

2/18/71

Mr. Leslie Whitten
c/o Jack Anderson
1612 K St., NW
Washington D.C.

Dear Mr. Whitten,

Paul Hoch has sent me a copy of his 2/14 letter to you. He had previously asked me if would make this data I have available to you and I told him I would.

This hasty note has several immediate purposes.

I would like to offer an opinion more emphatic than his on the possibilities of your being used by the Department of Disinformation. My own reporting days are far in the past, but if we were aware of these things then, today, I know, you must be even more aware of it. The official need is that much greater.

More, I am convinced this was the case in the Martin Luther King assassination. I deal with it in my forthcoming book on it, FRAME-UP. I enclose a copy of the Publisher's Weekly review of it.

With respect to those things Hoch mentions, especially about Sylvia Odio, I have the results of a fairly large investigation of that aspect. Almost all is on tape, none made without permission, all in the open, in each case with the person interviewed able to and invited to shut the machine off at any time. I work no other way and have no means of recording clandestinely.

Off-hand I recall only two people who declined to permit taping. These are Sylvia's uncle, Augustin Guitart, and his son, interviewed simultaneously in New Orleans in the late summer of 1968. I have three interviews with Hall, all made while he was in the Los Angeles Veterans' Hospital just demolished in the earthquake. At one point you can hear him click a hidden pistol for my benefit, to illustrate the fear he had for his personal safety. He is a very undefeatable character, but I suspect he had reason to be afraid, as he saw it. He admitted the possibility he is the man who went to see Sylvia. He had other interesting tales, one being an offer made to him to kill JFK for \$50,000. I interviewed Larry Howard twice. The first time was in his El Monte home in 2/68. At the end of this interview he pulled a .45 out from under the chair on which he was sitting and told me this is what awaited me if I turned out to be other than represented. The second time was in 10/68, when he took me to Jerry Patrick Hemming's, where I interviewed them together. They at that time also laid out their plans for an invasion of Haiti. I have never transcribed this tape because it will be difficult. The batteries went dead toward the end of it, and the speed will be way off. Hemming indicated he had been befriended by the Odio's in Havana. Howard gave me pictures from their anti-Castro mercenary days that include those later involved in the arrest for the attack on Haiti. I interviewed people in Catholic Cuban Relief in Dallas, Sylvia's priest, and got some data from the Dallas D.A....I'll be too busy to do anything until after the first of the month, and I'll be away part of the time. But if you are interested, drop me a note and the first time I'm in Washington I'll phone you.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg