

August 21, 2005

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Ambassador Richard J. Griffin
Assistant Secretary of State for Diplomatic Security
Room 6316, Harry S. Truman Building
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Ambassador Griffin:

I am employed as an intelligence analyst for the [REDACTED]. I am also an Army Reserve Lieutenant Colonel and unit commander.

I wish to express my concern and dismay at the comportment of Mr. [REDACTED], a Special Agent of the Personnel Security-Suitability office of the Diplomatic Security Service of the State Department. Mr. [REDACTED] interviewed me circa May of 2003 in relation to a background investigation of Mr. [REDACTED], a former employee of the State Department. I was assigned to the same Army Reserve unit from 2000 to 2002 as Mr. [REDACTED] and was his commanding officer from 2001 to 2002.

As an intelligence and former law enforcement professional, I am trained in and have used interviewing techniques I learned at the Military Police and Military Intelligence schools, and the Utah State Police Academy. I have also been interviewed before, for security background investigations of others. By doctrine, during such an interview, the investigator must be careful not to influence or direct the statements of the individual being interviewed. The interviewer should ask straightforward questions and faithfully record the statements of the interviewee. Moreover, in my experience, persons who are not suspects in a criminal matter are generally treated with dignity and respect.

Special Agent [REDACTED]'s comportment was vulgar, intimidating, and aggressive. While earlier phone conversations to arrange an appointment were professional and business-like, his demeanor changed when he arrived at my workplace.

I work in a Secure Communications and Intelligence Facility (SCIF) protected by Federal police officers. Only they can bring firearms into the SCIF; others must check in their weapons at the security booth. I met [REDACTED] at the security booth. When informed of the no-weapons policy, [REDACTED] bristled and complained. Refusing to deposit his weapon, we had to conduct the interview in a non-secure room outside the perimeter of the SCIF.

A sullen Agent [REDACTED] started his interview and quickly made it clear that he had already formed pre-conceived ideas. He asked leading, subjective questions, and struggled to direct my statements to match his framework. My experience with the subject of Mr. [REDACTED]'s investigation had been favorable, and I so stated. When my statements failed to fit his paradigm, Agent [REDACTED]'s comportment degenerated from sullen-but-eliciting-information, to argumentative, to aggressive, to combative.

When I couldn't support his theories, ██████ pressured me to agree with him. He asked leading, subjective questions, and started to distort my own words to match his preconceptions. As the interview progressed, ██████ became argumentative and intimidating. He asked about ██████'s standing in the Army Reserve. I based my replies on over 24 years of commanding troops at the lieutenant, captain, major, and lieutenant colonel levels. ██████ did not like the facts I gave him, and he became flustered, impatient, and argued with me. ██████ used interview techniques more suited for browbeating a confession out of a suspect than eliciting facts from a cooperating witness.

Showing me copies of Army forms and documents, ██████ insisted they were 'evidence' against the subject. But when I – a trained Military Personnel Specialist and Human Resources Officer - told him some of the papers were merely administrative documents, and that he was misinterpreting some of the others, ██████ became very angry and snide. I tried reasoning with him, pointing out that the Army had no outstanding issues with Captain ██████ and had even promoted him to major. ██████ raised his voice, smacked his fist on the table, flared his nostrils, and growled things like "*You are wrong!*", "*You're just WRONG! ██████ is finished! He's DONE!*"

██████'s partner seemed intimidated by ██████'s hostility, giving him stunned looks. The other agent tried to de-escalate the situation by remaining quiet, allowing ██████ to cut him off when he tried to ask a question. He gave me a shrugging expression that said, "I'm sorry, but what can I do about ██████?"

In the end, ██████ abruptly terminated the interview and left, making it clear that he held me in disdain. Afterwards, I faxed ██████ papers that he had asked for before the interview. Before, he had insisted they were very important to the case, but he never acknowledged getting them, or returned my calls.

I am not a State Department employee, and ██████, thankfully, is in no position to influence my own Top Secret/SCI clearance. However, had I been a State Department employee, I would have feared for my own clearance because my statements had not furthered Agent ██████'s objectives. I am sure that most DS special agents are professional lawmen, but if my experience is commonplace, there may be a cancer growing in the Diplomatic Security Service.

Very Respectfully,

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