

Dear Dave,

10/3/77

In preparing for the trip I had to cut short I made extra copies of some of the files I've obtained from the Memphis Field Office on the Invaders, intending to read and annotate them as a case study of the FBI's domestic intelligence activities of a nature other than has received attention in the King personal and SWP cases.

I had time to read but a small part of what I'd set aside because the trip was cut short. I still hope to complete this but the accumulations reduce the possibilities. This is why I write because there will be a separate file, selected from the enormously larger one I've obtained. In turn that is but a fraction of the actual Invaders Memphis file there was great reluctance to give me. Jim and I had to get into a real hassle with the FBI last June to get it at all.

It will make an exceptional study, especially if examined and analyzed in conjunction with a similar file on the sanitation strike. There is some but less in these records on a strike by hospital workers of the same AESSCME union

The amount of time, money and effort expended on so tiny a fraction of the young blacks in Memphis and its spill-over into the established and emerging organizations of those more senior is incredible, as is the penetration and the reporting, for all the world as though the country would collapse without it. No wonder the law enforcement record is so bad, the entire FBI seems to have been engaged in silly spying and strikebreaking and nothing else. There are many instances of actual criminal act totally ignored, so totally that among the extraordinary number of copies and the files into which they were put none went into criminal files, aside from one on Selective Service, in which the deserters were left alone, and what can be included in their other black files not of criminal numbering.

The main file I have was gutted by extensive destructions long after the fact and at a date I wonder about, 8/19/70 as I recall. There are records of these destructions and they do include where the information in the destroyed records is said to have been consolidated. Of course the original records would have been much more complete but in the couple of these larger LHMs to which there is such reference there is much data. It portrays what the FBI was up to.

These files are preserved exactly as I received them, with the copies I took with me made from them to keep them intact.

There is so very much here, and there will be still more, I can only hope that at some time in the future there will be an authentic scholar on black issues and questions, one cued into the political realities, who can preside over and have proper studies made from this great riches in incredible paper, the work of the overly-dedicated very wrong-headed. There is more than can be exhausted in the best dissertation.

I want to thank you for thinking of having Ruth speak to CatTimes not because the story means so much to me but because spending part of an afternoon and an evening and dinner with her was a real pleasure. She is a really fine person. I wish we could have spent more time together. She met me at the airport, as Milton was to have done and did not, and I had hardly put my bag away when the reporter Mike Dorgan was there, with the student from the college radio station. That took until suppertime. If it had not been for an editor's morning afterthought I'm sure there would have been mention of the archive. We spent some time on it and I did mention it at Milton. But the first part of the story was replaced by the duck on Schiller's TV.

Ruth is quite a person. I fear that I was in part distracted because of uneasiness over not having heard from one of those I expected to see in Los Angeles. My apprehensions were real because he awakened me in the middle of the night, having received a message several days late because he was off someplace on location and was returning to that remote place after but a day in L.A. (The other I knew would be away three days on personal business.) So instead of finishing a night's sleep I improvised transportation home. It did not pay to lay around in LA. for five days waiting to go to Seattle for an evening of talk and an early morning plane. Instead I've chanced drafting affidavits, sent Jim a copy for changes and corrections, and will see if by mail Perry and Carrico will sign them. They come from the notes of my 1971 interviews and are included in the latter part of Post Mortem, so you know the content.

...I'm indebted to you for the pleasant period with Ruth. Best to all.