

20 October 1968

Dear Sylvia:

Please pardon the long silence and the delay in letting you know the photos of Allegra arrived. She is beautiful and has the sweetest face. I could squeeze her to pieces - the same feeling our two fur-people evoke. I do love cat-folk. Somewhere there is an envelope with pictures of George Henry and Pichit (of this I am positive since I carefully put it there so I would know exactly where it is) and I cannot locate it to save me. Soon as I discover the pictures again they will be on their way together with your slides of Allegra.

Strange things are happening here and I am more than a little disturbed. It may be there is nothing to be concerned over but, as I have said before, I am not well enough informed to make any valid judgment. Here is what has been going on.

A Jack Wade, identifying himself as a reporter with the St. Petersburg Times (I did verify this), phoned to ask about contacting Ed Horsey. He said my name and phone number had been given to him by someone whose identity he could not disclose. I told him I would relay his interest to Mr. Horsey the next time I heard from him and did so. Subsequently, Ed said Mr. Wade had promised to read to me any article he wrote before publication but did not say what he, Ed, had said.* I have heard nothing more about this.

Then there was a call the first of last week from a man who said he was Jack Senn, a former newsman from Detroit, with an interest in the JFK assassination and a desire to do some research. He said Ralph Edwards told him about me. Of course, this threw me and I expressed surprise and disbelief that Ralph Edwards had ever known of my existence. After a lot of dialogue, he told me it was the Ralph Edwards that is writing a book on the assassination while visiting St. Petersburg. He said Edwards had told him to contact me since I was coordinating research for him. He gave me a phone number and address and said I should check on him for reliability.

I asked a friend to check the number in the criss-cross directory and the city directory. Both references show the phone listed to a woman and the city directory indicates she lives there alone. No listing for a Jack Senn in either.

Right after this, Ed Horsey phoned to prepare me for a call from Mr. Senn and to ask me to check on him if I could since he was suspicious about the whole thing. He said Senn phoned him and asked to speak to Ralph Edwards. They went through the same bit of confusion over the identity of Ralph Edwards. Senn said he had received the Edwards name and phone number from someone at the employment office. Since Ed did not understand the whole thing, he said Edwards was out of town and that Senn should phone me. Ed said he did this so we could learn more of what it was about.

About an hour later Ed called back to say he had received yet another call asking for Ralph Edwards. This time he asked the caller to wait a moment and set up his tape recorder with a telephone pick-up. This caller told him how unhealthy it was to probe into the assassination and promised that if he did not drop his investigation he would be liquidated. He played the tape for me and it was no voice I could recognize. When Ed told the caller he was going to report the threat to the police, the caller said to go ahead, that it would do no good since the police had the same interest as the caller.

*Ed said Wade told him he had been in touch with Kerry Thornley and that Thornley had said Ed was working on the diary kept by Gelber in Dade County (Miami) in 1963 - the one Garrison has been trying to get. Ed insists he has told no one except me

that he has been in touch with Gelber about it. He told me over the phone. I had told a friend in California by phone the night before Wade said he talked to Kerry Thornley and I know the friend did not repeat it to anyone at all. I believe I told you also - again, by phone.

Now back to the sequence of events.

~~Yesterday~~ - day before yesterday, Jack Senn phoned again to see if I had heard from Ralph Edwards yet. I asked him about the phone number and address he had given me and he said the woman was his wife and that they had just not bothered to change the listing for the phone or that in the city directory. I asked him more about how he came up with the name of Ralph Edwards. He said his wife is a sorority sister of a woman with the Florida State Employment Office and his wife was given the information at a meeting. Ed Horsey states he has never been in any contact with FSEO and still cannot figure the Edwards angle.

Yesterday Senn called to say he had called Alcock of Garrison's office to arrange for furnishing Garrison with photostats of the Gelber diary upon assurance that all names will be withheld from any public releases. He said he told Alcock the copies would be sent by me. He said he told Alcock that Ed Horsey was obtaining a copy of the Miami tape and the photostats from Gelber for me so I could send them as soon as I received confirmation that the names in them would be withheld.

In view of the fact that Gelber had refused to let Garrison have the diary and that Governor Kirk had backed him in this refusal, I asked Mr. Senn if all of this would not perhaps place me in some jeopardy. Senn said that Edwards had told him it had been cleared with Gelber.

Along about here, if not before, you wonder why I did not protest the use of my name. I started to and then decided to go along for a bit more to see what was behind the whole thing. I do resent being involved but, since I seem to be, I want to find out the reason.

Yesterday was a shambles anyway. At the southeast corner of the house we have a beautiful hibiscus tree, about 30 feet tall. We had such a tree. It must have a dozen 5-6" trunks. It became a casualty of Gladys, being left lying on the roof of that corner of the house. Bob was trying to remove it and I was trying to do my bit to help by telling him exactly how to do it. He expressed his appreciation by asking why I did not go back into the house and let him do it. Husbands just don't seem to care for such wifely assistance.

We have a big screened porch on the back of the house and it resembled a swimming pool more than a porch. All the pollution in the air over Florida was washed out and deposited in that water. I swear it. Nasty, greasy black dirt. So, I was in the middle of trying to bale and shovel out the porch when Senn phoned. I should have phoned Horsey immediately to ask just what was going on but I didn't. Besides, Bob was just about to cause part of the tree to fall on the phone line which would have brought any telephone conversation to an abrupt halt. The line held, by the way, to my amazement and Bob's satisfaction.

Within a half hour of Senn's call the phone rang again and I answered. The voice of the caller sounded like it was coming from Mars. It was a man who said he was Edward Horsey and demanded to know if he was speaking to Mrs. Hartmann. Ed always identifies himself as Ed and calls me Helen. Then he wanted to know if I could hear him - I had kept shouting "hello" and saying the voice was very weak. When I said I could hear, he asked when I was sending the material to Garrison. I did not respond to the question but asked if he was at home, saying I would call him and perhaps get a better connection. He said he had to know right then, exactly when was I going to send the material to Garrison. Again, I asked if he was at home so I could call him.

Then he got a little huffy and demanded that I tell him when I was going to send the information to Garrison. I replied that the connection was terrible and that I absolutely refused to discuss anything over such a connection. He hung up. And then someone else hung up. I heard two distinct disconnects. Oh, yes, he had said he was not at home and would not be at home for several hours and that I could not call him back at home.

So I phoned Ed Horsey's number and he answered. I told him about both Senn and the call about material for Garrison. His mother verified that he had not used the phone. And I already knew it was not his voice.

I asked what was going on with reference to what Senn had related to me. He said Gelber was willing to make the photostats available under the conditions related by Senn and asked if I could get them to Garrison, along with a copy of the tape. I said I could and asked why it had to be done that way. No clear answer to that one.

I do not know what is going on, by whom, or for what reason. I have made up my mind that if any of this material gets into my hands I will copy it and return it - not send it to Garrison. I do know that my telephone is tapped by someone. I do not know by whom. It has been for some time. I proved this to my own satisfaction by giving false information on a couple of occasions, deliberately, and then learning that some action had been taken that could only have been based on what I said on my phone.

Here is some of what I have been told by Ed Horsey. The Miami tape is supposed to have the voice of "The National Leader" of the Constitutional Party for States' Rights, the Florida name for the National States' Rights Party. Ed says the name of this man is Strom Thurmond. One of the men involved in this, and named in the Gelber diary is Mollina, first name Gus. He is also one of the men shown in the "Allen" photograph which purports to show a couple of men being arrested on the grassy knoll. A Dr. Murray, of Miami, was the head of the CPSR. His name has also been linked to the rackets in Dade County. A Bill Summerset is an undercover agent mentioned in the diary, his cover broken by Garrison publicity. (This name was in one of the news items datelined New Orleans.) Another name in the diary is Joseph Milter - who or what he is or was is not known to me.

Ed is engaged in trying to learn more about names of those who were part of these states' rights groups in 1963. He has contacted Dr. William Douglass of Sarasota, top muckraker of "Let Freedom Ring" telephone messages. He has asked Jack Senn to contact Phil LeBus of the Christian Youth Corps, a neo-Nazi outfit with headquarters in St. Petersburg. This last bunch of goons play dirty, real dirty. A year or two back a man was found hanged in a closet and, while there was no hard evidence, the police suspected the CYC. It is strictly WASP, even going so far as to convince its followers that Christ was not a Jew after all. Senn is supposed to have an appointment with LeBus today.

I do not know of anyone here that I can truly trust. I do not know what I should do. It might be wisest to drop all contacts here. On the other hand, there may be something I could learn that would be of value. I sure wish you were closer than you are.

Got to stop and post this. Wanted to get it in the mail yesterday but trees and water took precedence. Gladys blew a lot and dumped water but did us no damage other than that to the hibiscus tree.

If you think I should disengage myself from whatever is going on, I will gladly do so. And if you don't and anything unpleasant results, I will not blame you. I do need some advice from somewhere.

With love for you and the fuzzy,

