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U.S. Department of Justice

Federal Bureau of Investigation

Washington, D.C. 20535

April 25, 2008

Subject: MONOGRAPH: PRETEXTS AND COVER  
TECHNIQUES (MAY 1956)

FOIPA No. 1108575- 000

The enclosed documents were reviewed under the Freedom of Information/Privacy Acts (FOIPA), Title 5, United States Code, Section 552/552a. Deletions have been made to protect information which is exempt from disclosure, with the appropriate exemptions noted on the page next to the excision. In addition, a deleted page information sheet was inserted in the file to indicate where pages were withheld entirely. The exemptions used to withhold information are marked below and explained on the enclosed Form OPCA-16a:

Section 552

- ☐ (b)(1)
- ☐ (b)(2)
- ☐ (b)(3) \_\_\_\_\_
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- ☐ (b)(4)
- ☐ (b)(5)
- ☐ (b)(6)

Section 552a

- ☐ (b)(7)(A)
- ☐ (b)(7)(B)
- ☐ (b)(7)(C)
- ☐ (b)(7)(D)
- ☒ (b)(7)(E)
- ☐ (b)(7)(F)
- ☐ (b)(8)
- ☐ (b)(9)
- ☐ (d)(5)
- ☐ (j)(2)
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- ☐ (k)(7)

35 page(s) were reviewed and 35 page(s) are being released.

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- ☐ referred to the OGA for consultation. The FBI will correspond with you regarding this information when the consultation is finished.

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☐ The enclosed material is from the main investigative file(s) in which the subject(s) of your request was the focus of the investigation. Our search located additional references, in files relating to other individuals, or matters, which may or may not be about your subject(s). Our experience has shown, when ident, references usually contain information similar to the information processed in the main file(s). Because of our significant backlog, we have given priority to processing only the main investigative file(s).

If you want the references, you must submit a separate request for them in writing, and they will be reviewed at a later date, as time and resources permit.

☐ See additional information which follows.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Hardy", with a stylized flourish at the end.

David M. Hardy  
Section Chief  
Record/Information  
Dissemination Section  
Records Management Division

Enclosure(s)

## EXPLANATION OF EXEMPTIONS

### SUBSECTIONS OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, SECTION 552

- (b)(1) (A) specifically authorized under criteria established by an Executive order to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or foreign policy and (B) are in fact properly classified to such Executive order;
- (b)(2) related solely to the internal personnel rules and practices of an agency;
- (b)(3) specifically exempted from disclosure by statute (other than section 552b of this title), provided that such statute (A) requires that the matters be withheld from the public in such a manner as to leave no discretion on issue, or (B) establishes particular criteria for withholding or refers to particular types of matters to be withheld;
- (b)(4) trade secrets and commercial or financial information obtained from a person and privileged or confidential;
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- (b)(6) personnel and medical files and similar files the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy;
- (b)(7) records or information compiled for law enforcement purposes, but only to the extent that the production of such law enforcement records or information ( A ) could be reasonably be expected to interfere with enforcement proceedings, ( B ) would deprive a person of a right to a fair trial or an impartial adjudication, ( C ) could be reasonably expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy, ( D ) could reasonably be expected to disclose the identity of confidential source, including a State, local, or foreign agency or authority or any private institution which furnished information on a confidential basis, and, in the case of record or information compiled by a criminal law enforcement authority in the course of a criminal investigation, or by an agency conducting a lawful national security intelligence investigation, information furnished by a confidential source, ( E ) would disclose techniques and procedures for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions, or would disclose guidelines for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions if such disclosure could reasonably be expected to risk circumvention of the law, or ( F ) could reasonably be expected to endanger the life or physical safety of any individual;
- (b)(8) contained in or related to examination, operating, or condition reports prepared by, on behalf of, or for the use of an agency responsible for the regulation or supervision of financial institutions; or
- (b)(9) geological and geophysical information and data, including maps, concerning wells.

### SUBSECTIONS OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, SECTION 552a

- (d)(5) information compiled in reasonable anticipation of a civil action proceeding;
- (j)(2) material reporting investigative efforts pertaining to the enforcement of criminal law including efforts to prevent, control, or reduce crime or apprehend criminals;
- (k)(1) information which is currently and properly classified pursuant to an Executive order in the interest of the national defense or foreign policy, for example, information involving intelligence sources or methods;
- (k)(2) investigatory material compiled for law enforcement purposes, other than criminal, which did not result in loss of a right, benefit or privilege under Federal programs, or which would identify a source who furnished information pursuant to a promise that his/her identity would be held in confidence;
- (k)(3) material maintained in connection with providing protective services to the President of the United States or any other individual pursuant to the authority of Title 18, United States Code, Section 3056;
- (k)(4) required by statute to be maintained and used solely as statistical records;
- (k)(5) investigatory material compiled solely for the purpose of determining suitability, eligibility, or qualifications for Federal civilian employment or for access to classified information, the disclosure of which would reveal the identity of the person who furnished information pursuant to a promise that his/her identity would be held in confidence;
- (k)(6) testing or examination material used to determine individual qualifications for appointment or promotion in Federal Government service the release of which would compromise the testing or examination process;
- (k)(7) material used to determine potential for promotion in the armed services, the disclosure of which would reveal the identity of the person who furnished the material pursuant to a promise that his/her identity would be held in confidence.

**PRETEXTS**  
**and**  
**COVER TECHNIQUES**

**(Not for Dissemination Outside the Bureau)**

**May 1956**

**Federal Bureau of Investigation  
United States Department of Justice  
John Edgar Hoover, Director**

**56 D 112**

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## PREFACE

The primary purpose of this monograph is to make available to FBI investigators the ideas and experiences of other Agents\* and Bureau officials. The sharing of these ideas and experiences will serve as a firm foundation for the future and will build better pretext and cover techniques. In addition to setting forth the underlying principles of these techniques, this monograph cites numerous examples of pretexts and covers which have worked successfully. These examples are presented in concise form with the emphasis on the ideas and ingenuity they contain.

The pretexts cited in this study have been organized for presentation based upon the primary investigative objective attained or the particular situation which formed the basis for the pretext. This arbitrary classification should not be construed as limiting the potential of a particular pretext since it may be suitable for other investigative ends. In this regard, some of the basic pretexts cited are known to have solved other investigative problems. Because of this, investigative personnel should give thought to the adaptability of these techniques to their own problems.

\*Throughout this monograph, the term, Agents, refers to Special Agents of the FBI.

An effort has been made to select from Bureau files those pretexts which have a broader adaptability, and to exclude those which, although possibly ingenious, were conceived for a very special set of circumstances. For example, this study does not deal with those situations where an Agent has been assigned to working and living under cover for extensive periods. Further, the use of the pretext during and incidental to the regular interrogation of a subject or suspect is not considered here. This study concerns the deliberate and planned pretext; however, it recognizes that pretexts have been used in emergencies by quick-thinking Agents.

The pretexts cited have been used successfully. Many of the ideas embodied in these pretexts are equally adaptable to security and criminal investigations; therefore, it is believed that this monograph should be of interest and benefit to all Special Agents, regardless of the type of work which they are handling.



## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

### A. Summary

The pretext is an accepted investigative technique. Essentially, it is a means of obtaining information, although it has been used successfully to accomplish many other purposes. It is as basic as interrogation, surveillance, and crime-scene searches; however, its value can be greatly diminished if it is used indiscriminately or excessively in a particular area or among a particular group. Once it has been decided that a pretext is the next logical investigative step necessary to solve the investigative problem, the investigator's ingenuity and resourcefulness can be brought into play by devising a workable pretext. Like any other accomplishment, a good pretext is a satisfying experience.

An important and most common use of the pretext is to obtain background and identifying information concerning subjects and suspects. Other important uses are to gain access to property and to observe and photograph subjects and suspects. The pretexts cited as examples show the widespread uses of this technique. It is also apparent from these examples that the same basic pretext might be used to accomplish a variety of purposes.

If we are to be successful in the use of this investigative technique, we should know the fundamentals, carefully plan the pretext to be used, learn our part, and look and act the part.

**B. Conclusions**

1. The pretext technique can be more highly developed and used to better advantage if the ideas and experiences of other Agents are available for study.
2. The use of pretext and cover should be restricted to those situations where the information should not or cannot be obtained in an official manner with reasonable effort.
3. The primary requirement of a good pretext is that it be carefully planned.
4. Pretexts which tie in with subjects' activities or interests have a greater chance of succeeding.
5. The use of a dialect or expressions familiar to subjects is helpful in some cases.
6. Pretexts utilizing the telephone should be just as thoroughly prepared as pretexts involving personal contact.
7. Although the majority of the pretexts cited as examples were employed in urban areas, some of these could be readily adapted to use in rural areas.
8. A record should be made in the investigative file showing complete details of any pretext used.

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **A. Definition**

Webster's New International Dictionary defines a pretext as "A purpose or motive alleged, or an appearance assumed, in order to cloak the real intention or state of affairs; excuse; pretense; cover; semblance." As related to investigative work, the pretext technique is a lawful means to an investigative end.

### **B. Considerations in Planning and Using Pretexts**

The pretext is a deliberate and planned technique. In some situations, it is without equal as the fastest and surest means of obtaining the information sought. Basically, the pretext is used when it is necessary to accomplish an investigative end without disclosing the Bureau's interest in a matter and/or the true purpose of the inquiry.

The primary considerations in selecting the pretext to be used are:

1. The investigative problem to be solved
2. The nature of the person to be contacted under pretext

Pretexts offer unlimited possibilities to an investigator with imagination and ingenuity. A good pretext should:

1. Be carefully planned

2. Be as simple and reasonable as possible
3. Offer an inducement or have a spontaneous appeal
4. Contain accurate statements or statements not susceptible to verification
5. Consider the intelligence and nature of person to be contacted
6. Provide for logical conclusion or follow-through
7. Stay within the framework of our laws

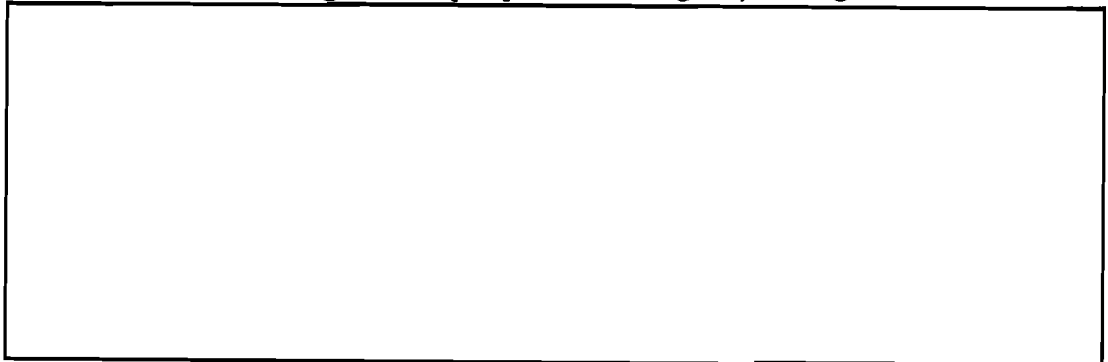
In some instances, the use of a dialect or expressions familiar to subjects has been advantageous. Of these two, the successful use of a dialect is the more difficult for most Agents. A dialect should only be used where the Agent has considerable ability either acquired through environment or developed through study and practice. Agents conversant with communist terminology have used this knowledge to good advantage during pretexts. In criminal investigations, the use of slang and double-meaning expressions familiar to the criminal element has assisted in supporting a pretext or cover. In effect, some pretexts require that the Agent speak the subject's language.

The need for planning cannot be overly stressed. This planning should consider the alternatives open to subject and provision for these

alternatives. With proper preparation for subject's reactions, the pretext will be flexible and more readily adaptable during the course of the interview. Wherever possible, the pretext must be brought to a logical conclusion, and where there is a need to follow through to maintain the pretext, this should be done. The following illustrates ingenuity and follow-through to a logical conclusion in a pretext:

Agents of one office were confronted with the problem of identifying an unknown woman\* who had contacted a diplomatic establishment. The only identifying information furnished by the informant in this instance was the first name and address of the woman; however, the need to identify her was apparent from other information furnished by the informant. It was determined that the address was that of a rooming house. The first name of the proprietor of the rooming house was different from that furnished by informant. b7E

Telephonic credit pretext inquiries were made of several neighbors. It was determined that the woman was not a member of the proprietor's family. A pretext telephone call was then made to the rooming house proprietor. Agent, using a fictitious



\*Underlining denotes primary objective of pretext.

On the following day, the proprietor was called again.  
This time the Agent stated

It is to be noted that the last pretext in the above instance not only obtained the information desired and was itself brought to a logical conclusion, but it also provided an answer for any suspicions the proprietor might have had about the earlier pretext.

C. Looking and Acting the Part

A well-known quotation, which is generally attributed to Abraham Lincoln, reads, "You can fool some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all the time."\* If we are to deal with subjects who would fool us,

\*H. L. Mencken, New Dictionary of Quotations, NY, Alfred A. Knopf, 1942, p. 902.

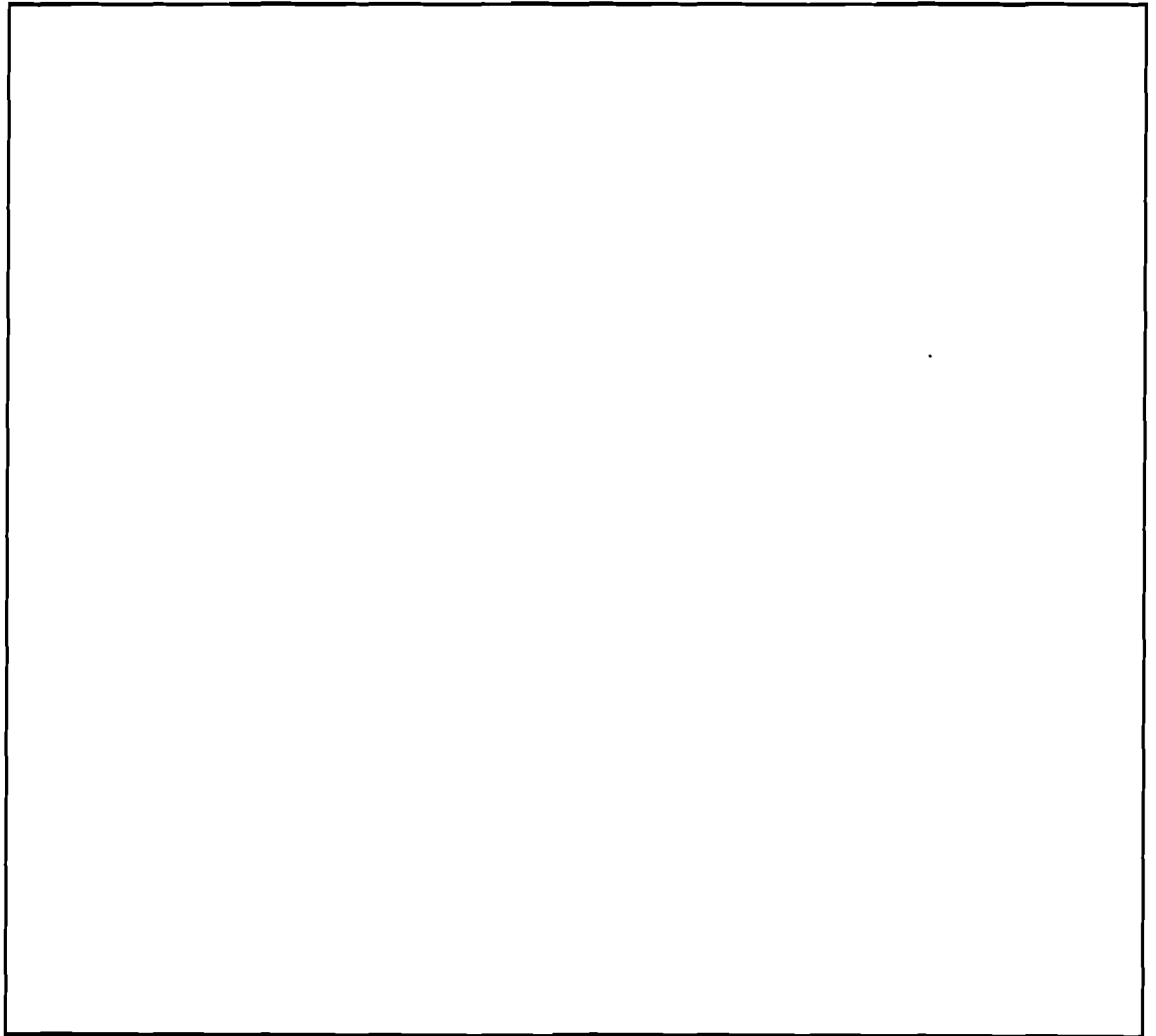
then, our Agents who are conducting pretext interviews must be aware of this fact and on using pretexts look and act the part. If an Agent is pretending to be a fisherman, the pretext should be carried out during the fishing season with the proper clothes and fishing equipment. If using the pretext of being an insurance salesman, the Agent should carry an insurance manual with the necessary rate charts and policy data. These are simple but convincing "props." A few simple changes in outward appearance will do more to convey the desired impression than several minutes of a cover story. To alter an old Chinese proverb, one "prop" is worth a thousand words.

A good pretext and careful planning will instill confidence in the Agent, and this confidence in turn will help convince the subject or other person being interviewed that you are what you say you are. Like an actor, the Agent should know his role; thus, use should be made of Agent's talents and past employment experience where possible.

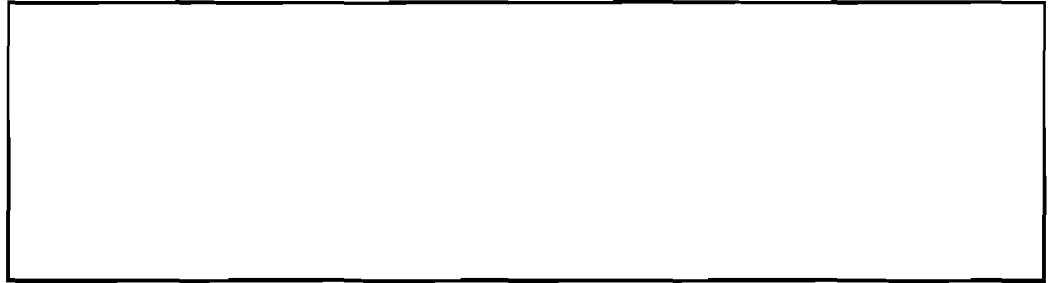
One office had the problem of obtaining photographs of more than two hundred security subjects. In most of these cases, unsuccessful efforts had already been made to obtain photographs from the usual sources.

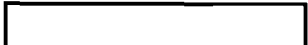
After considerable thought, it was decided that the problem could best be solved by devising a suitable pretext adaptable to most of the cases. The following pretext was devised and illustrates thorough planning and preparation:

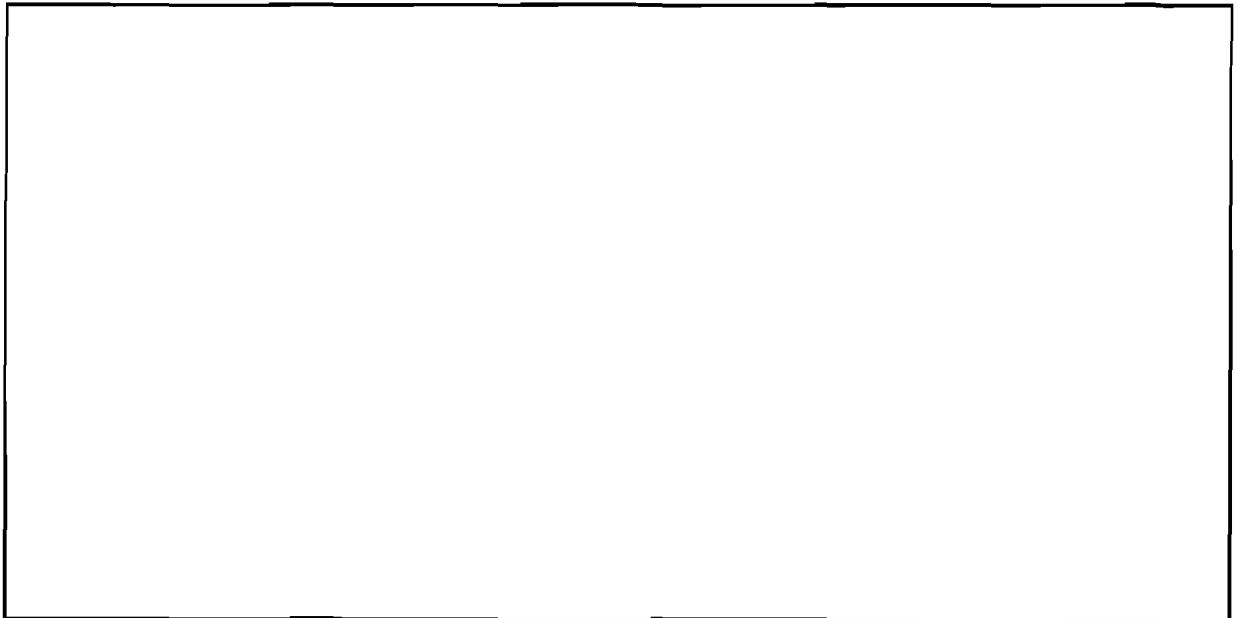
b7E







In most instances, this pretext resulted in obtaining a photograph. Persons contacted were given an opportunity to ask questions. Where reluctance was shown, the Agents emphasized that 



**D. Precautionary Factors to Avoid Pitfalls**

1. Even though the use of the pretext technique is widely accepted by responsible law enforcement personnel, it is most important to

restrict its use to those instances where the information cannot be obtained in an official manner with reasonable effort.

2. Where possible and feasible, the cooperation of local government officials or persons in business should be obtained in connection with preparations for the pretext. In some pretexts, timing is an important factor. Where there is a choice, consideration should be given to the most logical time of the day, month, or year for the pretext.

3. The use of the telephone in sales, opinion polling, and advertising is so widespread, that this media offers excellent opportunities for pretexts. When a telephonic pretext goes astray, there is a natural temptation to terminate the call by hanging up. As this may make the subject more wary, it should be avoided. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary that telephonic pretexts be planned just as thoroughly as personal contact pretexts.

