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Olmstead v. U. S., 277 U.S. 439, 485 (1927)

c. There is the danger that the United States Government will become an unwitting accomplice to criminal acts and that criminal figures will take advantage of their association with the government to advance their own projects and interests.

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d. There is a fundamental impropriety in selecting persons because they are skilled at performing deeds which the laws of our society forbid.

The use of underworld figures by the United States Government for their criminal skills raises moral problems comparable to those recognized by Justice Brandeis in a different context five decades ago:

Our government is the potent, the omnipresent teacher. For good or for ill, it teaches the whole people by its example. Crime is contagious. If the Government becomes a lawbreaker, it breeds contempt for law; it invites every man to become a law unto himself. To declare that in the administration of the criminal law the end justifies the means -- to declare that the Government may commit crimes in order to secure the conviction of the private criminal -- would bring terrible retribution. Against this pernicious doctrine this Court should resolutely set its face.