

8/13/71

Dear Lou,

Your call, fortunately, came when I had just finished a chapter in the book I'm working on and my mind is a little less clogged than it might have been. I write it make a couple of things more explicit. First of all, you are going to have at least two more informants surface, but perhaps not until actual trial. I think you should regard everybody except Jim as a possible one, whether or not you believe it. Whoever got him to drop the Sheridan case has to be checked, it is his wife. The timing could not have been worse, as I think you can consider possible from what I sent you alone and, as I told you, I have more on that. Now, on Pershing: regardless of what may have caused him to do what he did, with tapes they don't need him and would be better off without him, for there is no possibility of cross-examining tapes. This may give you a lever, if any of his people are left in N.O. and not under 24-hour surveillance. I am worried about James Earl Ray surviving for this reason. The Oswald solution is as close to perfect as they can get. And one of the things I'd be preparing to try and do something about is the contingency something happens to him before court appearance. Don't be caught by surprise. If there may be nothing you can do against the contingency he'll be killed (which could easily be made to look as though the pibballers had it done), you can be in a position to make other uses. I can't begin to make many suggestions about how to go about this for there is little I know about him and his. But one of the possible beginning points is learning what they had on him. Wall's story doesn't stack (is he related to the FBI agent Wall who was their N.O. Ferrie specialist?). On Pitcher: he had better get to working, and one of the ways he can is on Sheridan, who may very well have committed crimes there involving Brownlee and John George. One of his possibilities is a charge against Epstein, who undoubtedly made deals there, on behalf of Justice and involving the framing of Hoffa, a crime that today would attract enormous attention. They made a deal with Partin that, no matter whether or not it is a crime under the laws Pitcher is supposed to enforce, would be a major front-page story everywhere and today a real defense. It sure as hell would sour their press....If those two finks are still around, they might be persuaded to sing, especially Morris, who has to be on some kind of stuff, even if he is the more intelligent and tougher-minded. But my major point is that Pitcher can attack, the best defense. If he sits back, he'll be a sitting duck. That will hurt, not help Jim. ...On Chris, there can be an important legal point. If you were to go around making inquiries about him, that would get around. But if you pick out the better places and check that day's registrations, without letting anybody know what you were looking for, preferably starting near the ~~fisheries~~ Fisheries building, and got the time of checkin, especially if it were earlier, even just the day before, or in the morning, you'd have something...Returning to Pershing, read those transcripts involving Jim. There is nowhere where he could and should have fed Jim an incriminating line that he did. He left a tape record, so far as it has been made public only, of Jim being involved in lobbying, which is not a crime, unless it is to be paid for it down there, and where does that become a federal crime? The worst that can be said of this is that Jim was complacent when he learned Soule was on the fix. And is that a federal crime? Assuming, of course, that he did not get anybody the trusts to do some checking to see if there was a case, which would be one helluva defense, if it happened...I think I mentioned the old "Bleau bills. ...If I am correct in their having made a mistake in getting all this publicity, I think they'll also be working harder to offset it, and your own people unpleasant as the thought may be, give them their best bets. You might want to assess the vulnerable. ...My repetition of what I had earlier said of Rosemary is to provide a possible but difficult investigative lead for the in-court use of the Sheppard and other decisions and, should it pan out well, before then. If you could prove what I am certain is the case, you'd get a good indignant press that would be uptight about one of their own being a federal fink. They are not happy with this administration and Justice, regardless of their gutlessness...I don't know, but I have a hunch that were I to nose around down there, I might just blunder into something. We can talk of this is you handle the extradition. Which reminds me, if and when the wealthy men in T&C worry about defense in a civil action, I have something that I think can kill it. But you know I am not a lawyer...My mind is really still on the writing, but as I get ideas I'll try and note them...Have you checked everything at the 'Bleau, where many had to be in on this, from the rooms alone. Sometimes we overlook the obvious. And the phone company people?

Best.