

424 North George Mason Drive  
Arlington 3, Virginia

December 8, 1952

Mr. Lester Walker  
Box 95  
Cornwall, Connecticut

Dear Mr. Walker:

Acknowledging receipt of your letter of 24 November 1952, it would be hypocritical to deny feeling flattered by its contents and suggestion. But not only is it impossible for me to look favorably toward your suggestion but also I must urgently request that you do not follow the course pursued by another author who three or four years ago, without my permission or even advance knowledge, wrote a piece about me in a nationally circulated magazine, for it brought me considerable embarrassment.

You state that you are aware that my work has involved matters of security, but imagine that a great part of it has not concerned things which can not be written about and that these would be plentiful enough to give you a good story. I appreciate the statement as to your awareness of the classified nature of my work but the security aspects go beyond that: it is undesirable even that my name appear in articles dealing with the subject. This "passion for anonymity" is reinforced by the existence of a relatively new statute known as Public Law Number 513 (81st Congress, 2nd Session) approved 13 May 1950, the purpose of which is, as stated in its preamble, "to enhance further the security of the United States by preventing disclosures of information concerning the cryptographic systems and the communication intelligence activities of the United States."

In closing, I wish to tell you how much I appreciate your courtesy in communicating with me in advance of doing any writing about me, and hope that you will accept my hearty thanks and drop the matter.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM F. FRIEDMAN

CHARLES LESTER  
WALKER

COPY

Box 95,  
Cornwall, Conn.  
November 24, 1952.

Mr. William F. Friedman,  
424 North George Mason Drive,  
Arlington, Virginia.

Dear Mr. Friedman:

I am a writer for Reader's Digest, Harper's, and various other national magazines and have thought for some time that there should be a story for one of these publications in the work you and Mrs. Friedman have done in cryptanalysis over the past years.

I write, therefore, to ask if you would be interested in having such an article written at this date. If you are interested, I would discuss the idea with a number of editors and get the piece placed before going to work on it. Then you and I could get together and determine from what sources, you and others, I should obtain the necessary information and material.

I am aware, of course, that your work has involved matters of security, but imagine that a great part of it has not concerned things which can't be written about and that these would be plentiful enough to give us a good story about your career, and that of Mrs. Friedman. I have a feeling too that as a matter of historical record something of this sort should be published about your work, since it has been, certainly, a highly important one.

If you feel favorably toward this suggestion, will you let me know? I enclose a self-addressed envelope for your convenience in reply.

Cordially yours,

/s/ Lester Walker

WALKER  
L.

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