4. When a pretext is used, a record should be made in the investigative file so any other Agent subsequently assigned to the case will have the benefit of this information and possibly avoid an embarrassing situation. It may also be that a second pretext effort can use to good advantage an earlier pretext which has been recorded.

## **II. BASIC TYPES OF INVESTIGATIVE PROBLEMS INVOLVING USE OF PRETEXTS**

### **A. Pretexts to Obtain Information**

During the course of an investigation, it frequently occurs that certain items of background information are needed which are not available from the usual sources. There are set forth hereinafter examples of pretexts which have been used to determine a subject's name, birth data, employment, residence, intentions, and other general background data.

#### **1. Ascertaining Background and Identifying Data**

- a. Agent had been unsuccessful in establishing birth data of a female subject. A review of the case file on subject's husband revealed he had furnished various dates and places of naturalization. The Agent, [REDACTED] b7E  
[REDACTED]  
contacted subject's husband by telephone. After questioning the husband about [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] the husband readily furnished the Agent all information sought including subject's birth data.

This pretext illustrates the method of putting the subject on the defensive. This is effective if not overdone.

- b. During a loyalty-type investigation, it became necessary to establish the degree of association between the subject of

the inquiry and his father, a communist. The father did not reside with or in the vicinity of the son. The son was known to have served in the armed forces during World War II and to have been wounded. A pretext telephone call was made to the father at which time the Agent advised [redacted]

[redacted] The resulting conversation accomplished the investigative goal of this pretext.

- c. An American citizen, who was issued a passport not valid for travel to China, was determined to have traveled to that country where he attended the Asian and Pacific Regions Peace Conference, Peiping, China. During the investigation, it became pertinent to determine subject's travel intentions at the time he obtained his passport. Following subject's return to the United States, members of the press were afforded an opportunity to interview this individual about his trip to China. Agent learned of this. [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] Newspaper accounts of subject's statements were obtained.

- d. An unknown male contact of a Soviet official was surveilled to a large and fashionable apartment house where he was observed to speak with the doorman before entering. In order to identify this contact, the Agent [redacted]

[redacted]

- e. The following pretext shows the advantage of capitalizing on situations involving subjects:

A subject of a security case had recently been hospitalized as a result of having been found unconscious on the street. Hospital records indicated subject had been drunk and suffered body bruises as a result of "passing out." Office files reflected subversive information about a person with the same name as the subject; however, it was not known if the information definitely pertained to subject. To resolve this situation, subject was interviewed by Agents [redacted]

b7E

[redacted] This pretext interview provided sufficient background information to establish that the subversive information in question actually pertained to subject.

- f. In an espionage case, an unknown woman contacted a foreign official. A recording of the conversation was made. The conversation indicated the need to identify the woman and institute an investigation of her activities. Through subsequent investigation, a suspect was developed; a pretext telephone call was made by an Agent to the female suspect, who lived in the headquarters city, during which a tape recording was made. A comparison of this recording with the recording of the contact's conversation with the official determined that the suspect was the woman in question. \*

\*The recording of the unknown woman's contact with the foreign official was made with the approval of the Attorney General. The recording of the conversation between the Agent and the female suspect is not a violation of criminal law according to a ruling of the Department of Justice since one of the parties to the call made the recording. There is a Federal Communications Commission administrative ruling which requires that a tone-warning signal be heard every fifteen seconds during interstate and foreign calls where such a call is being recorded by one party without the knowledge and consent of the other party. The Department of Justice has ruled that even though no tone signal is used on an interstate or foreign call there is still no violation of criminal law. (See instructions regarding prior Bureau authority in matters concerning the recording of telephone conversations.)

A pretext telephone call to a suspect for the purpose of allowing a victim or other person to hear the suspect's voice has been used to good advantage in criminal cases as well as security matters.

One office learned about a new organization having been established within its territory. Little was known about the organization except the identity of one person who was believed to be an officer. Agent wrote a pretext letter to this person [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] This b7E  
letter was [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Approximately one month later, literature concerning the organization was received through the post-office box. This literature identified the head of the organization, set forth the aims and purposes of the organization, and generally served as a starting point for additional investigation.

2. Determining Employment

Ascertaining the employment of a subject is one of the most common investigative objectives; however, it is also one of the easier facts to establish by means other than pretext. Because

of this and the fact that many of the pretexts cited in other portions of this study would be suitable for determining a subject's employment, some of the more common pretexts, such as the insurance salesman or credit inquiry, are not being mentioned here.

When the subject's residence is known but his employment is unknown, the following pretexts have been used successfully:

b7E

a. Agent, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] This pretext is usually successful because subject is anxious to clear himself and he will volunteer information in an effort to do so. As subject furnishes information to prove he is not the person involved, the Agent can expand his inquiry to obtain from subject [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] This indicates to subject that he has been cleared, and the pretext will come to a logical conclusion.

b. Investigation of an espionage suspect revealed he had applied for employment at a defense plant. Subsequent physical surveillance failed to establish whether this suspect was hired or was still seeking employment. It was known that subject had received some unemployment benefits. It was desired to know the suspect's status; therefore, suspect was telephonically

contacted by an Agent under the guise of [redacted]  
[redacted] Agent  
pointed out that [redacted]  
[redacted]

### 3. Locating Subjects

- a. The Los Angeles office had been unable to determine the whereabouts of a security subject through the usual methods. Agent [redacted]  
[redacted] The Agent replied that it was of extreme importance and of a highly confidential nature; whereupon subject's mother furnished subject's telephone number in Los Angeles.
- b. In a case where a secret indictment had been returned, subject was believed to be in Portland, Oregon; however, there were several possible addresses involved. There was reason to believe subject would flee if he heard about any inquiry made at any one of his addresses; therefore, the problem was to determine subject's whereabouts without the subject becoming aware of our interest. It was decided that the Portland office switchboard operator on duty should call each one of the possible addresses of subject at which time she would [redacted]  
[redacted] When the subject was reached at one of the addresses, the operator told the subject that [redacted]  
[redacted] Agents waiting in the vicinity were notified by radio, and subject was taken into custody.
- c. A security subject was placed under physical surveillance upon his arrival at an airport. From the airport, subject was



surveilled to his father's residence. Thereafter, he left his father's home by car for an unknown destination. Because of certain elusive maneuvers, the surveillance was lost. One of the Agents on this surveillance telephoned the home of the subject's father. Under the pretense of being an employee of [redacted]

[redacted] he inquired if he could speak to subject to see if subject could [redacted] The subject's father furnished the telephone number where subject could be reached; the field office furnished the address; and the surveillance was resumed. To protect the pretext, the Agent subsequently called the subject's father and explained that [redacted]

b7E

The basic pretext used in the above example is particularly effective where the telephone call can actually be made from an airport or railroad station due to the characteristic background sounds which can be heard by the person called. This same basic pretext has been used in connection with fugitive cases where a call was made to a friend or relative who was believed to have knowledge of subject's whereabouts.

The Agent advises [redacted]

[redacted] he would like to talk to subject. A call of this nature imparts a certain urgency which tends to make the pretext a success. In less heavily populated areas, it is especially important to have correct information regarding train schedules, since the person called may have this knowledge.

The use of a [ ] or [ ] as a "prop" has been of considerable assistance in identifying and locating suspects and subjects in heavily populated, lower-income neighborhoods. Pretexts of this type have been devised based on accident claims, local relief, tax refunds, serviceman's allowance to dependents, terminal leave pay, unemployment insurance, or insurance dividends. The "prop" [ ] was exhibited by Agents at the most opportune time during the pretext. Agents have observed that the [ ] often made the difference between success and failure.

- d. During a fugitive investigation, Agents determined from officials of Western Union that a woman had just telephoned asking if there was a money order for subject. When advised that there was none, the woman said she would call back later. Upon determining this, the Agents [ ] [ ] Subject subsequently called Western Union, [ ] [ ] Subject appeared and was apprehended.

In another office where a similar situation developed, Agents [ ] which resulted in subject's capture within 46 minutes after receipt of the lead in that office. This [ ]

**B. Pretexts and Covers to Gain Vantage Points**

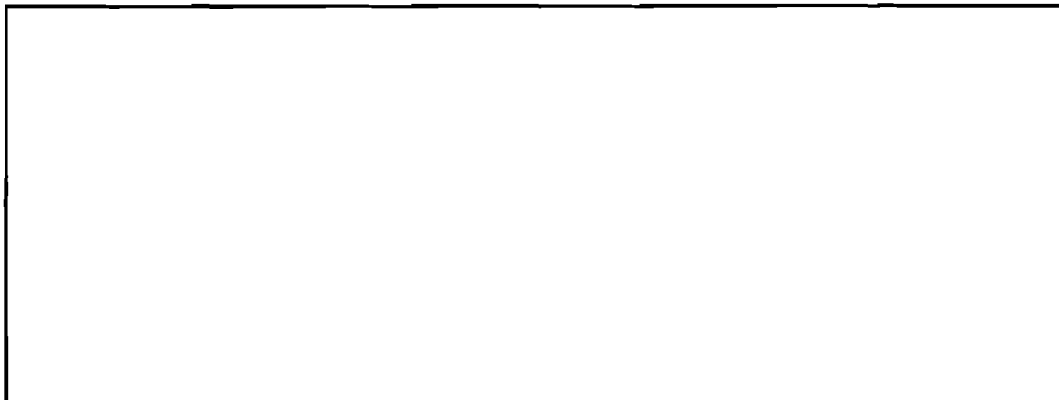
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**1. Gaining Access to Property**

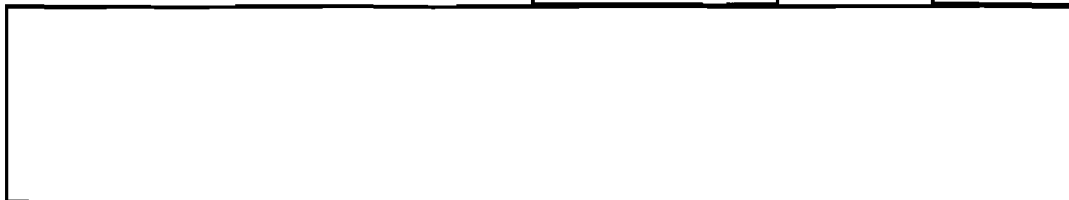
- a. In the situation where it is desired to obtain a duplicate key for a locked vantage point, but it is not advisable to request cooperation of the superintendent of the building, a pretext has been used successfully to obtain a duplicate of the master key. Agents enlist the cooperation of [redacted] [redacted] On the day the pretext is to be used, two Agents [redacted]

[redacted] These Agents can then return to the Bureau car and in a matter of minutes make a wax impression or photograph the key with a fingerprint camera.

- b. In another instance, a key was deemed necessary to use an uninhabited space for a vantage point. Although there was no derogatory information available concerning the superintendent or owner of the building, it was desired to conceal the true purpose for obtaining a key; therefore, Agents contacted the [redacted]



Gaining access to hotel rooms and closets presents a variety of problems; however, one pretext which has been used successfully in smaller hotels is to have Agents [redacted] pretext. [redacted]



- c. When Agents learned that a suspect in a theft of Government property case was an amateur magician and musician and frequently entertained, they contacted him under the pretense of [redacted]. As a result, the suspect invited the Agents to his home where he advised that [redacted].



