5/26/77

Mr. George Lardner
Newsroom
Washington Post
1150 15 St., NW
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear George,

You may recall that a couple of weeks ago you asked me about the Sunday Sun pieces about the second of which AP's A wire carried a long story.

I then knew about this from what Reppert has just told me when he phoned me. I said it was b.s. but in a vacuum the theory that it was an accidental Secret Service shot was one of the more attractive ones. If you knew nothing about the fact.

Reppert did finally send me the stories. I sent my young friend Howard Hoffman copies.

Howard is perhaps less charitable than I was. He does indentify each of the individual items of fecal matter as fecal matter.

Bill has made a copy of the memo Howard sent me. I send it to you FYI only. You will recognize that this is not my work but Howard. I endorse it but it is his.

Having read the stories I can with some assurance now accuse Howard of understatement.

However, his memo will tell you more than enough of the fact.

(Odd, is it not, that papers go for theorizing, which does npt mean the normal stardards of news, but avoid the fact, which does meat normal news concepts.

You may hear of Howard again. This will let you know that he is not a theorizer and that he is not willing to accept a fabricated conspiracy theory just because it has attained some attention.

Donahue and the Sun cannot have done any minimal checking or this garbage would never have solidified.

Two days ago I had a call from a Sun Wash bureau reporter named Mann. He wanted to know the status of my case. I've heard nothing more from Reppert.

The trouble with fact it that it is uncongenial to what people want to believe.

Including those editors who were conned and lack the ability to admit it to themselves.

I did not feel well last evening or I'd have updated you on your Saturday Kevin/Hall piece. You were not in when I phoned today.

While I have no way of knowing what print interest it achieved I do have a good couple of sources on the committee and the reporter interest. The followup you did not use UPI did use.

The deniability device now seems to be to have Jackie Hess cited. Well, she is not the one who made promises to Art so why should she not deny it? I've heard of no Klein or Fenton denials. What I know of reporter interest is in volume of approaches to the committee, not stories. It appears to have forced a meeting yesterday and a statement by Chardak after it.

The Post syndicated your overdue and delayed Lane-Fauntroy piece. It could have been used widely and I would not know it. What comment I've had, however, would not make you proud. I'm talking about the unprinted syndicated copy, not comment by those who read what the Post used, on which your wife's judgement was excellent.

Others had similar interests long ago. One reporter who was shunted off onto other assignments long ago, maybe two-three months ago, is again interested. May there be others!

Best