

Dear Dave,

1/28/91

This is what I hope will turn out to be a progress report and a request for a favor, the latter first.

I've accumulated close to 150 additional pages of reminiscences, too big and too costly to do on our aging, slow and costly per-copy machine. I'll take them into town along with another job of more than 500 pages and have both done commercially. The xeroxing we've been doing, as Lil has pointed out, is getting to represent a real cost to us. So the request is that if you want to keep these pages that you please make a copy and mail it to my friend Sol ^{Rabkin} ~~Rabkin~~, 75 Henry Street, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201. Thanks.

Several week ago I had a call from a man once a very good friend but from whom I'd not heard in a long time. One of his sons is ~~working~~ ^{working} on a book on which he thought I could be of some help, ~~including~~ including in getting FBI records. They came down Friday, from New York, and returned Saturday. I'll go into the unexpected developments after ~~telling~~ telling you about him and the fine compliment he paid me, the second I remember, the other also prized.

Richard Gullen had two boys, about 5 and 6, when we first met. He was then well enough off to have a fine apartment on Central Park West. He had been general counsel for Dell and for Grove Press and had gone into business for himself. One was what I think was a publishing partnership, Parallax Press. It published Oswald in New Orleans but under the Canyon name because Pocket Books, which distributed for Parallax, refused to distribute Oswald. I think you may agree that kept it from being a potential best-seller. If I'd known of this in advance I'd have told them it would not work. Pocket is a Simon and Schuster subsidiary and I've told ^{you} that that the man who then owned both, Boris Shimkin, was reasonable worried about being added to the indictments over the book "Calories Don't Count." There had already been indictments. Pocket was very honest with me and made real efforts to be helpful with Whitewash in 1965.

We stayed friends and I used to stay with him when I was in New York. As he prospered he moved to so expensive an apartment that Les Payne was impressed when he met me there once when I was staying there. It is opposite the Museum of Natural History, a short distance from Central Park West. Two storeys, large rooms, even a private elevator.

I've forgotten what prompted the exclamation, but he once told me, "you are the most conservative man I've ever met." This did not relate to politics. He'd found that no matter how it seemed, everything I'd told him was understated, and these were controversial things. He'd found I was always accurate. Of course I liked and remembered that!

When I visited I used to tell his boys stories, about animals, about farm life, about things strange to them living in the heart of so big a city, and they liked them, one more than the other, I now don't remember which but I think the one who did not come with them. Both boys are now lawyers, the other one having invented and made a success of a sports-related interest and this one turning to writing. His name is David.

I was able to be of some help to David, including by introducing him to Lesar because to a degree they have a common interest that is not of special interest to you and me.

It turned out that David also has some interests in the "King assassination. He and Dick were really impressed by the size and content of the materials I've collected. And Dick and I talked about other things while David copied what he wanted.

It was all very pleasant, including even supper at Hana's, where to Dick's taste Everett and Nicole extended themselves. Dick, who eats in the finest restaurants not only in New York, comparing that Oriental food with Chinese, said it was better than ~~what~~ he'd ever had in any New York Chinese restaurant. He especially liked what happens with us from time to time, Nicole thinks of something we've not had of Korean food and with~~e~~ out us ordering it and without it appearing on the bill, she sends these extras to us. I think this was a new experience to Dick.

I've forgotten what started it, but they were both interested in the "King assassination, they were impressed by the records, and somewhat excited when they learned I'd started a second book on it that I'd laid aside awaiting the results of that decade-long FOIA litigation. So, I showed David where what I'd written was, he brought that large box up and skimmed it, and exclaimed "You have more than 500 pages done!"

I'll come to the point in a hurry. They will help me complete the book, take care of cutting and editing, etc., and today the other xeroxing job is making a copy of this unread manuscript for them. In addition, Dick will pay for a research assistant for me! I did not ask it. When I told him that the difficulties of using my own files is what kept me from completing the book after the litigation was, for all practical purposes, over, and he thought of it.

What I real, a genuine friend! What remains to be seen is how much I'm up to and what quality there is to what I can now write.

We had an early breakfast at the Red Horse on Saturday. Dick had showered and shaved first so we breakfasted alone, and chatted more. When we finished and he went to get David to bring him here, he turned to me and said something I'd never been told in all my years, "Harold, you are a lovable man." Of course I liked that!

We had been talking about the book, The King Conspiracies, much time has passed since I'd drafted what is on paper, I thought about it on the way home, and before they got here had an unread page of a new beginning. It is along the lines I recommended to both you and Jerry, untold stories about the FBI. They made a copy because they liked it, before I'd read it, and after they left Saturday and yesterday morning it grew to ~~be~~ 3,600-3,500 words, now read and ready for xeroxing. I'll send it with the existing ms.

But the fact is that that did tire me much. I tried to nap Saturday afternoon and could not but did a little yesterday. I do feel wearier daily. I think that in part this comes from a lack of physical activity, in part because while I sleep well I cannot stay asleep long enough.

I have so little recollection of the existing one I have no reason to believe that anything but the content is good and I can't evaluate how worthwhile some of that may be today until I read it, which I've never done. As usual, Bill was retyping while I was writing. But from the working title, I know it included the FBI. It is ^{IN} "The King Conspiracies."

What I wrote was written long before I filed my King FOIA suit. And did I learn beginning with it and from what I got in it! *I was also ill and very weak then*

So, as I now see it, and I've not even sat down to try to plan the rest, it will be a book as much on the FBI as on the King assassination.

The new beginning is 100% FBI and when I've finished with it ^{it} ~~it~~ still will be 100% FBI. The title I've given this new beginning is "The FBI Nobody Knows."

I plan to complete it and get the draft to Dick and David before reading what is on paper. Of what is on paper I have enough of a recollection to say that it is a first-person account of Jim and my experiences ^{with and} up to the evidentiary hearing.

It turns out that Dick thinks he can help my Swedish reporter friend who is doing a book on the Palme assassination. I asked him, I'll have to write Gunnar now.

It also turns out that Dick had some experiences with Lifton that I'll encapsulate. All the major reprinters would not touch Best Evidence, rather unusual when it was on the best-seller list. Dell then ~~contracted~~ contracted it and printed some copies, having given Lifton a relatively ^m small advance. (Lifton's agent had been Dick's assistant at Dell.) Someone at Dell, considering the book too thick for their kind of printing and customers, asked him to arrange to take it off their hands and it is Dick who placed it at Carroll & Graf.

First he said that he found Lifton kind of flakey and then he told me this story. Lifton was so obnoxious that when he was ^{living} with his parents on Long Island they tried to get him out of the house and when all other efforts failed they simply changed the locks so he could not get in! If I remember correctly, Dick comes from that area and went to school with Lifton's father.

So, aside from weariness and what it may limit, I feel rather good about all of this. And I think that my friend Joe will like this new beginning of The King Conspiracies.

Best to you all,

Harold