[redacted] On the basis of this information, a search warrant was issued and the subject was taken into custody.

- d. In connection with the investigation of the International Workers Order, it was desired to attend a closed meeting to be held in Washington, D. C. The meeting was to be attended by International Workers Order delegations from various cities.

One Agent [REDACTED]

2. Observing Subjects

- a. A number of security subjects had to be personally observed by an Agent; however, the places of employment and residence were not conducive to physical surveillance. Agent

[REDACTED]

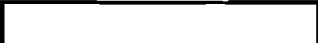
[REDACTED] This pretext provided close observation of the subjects and was never questioned by any of the subjects.

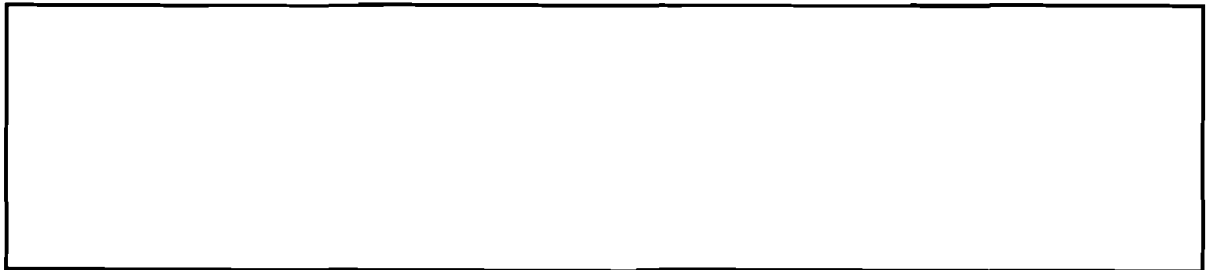
[REDACTED]

- b. In another office where difficulty has been encountered in observing security subjects, Agents have contacted subjects under the pretext of

[REDACTED]



Subjects contacted through this pretext were receptive and usually  Subjects can be questioned about other



Some additional pretexts used to observe and photograph subjects are set out in the study under the section "Photographing Subjects."

3. Gaining Vantage Point Through Cover

The need to observe an area from a vantage point, to get in close proximity to a building, or to observe the layout of the interior of a building, and to do any one of these without drawing attention, is the type of problem which arises frequently in connection with payoffs, espionage meets, subversive meetings, arrests, and raids. Almost every conceivable cover has been used by Agents in solving this type of problem. In rural or remote sections of the country, Agents disguised as hunters or fishermen

have been able to approach and arrest a subject without losing the element of surprise. Agents have posed as bill collectors, taxicab drivers, truck drivers, deliverymen, elevator operators, waiters, salesclerks, hotel clerks, real-estate agents, building inspectors, claim adjusters, surveyors, telephone men, assessors, tax collectors, food and drug inspectors, construction workers, bricklayers, plasterers, painters, iron workers, public-opinion pollers, laborers, and last, and least, as bums.

b7E

The following are cited as examples of covers which have been used to good advantage:

- a. A Bureau car made up to look like [redacted] [redacted] has been used to help Agents observe in an area without creating any suspicion. This pretext makes it possible to linger in areas where an ordinary surveillance would be too obvious. It also allows Agents to maneuver with ease to the most advantageous observation position since the Agent [redacted]

The use of a female employee of the Bureau as [redacted]

[redacted] might be more effective in some instances.

b.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] This will not only give the driver a little more time to observe in the area, but will present an opportunity for [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

c. In connection with the investigation of a Communist Party front group, it was necessary to observe the doorway of a building where the front group was to hold a meeting.

[REDACTED]

it was decided to utilize this cover. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] An Agent in a vantage position on the sidewalk was able to closely observe persons entering and leaving the meeting place. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

C. Photographing Subjects

1.

An Agent [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] used the pretext [REDACTED] to gain access and photograph subjects.

The camera used was [REDACTED]

The guise of being [REDACTED] has also been used to obtain a photograph of subject.



2. The problem in another instance was to personally observe and photograph a number of security subjects living in several apartment houses all under the same management. During interview of the superintendent of one of the apartment houses, it was determined that the management was contemplating a change to natural gas for cooking facilities. With the cooperation of each building superintendent concerned, the Agent was able to enter the apartments in question, while subjects were home, under the pretext of [redacted]

[redacted] Agent personally observed subjects and obtained good physical descriptions of them. In connection with several of these subjects, Agent was able to obtain good photographs using the [redacted] camera [redacted]

3. An Agent assigned to the investigation of the Chinese Youth Club in New York City noted photographs of this Club in a leading magazine. He determined from the photographer for the magazine that no difficulty had been encountered in taking the photographs. Agent [redacted] from the New York office proceeded to the Chinese Youth Club. Utilizing the pretext of [redacted] they took all photographs desired.

4. The New Orleans office had the problem of obtaining photographs of a number of Negro security subjects who resided in a rural area. These subjects rarely left their community. Investigation determined that many of these subjects congregated in the vicinity of a country store on Sunday mornings. The store was across the road from a church which was a landmark in the community. An Agent [redacted] was successful in obtaining excellent photographs on the pretense of [redacted]

[redacted] To support this pretense, [redacted]

### III. PRETEXTS SUITABLE TO PARTICULAR SITUATIONS

Pretexts contrived on the basis of a particular situation, whether the situation relates to the subject directly or indirectly, have an excellent chance of being successful because they tie in with something familiar to the subject.

#### A. Pretexts Relating to Subject's Activities, Interests, or Property

These pretexts are designed to play upon the situations which are of concern to the subject or which would appeal to the subject because of his likes or dislikes. For example, if a subject is unemployed but desires employment, a pretext [redacted] [redacted] has a particular appeal to subject. If a subject is seeking a loan or credit or has an extraordinary interest in clothes or automobiles, such situations should be considered when devising a pretext. Some pretexts of this type are as follows:

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1. Where a subject had recently married, an Agent [redacted]  
[redacted]

In this case, Agent telephonically contacted subject at her place of employment to ascertain her residence address. During the pretext call, Agent explained the ostensible purpose of his call

[redacted]  
[redacted] Subject indicated an interest and readily disclosed her residence address. To follow-through, Agent

[redacted]

2. During the early development of a security informant, who had had no prior connection with the Communist Party, Agents of one office felt that the informant could best penetrate the Party movement through the arts or through a Party member with a "soft heart." The Agents decided to put informant in contact with a woman Party member who was a communist writer of some renown and a press director in the Party. Informant contacted this Party member while acting as a door-to-door salesperson. During the contact, informant mentioned she had heard of the Party member and asked if she would be kind enough to look at some of the informant's poetry. Through this pretext contact informant has become well acquainted with the Party member and has been able to furnish valuable information. b7E

3. In connection with a move to new office space by a subject business, it was determined that employees of this business were reviewing a mass of material in their files with a view to destroying that which was no longer desired. After study of the operation, Agents [redacted]

[redacted]

4. In the case of a Communist Party member who had possession of certain records of the Party, it was determined that he was planning to move to another city. Investigation determined the identity of the moving company, and, after discreet inquiries were made, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

and thus, were able to closely observe subject's new living quarters.

5. Where a subject has recently moved into an area and telephone service has been applied for or installed, a pretext telephone call can be made for the ostensible reason of [REDACTED]

The type of information to be requested in this pretext is limited b7E

to that which the local telephone company maintains in its files or could logically be expected to maintain.

6. A deserter was known to have visited his aunt's home in Chicago on several occasions. The aunt had been interviewed but was uncooperative. During the course of a check on the aunt's residence, Agents observed subject's car parked in the block. To avoid any obstruction tactics by the aunt during the apprehension, one Agent telephoned the aunt's home under the guise of [REDACTED] Agent advised the aunt [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] As Agent completed the call, deserter and his aunt were noted running out of the house. When apprehended, the deserter shouted, "Let me go, my car's on fire!"

A similar ruse involving a subject's car has been used. An Agent who has removed his hat, tie, and suit coat in order to make it

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Once on

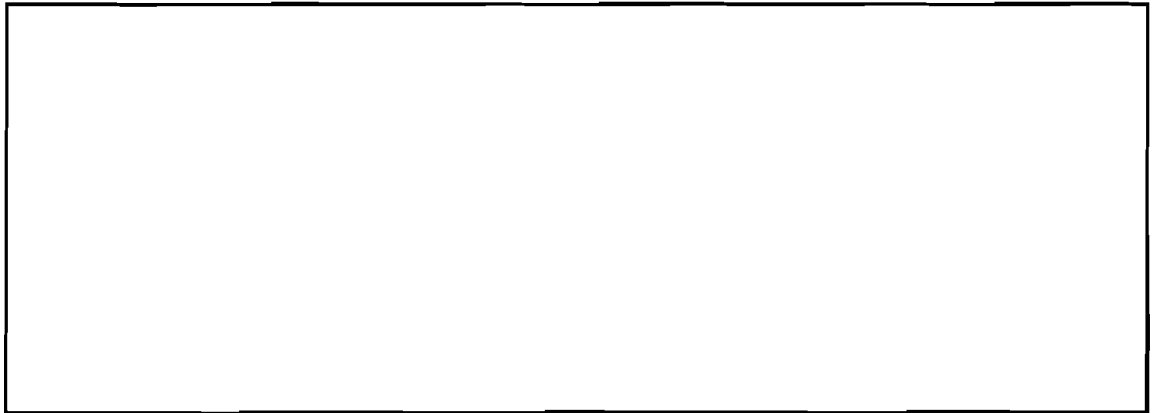
the street, the subject can be apprehended with relative ease since his mind will probably be preoccupied with the "damage." This pretext should not be employed where the subject has a good view of his car from his residence.

7. It is frequently necessary to establish if a particular individual who is known to have been a Federal employee in the past, is presently employed by the Government. To accomplish this, an Agent contacts the subject telephonically advising that he is b7E

[REDACTED]

A case where a pretext communication was used to good advantage involved a security subject who had been contacted by Agents but refused to be interviewed. This subject had been a member of a

communist front organization, but was not known to be a member of the Communist Party. To stimulate subject's desire to cooperate, Agents prepared a post card stamped with the return address of the



**B. Pretexts Based Upon a Situation at a Particular Time**

b7E

1. Two Agents were attempting to photograph a security subject but had not had any success. At the time, the area was experiencing a heat wave so Agents approached subject [redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted] Subject was willingly photographed in connection with the interview.
2. In certain areas, particularly large urban areas, contests [redacted]  
[redacted] Agents have determined the contest procedures involved and thereafter utilized this information in connection with a pretext.

A pretext of this type should only be used during the pertinent period of the contest in question and should provide a means of eliminating the person called from winning a prize.

3. In urban areas preceding the time of an election, it has been found very effective to telephone the subject using the pretext of

The

The Agent

advises the subject [redacted] and after obtaining the background and any other information sought, he advises that the subject will be considered for the job.

Before using this pretext, an Agent should determine the procedures

[redacted]  
of local officials, this type of law lends itself to the use of a pretext for obtaining background information.