

PH, JL, JW

12/16/71

Dear too-busy you,

I, too, have been too busy to write earlier. I've also written Jim and Moo (copies enclosed). Perhaps you can see that I have other than selfish interests in mind.

It may be of no interest to you, but I found, in checking out the addresses of which I had written you, that they cluster, along St. Charles Ave., which means along a path easy for a stranger in town to follow without getting lost. Whether or not this really means anything I do not yet know.

One of them, 1808 Carondelet, is an address at which men have been flopping for several years, following the vandalizing that followed upon the reconstruction of the inside. If there is any police report on this building you can get for me, it might be of some value and might bear on criminal activity within your jurisdiction of which you might ultimately want to know.

I do hope you will find time for the few things I asked of you, especially the rundown on Lou Davis (which may ultimately have some interest for Jim) and any raps sheets on Charlie and Marie Stein. There seems to be little doubt that there was a time when the federal government had some interest in Davis, and not because of his support of Walker's March on Oxford, at the time Meredith registered at the University. I learned a bit more of this after we spoke.

One development following my being there is the conviction in Memphis of one Claude Cockrell, of Memphis. He seems to have had New Orleans connections and activities. He also is of interest in some of my current work, having nothing to do with your investigation. If you can find any record on him there it would be of some value. He was a Wallace man, ran for office that way, claimed to know one Cal or Carl Bishop, a mercenary, used the name Johnny McManara, and was well known to one of the three or four Frank Libertos in Memphis. He seems to be a far-out extremist. Conviction, this month, for stealing a phone-company radio. He is a business man, one of whose ventures is diving.

Hope you and your family have a good holiday, one in which daddy can be home for a few days.

Spako did seem interested in what I told him. It does seem to fit with something of current interest to him. If I learn anything more, I'll let him know, of course.

Thanks for your help and best regards,

12/16/71

Dear Moo,

The snow you have often talked of wanting to see here is not with us. There were five inches when I was down there, a foot more 20 miles away by a fluke. Yesterday the temperature went up to 70, and I walked all the way into town! At daylight, before I could feed them, about 20 quail were scratching for remnants of yesterday's corn ration outside the living room, which gets the day part of today off to a pleasant start.

I have not yet caught up from my recent trip. There are still notes to type, other letters to be written, and I left much undone when I started a month ago.

I hope you can find time for the few things I asked of you, including sending me Marie Martin's current address and, if you know it, Charlie Stein's, and their records. It is not against their interest but in it, I think the time may come when I'll want to write them.

One of the surprising bits of intelligence I picked up when I was there, whether or not true, is one I didn't expect. It is that you knew Perry Russo before you went to Baton Rouge. Although you hadn't told me, I knew you had known Ferris. You sure got around as a younger man! Before you started making a record as a prosecutor, that is. If this is not true, I hope you can find to tell me. If it is, the time may come when you will hear of it again (and I don't mean from me). There appears to be no doubt that Russo and Oswald had met, whether or not he ever admitted it to you. He did acknowledge to me that he must have, and the way he said it left little doubt in my mind that he was being less than forthright. I mean other than at Ferris's, a meeting, if you remember OSWALD IN NEW ORLEANS, I never believed happened. There seems to be much about Russo that has not yet come to light. I would expect some of it to surface in Shaw's civil suit, which I understand is seriously intended, something else that surprises me.

Please thank your wife again for the fine (too fine!) meal she had when I was there. If the one she served to Vince and me was to your mother's credit (and I don't remember a better one), this was superior to any I had in any restaurant, and I really enjoyed it. I hope it and other things due to my presence were not too serious an intrusion into her time and your family schedule.

Best to everyone.

12/16/71

Dear Jim,

The successes and duration (3 weeks) of my recent trip have kept me busy since I got home, trying to complete note-making, catching up on the more important mail, etc. Thus I haven't had time to write and tell you how gratified those to whom you sent copies of your book were. Except Carr, who I did not see. Penn will give it to him.

Mary's eyes moistened with pleasure, and Penn didn't even call me a CIA agent to my face, so you can see they were happy, because you thought of them and because of the kind inscriptions.

They and the others who then and since have inquired about your health are also glad to know that the prospect is you'll whip the hospital staff, about which nobody seemed to have known. And I hope that Jasper has responded as you thought likely.

On this trip I was able to develop a few new sources and to get new information already checked out from a few old ones. Some of it was surprising to me. For example, Shaw's people are serious about their civil suit. I had thought it a kind of threat in connection with the perjury charge. They were probably considering this all along. To that end they have apparently held back some of what they had developed. I would like to think that prior to any hearing in that action I will be able to know more of this and to be able to consider some of it in connection with other things I know or have in my files.

I have asked Lou Ivon for as complete a rundown on "ou Davis as he can give me. Busy as he seems still to be, I doubt he'll take time for it, but I think it serves every interest for him to find the time, for I know that the Department of Justice has had a special kind of interest in him and they appear to have a greater one in you! (I haven't seen the text of the indictment, but the story in the States-Item of the fourth tends to fortify the beliefs I have expressed earlier.) I know how busy you are and that you will not take the time to write a letter, but I hope you can find the time to borrow one of Ivon's cassette recorders and talk into it whatever you may know of Davis, other than that he supported you in the past, so that I may prepare as much as is possible, based upon what I have been told in confidence. Do you, for example, know if he has had connections with Leander Perez, fund-raising for Wallace, the sale of untracable rifles to other extremists-racists, etc. Did you ever check out the reports of his disappearance at the time of the King assassination (I was then in New Orleans and heard these reports)?

In connection with your research into the war, you may be interested in "oe Goulden's Truth Is the First Casualty, recently available at the \$1.00 remainder price, if you do not already have it. I have not yet seen Vince's speech, which I've heard described as brilliant by several. However, based on my very early work on this, which I described to you on our first meetings in early 1967, I remain convinced that calling the CIA good guys in this is an over-simplification. I do hope that before you write you will give this further thought. We are together so little there is never a real chance for a full exchange of thoughts. Their higher sophistication, greater guile, unrecognized flexibility may give a contrary appearance, but their basic objectives are unchanged.

Let us hope the coming year is a better one for all of us.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg