else. As I stated to you, it was the agent that chose to make something out of nothing. If you ask me, because of his insulting and immature remarks to myself over the phone, he has a problem. Nor do I think it is important to discuss my offer to the UD officers which I had known in the past regarding compensation for their time. These things can easily be cleared up with a phone call or two.

The routine of my first visit and previous visits to the White House are as follows: I would usually be cleared-in at the East Wing Gate by a few different staff card holders, or by a UD officer who was a friend of mine. From there I would go to the East Wing Lobby and from the Lobby Post usually up stairways to the East Wing offices to visit friends. At first, I was escorted upstairs, then I was allowed, and given permission, to move from the East Wing Lobby area to the East Wing upstairs office area on my own. It was even mentioned to me one time by Elaine Crispin, "Ed, I can't believe how you get around here." I just figured, because people knew who I was, that everything was "A-OK" and felt good about it.

Besides visiting Elaine Crispin, I also visited Dennis LeBlanc. Upon completion of my business in the East Wing, I would always be escorted to the West Wing . . . either directly through the House over to the West Wing stairs, and down the stairs to the basement, and into the West Lobby,

or along the back drive through the kitchen area out and over to either the West Lobby or the EOB.

At times, I was left in the West Lobby under the control of the Post E-1 officer, or taken over to the EOB. From either of these locations, EOB or West Wing, I was pretty much free to move from the West Lobby area to EOB, and the reverse, at will. While in the West Lobby at Post E-1, I was allowed to move freely in that general area to photo office and automated lunch room just outside of the Navy mess. All of this movement was, of course, with the permission of the Post Officer, Dave Coleman. The UD officer who usually escorted me around the House, at my request, was Bernie Dennison. By the way, I do have proof of everything I am telling you. I was even allowed, once or twice, by Dave Coleman, to move unescorted from Post E-1 to E-4 and back, via the West Wing stairs. Which, I would guess, from a security standpoint, must be quite shocking to you. Officer Coleman would rotate from E-1 to E-4. When Coleman would work E-4, I would also be allowed by him to move freely in that lobby area, and even allowed to walk down the arched hallway towards the Cabinet Room, to the rest room across from Jim Brady's office. As you know, the Oval Office is just around the corner. At both locations, E-1 and E-4, I was allowed to use the phone at will. I was also allowed to take endless photos at both locations, E-1 and E-4, and throughout the White House and West Wing by both mentioned officers.

When not waiting for appointments at either post, E-1 / E-4, I would usually use the travel office in the EOB across from Rm. 89 as my base. I would at times be permitted to sit at an empty desk to make my phone calls.

At that time, Mr. Bob Manning was in charge. From the travel office I was permitted to leave my briefcase and move at will within the EOB and across West Executive Drive to the West Wing Lobby. One time, while standing outside the West Lobby doors, the Vice President came out. I then took photos of him and no one said a word. I was allowed to take photos everywhere within the White House but the Oval Office.

Sir, you gave me hell for moving in the EOB unescorted, yet Agent Taylor, who was also upset with my freedom of movement in the EOB, played a part in encouraging me to do just that.

As I stated to you, I had called Taylor from EOB, Rm. 402, four floors up, and requested to walk over to see him. I told him where I was and he told me to "come on over." Upon my arrival, I requested of him to walk me over to the South Lawn to see the President's helicopter land, which Agent Johnny Guy had done for me on a previous trip — and even had my photo taken with Marine One in the background. Taylor said he wouldn't mind at all taking me over to the South Lawn, but that he was too busy setting-up advances and told me to try with him again. At that point, he bid me good-bye and allowed me to turn right around and walk right back out into the EOB without any question as to where I was going, or if I had an escort.

He then, later, saw me walking out of the double doors just outside his office in the service way down the drive toward the West Wing. The point is, if it is such a big deal about moving around freely, why did he not say a word to me, such as, "Ed, where are you going?" or "Where are you coming from?" You would think he might ask me something, but when he saw me walking around, unescorted, he just smiled and said, "Hi." Yet, later on, he gave me hell for just that. Some security?

The important point is that in all the times I have been to the White House, including this time, no one has ever told me, nor has anyone ever said anything to me about the rules or management within. There are no signs anywhere; the double "A" pass does not have on it a word about the rules; and the guard, when one enters, does not say a word about any restricted movement.

The fact of the matter is that persons entering as an appointment are never made aware of the rules.

So how can you assume, with any fairness, that people know about an unposted rule and then jump down their throat and detain them for not obeying those rules, especially in my case where I have always been able to and have been given permission to move so freely? I hope you can understand from what I've explained to you why I felt at liberty to do as I did and felt perfectly innocent in doing so.

Regarding your statement to me about trying to gain entry to the West Wing, I'm not sure what you meant by that, but by your hurried manner, and so ready to find me guilty of something, you made it sound too all-concerned, as though I climbed over the wall and was trying to sneak into the President's bedroom — which is absurd! All that you had to do was interview the E-1 officer and he would have told you that all I requested was to sit on the couch and use the phone. If you think that I was so wrong after what I've explained to you regarding my permitted freedom in the past, I would say that you need a vacation.

It seems to me that any reasonably minded person would say that it wasn't my fault, but that of the White House security in allowing me to have such liberties in the past. Therefore, I was only acting in the manner in which I had become accustomed. That which I had no idea was out of line or a so-called "security breach."

I'm sure it makes no difference to you what I think, but in my opinion, your lack of discretion or concern for me in telling people that I was "caught" trying to gain entry into the West Wing and by telling them, without any explanation, that I was thrown out of the White House two times, wasn't, in my opinion, the most responsible action . . . for the reason that you did not have all the facts in front of you and, in doing so, you caused unnecessary concern and worry for any and all concerned or involved with me — not to mention that you made a perfectly decent person look like a fool and a jerk and completely destroyed my credibility . . . let alone embarrassed the hell out of me.

It still strikes me funny that in all of your concern for security, while still not knowing exactly who I was, or what I was up to, that you or anyone else ever searched me or my briefcase, not that you would have found anything of interest, but it just seems that it wasn't too consistent with the rest of your concerns.

Mr. Cotter, you were quite aware of the fact that I had legitimate clearance on both removal incidents: the first time by Eddie Sorreno, Chief Stuart, and a friend of mine, and the second time by Mr. Merton Blackwell, presidential liaison (Staff Assistant to the President). As you know, the first time that day you removed me, you told me if I wanted to come back in, that it would be OK, that I should go over to the phone, make an appointment, and then re-enter, but to come right out at the completion of each appointment. I did exactly as you instructed me to do — this time my appointment was with Mr. Morton Blackwell.

Upon my re-entry, the officer told me, "Now, remember, Mr. Springer, when you're done with your appointment, come directly out." Of course, I agreed to do so. Mr. Blackwell, upon my request, was nice enough to oblige me in seeing Marine One land on the South Lawn, but by this time he was late for an appointment and phoned over to the West Wing to have another staffer meet me in the West Wing Lobby. I asked Mr. Blackwell, "Are you sure I'm cleared to go over there, because, sir, I just had a problem there." He said, "No problem. I just cleared you. Go on over."

EDWARD SPRINGER

213 762-9554

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Being a bit hesitant, I still went over, because I was not doing a thing wrong.

When I arrived at the West Wing Post E-1, I told the officer that I had an appointment with this particular person, who was a staff member, that she was going to meet me here. He said, "OK, please have a seat," which I did. When she arrived to escort me to the South Lawn I felt relieved, but soon after her arrival you (Agent Cotter) and Agent Taylor came flying through the door, out of breath — I assume from running over to the scene of the "crime" — where the both of you proceeded to remove me again to the amusement of myself, and of course, the staff member, who told you, at the time, "Mr. Springer has an appointment. He was cleared by Mr. Blackwell." None of which matter to you because, as far as you were concerned, I had alternative motives, and was there to do some unlawful act.

I realize that you probably do not have an easy job and may even be bored being there everyday, but to myself, a small business owner in California, to see the President of the United States land on the lawn of the White House, is a big deal. To be quite frank, it gives me goose-bumps. So, if that is a crime, to have a desire to witness such an event, then I am guilty!

While in detention in your office, you told me not to worry because this sort of thing happens once or twice a week. Well, that would sure indicate to me that something was wrong. Don't you think that appointments should be made aware of the rules or do you enjoy going through this type of thing? Perhaps it was just slow that day.

I apologize for my attitude in this letter, but put yourself in my position and what I went through. You not only made me look like an idiot to everyone but, as I stated, you also destroyed my credibility to all that know me and ruined the rest of my trip. I never did get to see most of the people that I came to see.

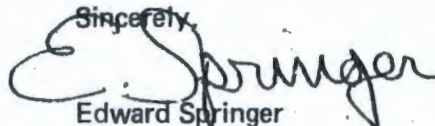
You also called the Los Angeles office and, without bothering to give them any explanation, you simply told them that Ed Springer was thrown out of the White House two times and is not allowed back. This information was, of course, then given to everyone connected with me that has anything to do with the White House . . . some of whom happen to be personal friends. What are these people to think? Sure, I can explain to everyone what happened until I turn blue, but they will still wonder what really happened.

I want you to know that I respect law enforcement and especially the Secret Service to the utmost. I know that your job is not an easy one.

Whatever involvement I've been privileged and honored to have, however so slight, has meant a great deal to me. Being a Reagan supporter, I have always kept the best interests of the White House and the administration in mind, and would never say anything nor do anything derogatory.

I have no real desire to visit the White House again; however, I would like to maintain my professional status with the Los Angeles office and would appreciate anything you can do to rectify this misunderstanding. If you or anyone else has any questions, please call: (805) 251-9151 / (805) 251-7559 or (805) 252-7092.

Sincerely,



Edward Springer

cc: Eddie Sarreno
Bob DeProspero
SAIC Intelligence Division
Ashley G. Williams
Morton Blackwell