

Dear Steve,

5/30/68

I regret not having been able to respond earlier to your letter of 5/15, which reached me in N.O. There is little time, for every time I go there I come back loaded and before I leave I am always behind in scheduled work. I know I have undertaken too much, but I also know if I do not it doesn't get done. I am in several new areas in N.O. and cannot predict the result. I think they are important, perhaps vital.

Yesterday I phoned Jim Lawrence to see if he could arrange to give you a specific assignment in New Orleans, one I will gladly turn over to you, which would justify his giving you credentials. I also suggested to him that you undertake some school project on this investigation, which would be very helpful. I asked him to have you call me as soon as you can, for a scholarly interest would be an appropriate one and it might facilitate this project, if you get interested in it. I write in the event you do not call before leaving.

My problem with you is that you are so far beyond your years that I forget it, forget that despite your superior intelligence and performance, you nonetheless have been limited to a certain degree of experience. It is this that prompted me to suggest you might more constructively spend your time in the Archives. I have no doubt that is true, but I also believe that those experiences in New Orleans that may be ungenial will be quite valuable to you and that you will be able to adjust, benefit and grow from them, even though they may be unpleasant. So, I think you should go there. There are ways in which I can help. Consult, if you can and chose to. There are people to whom I will introduce you. Perhaps I can help arrange housing. And Jim will have an opening when Gary leaves, in a few days. He may have committed it or he may not be able to afford to fill it. I do not know. I know they are broke.

There is one sentence of your letter I want you to ponder: "I offered to do anything from typing to chauffeuring to actual investigating."

Wrong. I have located free typing help for them and they have yet to avail themselves. I have arranged for the transcribing of tapes and they do not use these services. They need no chauffeurs; the police staff can supply that. You go there to work and for the experience, the benefit for yourself. Do not go to sit humbly at feet and admire. You can do important work there and, aside from enjoying yourself, which is more appropriate at your age than at others and is appropriate at all, go there to work. You are better equipped for this kind of investigation than the investigative staff, which lacks understanding.

You will be able to help accomplish what we all want, in many ways, but you will not by excessive humility, understandable in one of your years but not really right for one of your competences and knowledge. Nor can you best help Jim this way.

Because my efforts with housewives (hardly the word for little old ladies too rich even for tennis shoes) has not led the office to use their services, I think time squeezed in another effort at getting some college people to pitch in and have written further since my return. If something along this line can get started, you can also help very much there. There is much simple research that should be done and isn't, like in the paper libraries, etc. There is no office time and the investigators are not suited to this sort of thing.

to this sort of thing.

Yet I think it important that before going to New Orleans you spend a little time in the Archives. I may be able to arrange Washington housing for you; I cannot promise. From here the bus trip is close to four hours both ways on days I cannot go in. There are areas not really plumbed. I started but couldn't continue. I urge you to understand that Jim is not the beginning and not the end. Every time I use the Archives I get significant stuff. You may also want to just stay with us for a period and read some of what I have. You will find no secrets from you. For example, the executive sessions will give you a great understanding.

There are other reasons for us to have a long talk before you go there. I would like to tell you all that I know and all I know personally, for you should be prepared for people, getting along with them and knowing who they really are and who they represent, if anyone.

Jim can provide you with a car, but it is a pretty terrible one. No one else will use it. I did. For a careful driver like you, and in the city, it is okay. I had to go to Baton Rouge and I rented a car, which I could not afford, but that Chevy II is unsafe at high speeds. It might not even complete the trip. Louis will assign that car to you, I am certain, take care of the gas, if he can, and give you a DA's parking identification, which will permit a certain amount of illegal parking.

One of the unusual things I have ventured on this last trip is a kind of federal connection you might want to try and take over. I can discuss this only in person. This is likewise true of other things.

There are people there who will waste a tremendous amount of time for you if you permit it, and there are those on whom you can waste an equal amount. I cannot say that I haven't; I do not yet know.

With luck, the opportunity is great, for aside from me, none of us has done the kind of thing we can and fuzzi cannot do there. You can, I am confident. However, be prepared for the realization that among young people, to a large degree, N.O. is a defeated town. Many who have given up migrate there. The Quarter is full of them.

Your interest in the camps excites me. I think this is one of the major areas. The office has done little. Almost everything I have on paper they have. What I have that they do not is too extensive and too disjointed to give, and I have given my word not to show that interrogation to anyone. Here again, we require a personal meeting and some time, which I will take. Some of the time could be when I take you to Washington and return, for then we can talk. It is a little better than an hour each way. There is need for personal investigation of the lakeshore camps. For this you will also want rough clothes. Here I can turn over to you local sources untapped by the office, even able to me through the radical right ladies. My hunch is that here we can make a major breakthrough on which I have been working for some time. I think that a degree I already have.

You should have a portable typewriter and camera. Neither need be expensive if you do not have them. You will soon learn that you will want to spend as much time out of the office as possible. Working constructively there is difficult, often impossible. You will want to type your stuff up elsewhere, probably where you live.

I wander, and I must get to what I should by now have done, where a deadline faces me. Let me put it this way: you can have a wonderful and rewarding summer that can be an extraordinarily significant part of your "education" if you are properly prepared for it. My concept of this preparation is that you understand you may face sharp disillusionment and requires that you not undervalue yourself, not cast yourself in a servile role-try and forget that you are young, younger with that those you will be working with, for you are more mature in this field than almost any of them and already know more than most.

In the event we do not get together before you go there, I encourage you to bear two things in mind. Despite Jim's disbelief, that office is like a sieve. I just gave Louis another leak, one you know hence I'll not mention it. The evidence was overwhelming. I am satisfied that the company has a major thing going down there and has had, since before Jim's activity. They have merely enlarged it. I think I can pinpoint a few people for you. I know I can give you the right cautions. Therefore, a certain amount of paranoia may help. Also, depend upon overworked Louis Ivon. He is a decent, solid, honorable man. I like him more all the time and I trust him. He is overworked but he is dependable, dedicated and honorable.

Sometime this summer I will be down there again. This will depend on some things beyond our control and financing. I just used up what I had laid aside for emergency emergencies on this last trip and they are broke. There are some witnesses I should question for them, and Jim wants this. They just laid a big fat egg by jumping the gun. I was able to salvage some of what they loused up. But I think they now realize the error. Jim and I have an understanding on these that will have me there unless they have to move too fast for it to be arranged. Thus, I do not know when it will be. You, without doubt, will have interests along these lines. I would like you help and would like very much to brief you on what you might be able to do and what to be alert to, without doing anything.

You are lucky with your father! You should have a marvelous and productive summer. If you can come here first, I encourage you to establish a more direct contact with Gary Schoener and to try and see him en route-and aim alone of those of whom you have heard. He is in Minneapolis, Box 392 Mayo Hospital, Dept. Psych., Unive. Minnesota. You will, I think, if you use a good travel agency, find that you can go there at no extra cost in coming here and here at little extra cost over New Orleans. If you come here, use any airport that has direct flights and I will meet you. Going to New Orleans, Friendship is best. Coming from Minneapolis, probably National. From the west coast, nonstop, either Dulles or Friendship. There is not much difference in time for me but the through flights are much better and save you much time.

Look forward to it, as I do for you. And excuse the typos.

Sincerely,