

SM

January 2, 1978

Dear Jim,

Thanks for your letter of the 25th. When I can find a Xerox machine (today or tomorrow), I will send Sylvia and Mary your letter, the Daily News clip, all 59 pages of documents, and my list of these documents (#138-164). Notes will follow; soon, I hope.

Also, I am sending all 3 of you your list by serial number, annotated to give the corresponding PLH-AIB ~~xx~~ sequence number. As you can see, there are only a few items I do not yet have - serials 105.226G, 330, 372, 454 (which I have in my CD file) and 527. I'm not sure if #226G and 372 are worth sending, since I probably have the same information in CD's; use your own judgment. Also, from the 62 file, ~~212~~, 212, 243, 528B, 718 (is it different from 86-?), 2128, and the first unrecorded item. I would like all of these.

Also enclosed for all 3 of you - the pre-assassination items from Vol. 1 of the 105 file, except for 4 published reports: serial 16 (#23 in the CE 834 list), 28(41), 30(43), and 36A(52). [These omissions are respectively 11, 15, 8 and 3 pages, leaving 108 pre-assassination pages.]

I want to put selected items from my copy of Vol. 1-3 into the pipeline. But first: did you send Mary and Sylvia the "70 pages" (actually about 79 pages) which I selected from Vol. 1-3 and sent to you on 11/22? If not, let me know and I'll distribute copies.

Enclosed for the ~~x~~ AIB only - the first 6 inventory worksheets, which have essentially the same info as CE 834 (less, actually). That is what you wanted, isn't it?

Jim, are you ~~xx~~ sure you want the CIA's document disposition index? It's hardly worth the paper it's printed on. There is some interesting info on a few of the withheld items, but that's about it. The first 4 pages are enclosed, in case you haven't seen it. Before you confirm that you want the whole 300 ~~x~~ pages, you might want to see if the CIA will give you a ~~xxxx~~ free copy, ~~or~~ or if the copy filed with the court (Civil Action 75-897) is readily available for reference. Maybe we should discuss this a bit. If you want information on withheld items, the list they gave Bud (by accident?) of #522 thru 1129 (30 pp.) is quite ~~xx~~ useful. Enclosed is the list of the contents of my folder of guides to the CIA material. (MEF, SM also.) Please advise.

Of the items which were given to me in Vol. 1-3 and are now withheld: I'm sending all 3 of you ~~x~~ serials 74 and 88E, and MEF and SM serial 154D and the Archives version of serial 54R, the change of address ~~case~~<sup>case</sup>. (I would like a copy of what the FBI has released for the latter item. Any possibility of press interest in this?) Re 154D: when that ~~we~~ was given to me with no deletions, I suspected there had been a mistake.

Enclosed for the AIB only (subject to a request from others, of ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ course): my McDermid file (notes on some Chicago Defender articles on his law firm; CD 642, pp. 2-3; CD 653, p. 2; CD 735, p. 375-8; 4H241; my two letters to McDermid; notes on my conversation with him; and a legal citation (which I can't interpret further) establishing that McDermid's firm (note: not him personally) was involved in a Giancana case. (Note that E.B. Williams shows up later.) I've ~~XXXXXX~~ never distributed my notes on McDermid's meeting with me before; please handle with the greatest discretion. I think McD is probably quite clean in all this.

Some more comments on your letter: Serial 105-132, which you say has been referred to NSA, just might relate to LHO's name being on a CIA watch list for mail to the USSR. The Abzug Committee was looking into this some time ago, and I was told in September that the relevant reports (or hearings) were in galleys~~x~~. You may want to check with them about this.

Putting together serials 50 and 76 (items 139, 151), page 4: Hoover was asking why the pre-assassination reports (XKaack, DeBrueys) didn't mention LHO's "subversive" contacts in Mexico. That's a good question. I suppose if Hoover asks "why not", someone had to come up with an ~~xx~~ answer, and we should ~~xxxx~~ be on the lookout for it. (In the Inspection Division files?) This ~~XXXXXX~~ raises the kind of question that Sam Stern started to ~~xxx~~ get into back in 1964 (see my manuscript): everyone was talking about whether the FBI should have ~~xxx~~ warned the SS of LHO as a potential threat to JFK, but why wasn't the FBI investigation more active "in terms of their own direct responsibilities," or some language like that. (P. 6.14 of my manuscript.)

1/2/78

Before I forget: my manuscript went into a number of points of conflict between the FBI and the WC, using only the WC's files. I've seen FBI documents on one of those areas - the Hosty notebook entry. There should be a lot more. For example, is there anything helpful in the Ruby file about the FBI's reluctance to answer the WC's questions about his PCI ~~work~~ career? ~~Maybe~~ Maybe all that will be in the other 62 file (62-109090) to be released in the next batch. Anyway, we should look for ~~xxx~~ these things. Most prominently - around the time of the 1/24-1/27/64 executive sessions, there were some very touchy WC-FBI contacts on the LHO-informant problem. Aren't there memos in the 62-6 [62-109060] file? They certainly should be in the 62-9 file - and they could be quite ~~sensational~~ sensational, especially when combined with the executive session material and the documents I ~~xxx~~ cited in my manuscript. ~~That~~ That would ~~be~~ be a good direction to point our friends in the press.

~~It~~ One possibility to keep in mind: I ~~am~~ have been astounded, over the years, ~~xxx~~ by the amount of incriminating material Hoover ~~xxx~~ did put in writing. But, maybe the most sensitive stuff wasn't put in writing. That is, things may have been worse than we know even now, with COINTELPRO and all. ~~It~~ If we can't find any FBI memos on the LHO-informant problem, for example, ~~we~~ we'll have to think about what it all means.

In general: one thing that comes out in many ~~documents~~ documents in what a petty tyrant JEH must have been. That is, we knew it already, but seeing those marginal notes yourself certainly adds to the picture. The basic question is, how much did this "procedural" tyranny affect substantive matters. The ~~xxx~~ amusing document about the FBI agent decked by ~~the~~ the SS at Parkland has, I suspect, little substantive content. The suppression of the ~~LHO~~ LHO note to Hosty is a quite different story; but again, the motive may have been mainly keeping out of trouble with Hoover. I ~~xxx~~ suspect that the suppression of the Hosty notebook entry may have been that kind of internal FBI coverup, and that Hoover never got the full story.

One thing that is very striking in the documents you have sent is that there is next to nothing indicating that FBI people had the slightest interest in a ~~xxx~~ critical approach to the basic evidence. Bad as the Warren Commission was, the FBI was an order of magnitude worse. By now you should have received the "good points" file I selected at the Archives some years ago. What does it mean that no such memos were (apparently) being generated by the FBI? ~~Are~~ Are ~~they~~ they that dumb? Are they ordinarily so uninterested? It's hard to tell, but the implications - as to what kind of frameup could have gotten past the investigation - are clear. Perhaps the most striking document along these lines is #69 (62-2480), where Shaneyfelt claims not ~~xxx~~ to understand why the WC was concerned about the time interval between shots. I've always been skeptical of the claim of people like Belin and Specter that they were really willing to find a conspiracy; Belin said he was trying to prove that there had to be more than one gunman, etc. But, compared to the FBI, maybe a small dose of their academic approach was enough to make them feel that they were really hotshot investigators! Apalling!! Anyway, maybe we will eventually find out if the FBI was just reflecting Hoover's feelings, and his reluctance to pursue the loose ~~xxx~~ ends for the WC, or ~~whether~~ whether something more directly sinister was involved.

Your 1967 document (#157, from the Ruby file) really whetted my appetite. It's interesting in itself, revealing that Jack Anderson was going to the FBI with his impressions of Garrison. This document fleshes out the rather cryptic comments in the Schweiker Report about the FBI's concern about getting into a bad situation re Garrison. (The Schweiker people really had to interview Anderson! Did they?) What interests me is that when some more documents come out, we will see that the SR just skimmed the surface of the 1967 matter - at ~~xxx~~ least in certain areas, such the as Garrison connection. We know the SR was edited; I think we will find out that the report was even more selective than we thought. This will be a good area for filling in the press with what we know from newspaper ~~xxx~~ reports at the time, etc. Very heavy stuff. (As I mentioned, Jim, I reread your article on Roselli & c and ~~we~~ was re-convinced that that is where the action should be. I'll trade 39,900

pages of FBI stuff for the I.G. report any day!)

By the way, the Washington Post did report on this 1967 memo, a couple of weeks after the release, which does suggest a relatively high ~~xxx~~ level of interest. There was no byline, but (as I mentioned before) ~~xx~~ I think Lardner would be a good person to talk with.

Item 158 (Shanklin to ~~HW~~ HQ, 11/23) doesn't, offhand, turn me on all that much. Is ~~xxx~~ there anything we didn't already ~~ka~~ know? I'm not sure whether the number of photos (8) is higher than it should be (6?) or lower (as Mary pointed out, we now have more than 8 photos). I'm still convinced the Mexico stuff is important, but you know my frustrations in this ~~xxxxx~~ area. Still, where is the FBI's reaction to these photos being identified as Oswald? Didn't they want, and get, an~~x~~ explanation? Also, somewhere there have to be messages discussing the tape that was played in Dallas, which got mentioned in Hoover's letters to LBJ and Rowley. I guess that could be in the fully-deleted items you sent.

I think we should have ~~xx~~ a copy ~~xx~~ of serial 105-49J, just for the record, and so we can tell people exactly what was deleted. It certainly was released by accident before. I wonder what else they are sitting on so ~~x~~ completely that we don't have hints about it?

The first of the Hoover memos of 11/22 (#160, serial 55) strikes me as just a misfiled document. I ~~x~~ get the impression that Hoover's phone calls ~~xxx~~ were either taped or ~~xxxxxx~~ listened to, and that clerical people just typed up these memos later.

Item 162 (serial 56) is particularly interesting because "Mr. Rowley stated he was also thinking of subversive elements - Mexico and Cuba." Mexico?? This seems to be before LHO was arrested; certainly before they could have known about his activities in Mexico. Even the possibility that this was a typo (for "Russia") when the memo was being prepared seems far out. So, what's going on here??

Mary, Sylvia - my copy of this item is particularly faint - we might have to get a second copy from the AIB, or from the FBI.

In response to your suggestion of a scenario having been fed to Hoover - offhand, I don't ~~xx~~ get the impression that he knew more than what he could have gotten from radio reports right away. Someone who is more familiar than ~~ix~~ I with what was being broadcast, and on the wires, ~~xxxx~~ should look at ~~xxxxx~~ these documents. (I'll send them to Lifton.) Obviously Hoover was getting wrong info, but it's not obvious whether it was more than that. It is strange that he referred to LHO and the FPCC, and his trips to Cuba (!), ~~xx~~ rather than describing him as an ex-defector to Russia.

Item 154 (Serial 88) gets a \*\*\* rating because I can't explain what would be coming in from Bern that would rate "Secret" and "Very urgent" - I don't think the Schweitzer College stuff was that hot. (Unless there is a lot we don't know about.) Also, I don't recall seeing the famous "Harvey Lee ~~xxxxx~~ Oswald" in any other FBI documents. (You know of Peter's interest in this as a clue.)

The Daily News clip you sent convinced me not to worry about the HSC until we see what they do next. Who knows if Volz is right~~x~~ about what they think; but he turned out to be wrong about an interim report being released within a few weeks of 11/27, so I'll wait and see. ~~ixs~~ Is anyone hearing anything from the HSC? I'm not.

Duty calls - I'm "Mommy for a Day," which does sort of cut into other ~~xxxxxxx~~ activities!

Best to all,

*Paul*

PLH

cc: SM, MEF