

February 11, 1986

Dear Sylvia,

Thanks for your letters of 1/31, 2/1, and 2/5. It's good to be hearing from you regularly again.

Thanks for sending the original ~~xxx~~ version of the Charns article. It does make more sense than the NYT version, not in the least by having an author and specifying the FBI file in question.

I had heard through Robert that Jim Lesar knew or knew of the author of the NYT article, and thought he was more a FOIA buff than an assassination buff. If he is interested in pursuing some of the points he raised in his article, I would be glad to be in touch with him. As you know, the ~~xxxxxx~~ relationship between the FBI and the Commission was a special interest of mine for a long time. Feel free to tell Charns about me (and/or ~~xxxx~~ EOC); I've enclosed an extra carbon of this letter in case you want to send it to him.

As you know, there were many interesting documents in the big 1977 FBI release about their work for the WC. Earlier, I collected quite a few relevant items from the internal WC memos at the Archives. My 1972 manuscript is quite out of date now, since it was based on the WC's view of the relationship, but I think it stands up quite well; someone could make an interesting academic project out of comparing the WC and FBI records of the same issues, meetings, etc., but I don't expect to get around to doing that myself. (I don't think many people still need to be convinced that the investigation was badly flawed.) I haven't distributed by manuscript generally, but I would be glad to send Mr. Charns a copy, if he is interested in further work on these issues.

I don't recall seeing a document about Hoover lunching with Warren the day before his ~~xxxx~~ testimony, but it doesn't surprise me; I would guess that session served as the usual pre-testimony preparation ~~with~~ most witnesses went through with one of the staff lawyers. I noticed that Sam Stern - ~~xxxx~~ the ~~xxxxxx~~ junior lawyer ~~xxxx~~ who knew the most about FBI-related issues, and who knew that the FBI had been less than totally forthcoming - was not even present when Hoover testified. Of course, the questioning, such as it was, was reserved for the bigwigs. (Jackie got similar special treatment - Warren took her testimony at her home.)

I remember also being impressed that, a week or so before Hoover testified, LBJ basically rehired him, waiving the usual retirement rule and, of course, ~~xxxxxx~~ praising him highly in public. No ~~xxxxxx~~ junior lawyer was going to give him a rough time after that! I have the exact text, and the date, in my chronological file ~~x~~ on the FBI and the WC.

I'm not looking for more work at the moment, but at some point I would be interested in seeing any Warren/FBI documents of special interest to us. (AARC might want to pay for a copy of the file.)

By the way, the document which N Charns apparently got from Harold, talking about "subsequent preparation of sex dossiers on critics of the probe," was discussed in EOC a couple of issues back; ~~xxxx~~ I'm pretty sure it is not an FBI document, as Harold has (I think) said, but a summary (and probably an inaccurate one) prepared by some ~~xxxxxx~~ Congressional staff.

I'm not sure I agree with Harold that Warren knew that the FBI was withholding. The staff certainly knew, and Warren should have known. My reading of various instances of FBI-WC tension is that the lower-level staff knew that they were not getting the cooperation they should have received, but that each decided that the factual issues involved were not central. (The FBI files on Ruby and Oswald, for example.)

The S.F. Examiner gave unusual play to this story. In an edition which I saw but did not buy, the ~~xxxxxx~~ headline was above the fold on page one, full width, big letters. I later checked the library, but they didn't have that edition.

I've made a note to pursue the Burkley matter with the JFK Library, but I won't rush that, since I think Manchester said that his files would be locked up until the ~~xxxx~~ death of the last ~~xxxxxx~~ Kennedy alive in 1963, or something like that.

I haven't had any contact with Chris Dodd's office since the HSCA. I have assumed that he is completely off the case. If you have any reason to think otherwise, please let me know. (E.g., if you know of anyone who has ~~been~~ been talking with his ~~people~~ people about the case.) And I don't recall any special interest on his part ~~in~~ in the medical evidence.

Here are the two letters I have written the ~~XX~~ JD in response to Hurt's book - on Burkley and Tippit. Feel free to distribute them as you see fit. My assumption has been that the only people who could get Burkley to talk are the Justice Department and ~~xxxx~~ journalists, and I'm working on one of the latter. (But he's still busy with Marilyn Monroe research.)

Also, I think Bud and Robert were interested in approaching Manchester on AARC's behalf.

On the Meagher-Feinman memo re Burkley: I would suggest just listing it in EOC (when I discuss Hurt's stuff on Burkley), for anyone who is interested either in Burkley in particular, or HSCA failures in general. If the HSCA had done the right thing, it would be a public document, along with Burkley's testimony. But if either of you is ~~hesitant~~ hesitant about this, I'll hold off until you say it's okay. As for giving it to specific people, just any journalist who wants to go after Burkley.

Maybe you would like to send a copy to the Justice Department, in any case?

My guess is that the approach most likely to produce a response is to emphasize that Burkley is in a position to rebut Lifton.

So far, no reviews of Henry's book, ~~x~~ other than the brief one in Publisher's Weekly.

I think the "useful comments" from various people which I referred to in my notes ~~xxxx~~ on Epstein's "Legend" were mostly oral. In any case, I don't ~~xxxx~~ have any of them in my Epstein/Legend file, other than the notes by Brad Sparks ~~xxxx~~ which I sent you.

I keep hearing from new ~~xxxx~~ people ~~xxx~~ about the case also. Some are collectors; many are quite young. There's even the ~~xx~~ occasional graduate student from England! The last time Luis Alvarez spoke with me, he asked when I was going to move on to ~~something~~ something else; I said, not until I clear off my desk. At this rate, that will take a while!

The enclosed "bow tie" article is for your Belin file.

With best regards,

*Paul*