

JL-The real reason I have taken this time is because I think you should send this to Jimmy with a very short note of your own in which you pick out one of the quotes that is so specific on the official committee preconception of Jimmy as the actual assassin. The one I think is best also has Oswald as the killer. That you be able to do this without Jimmy thinking it comes from me is one of the reasons I have been so chatty. There is no telling what Lane and Freed have filled him with. HW 2/27/77

Dear Jim,

2/27/77

Yesterday was a very good day. This is why I'm writing today and could not include a letter in what was mailed to you last night from a Washington suburb. You should have that by the time I can get this in the mail, today being Sunday.

The day was the third straight mild one so I could walk. I took two walks, which is good for me. Then the printer's father came to see if he could help. He is a couple of years younger than I. As a result I now have two file drawers I can use in my office. We did some shifting and carrying into storage. We transplanted three trees, put stones in the road where the frost is still bubbling out of the ground and people getting stuck in the snows wore ruts through the other stones. Then the young fellow I'd let cut firewood on shares came to cut my share. Most of the winter is over but he is to come again next Saturday, so I'll be using the fireplace now. I stacked about a cord of oak and then after he left carried a week's supply onto the porch so neither rain nor snow will keep me from it. If before the thrombosis this would have been nothing it was a fair amount of exercise for me today. My feet swelled and burned as the blood got to them and had trouble getting out of them. But it was good for me because it forced circulation and it was good for me because it made me feel good.

Toward the end of this we had guests. I think you met my friend Ian when he was Washington correspondent for the the London Times. I don't know what kind of college professor his wife is but she is as great a cook as my wife. She brought the makins makins, even to potatoes, so we would have less work, and did most of the cooking so I could continue with her work. We had a great meal. While the women were makki working in the kitchen Ian and I talked. He began by saying how I had called all the shots on the House assassinations committee accurately and long in advance. And this gets to what is on my mind.

During the past week, even with the two days in Washington, I've heard from several of my sources and a couple of magazine writers in addition to reporters. It is all one way - nothing but bad about this committee. I'm going into it for your information and because I think you should let Jimmy know. He is isolated down there. This is all outside his experiences. And I'm sure he really does not understand that Byzantine world. In addition he has made mistakes that are indicative of desperation. If the desperation is understandable the mistakes are bad. He can't undo them but maybe if he listens to you he'll stop making them and not do these counter-productive things without speaking to you.

Aside from having anything to do with the Lane-Freed gang two recent examples are his letter to Lewis and Jerry's filing of the civil suit in Knoxville. The old Jimmy would have known better on all these things. This is what makes me think he feels the pressures. We have no way of knowing how faithfully Jerry communicated what we told him about civil suits and the Chicago airport when we were on the way to Wisconsin, but we do know that we told him and that he then saw Jimmy a number of times. On the Lewis letter, it has been used widely against Jimmy and was never once used the way he had hoped. But you should give him to understand, before he makes more of the same kinds of mistakes, that Congressional committees cannot call reporters and violate their first-amendment rights and that there is nothing McMillan can say that is pertinent to the mandate of this committee. There also is no way Jimmy could be helped by exposing them. He might feel better but that is all. However, in the pursuit of this he has hurt himself in ways I'm sure he does not understand.

He also has no notion of how much work I've done since I saw him or how productive it has been. I can't tell him now and I won't for other reasons. I'm not tipping anyone off through an intercepted letter and when he stays in touch with Lane and Freed I can't risk letters those whores of the left who are in some ways more dangerous to him than the others have a corrupted view and then add their own typical corruption to it. Their oily tongues have conned Jimmy. I'm sure he is unwilling to even think about this because it would trouble his ego. But it is fact and again it is something the old Jimmy would not have fallen for.

Jimmy was warned yet he went ahead even though he knew he did not know them and that we did. This is consistent with every such thing he has done, if he'd stop to think. He blots from his mind how these are used against him, as he saw and heard at the evidentiary hearing. Another example is the OJR's use of Chastain. There was no point in getting an article circulated by Pacific News. That and 30¢ would get Jimmy the cheapest hamburger in town but no more.

Another example of how his judgement has been influenced by his confinement and his isolation is the shrink Freeman. I knew more than a year ago that Jimmy went to him under his right name, that Freeman had spoken to the FBI and what he told them. It was favorable to Jimmy, I told him that, and I asked him for a release so I could write Freeman and get the actual records. Jimmy is hung up on shrinks, I suppose from the number of times he has played games with them, and he refused. So now there is this gross distortion and misuse of Freeman in the OJR report. It is effective against Jimmy and we are not in a position to counter it.

I can't think of any of these things Jimmy has tried that has not been used against him or may not be still and I know there is not one that helped him aside from his getting to Brushy, which certainly was good for him.

This gets me back to what I have obtained from my sources. Because I was tired Ian and Chris did the grocery shopping I was to have done for him. This gave me time to read some of the clippings I've received from papers you and I can't get. In particular from Pennsylvania and from one end of that State to the other. As I read them I marked them in yellow to call quotes and comments to your attention. I think the yellow will show up less if you want to make xeroxes for yourself. You'll probably read them all but those are portions I'm calling to your attention in particular.

In Pennsylvania Sprague has been a kind of hero except among the accused and the ACLU, both of whom recognize that he is a conviction-bent prosecutor who cares about nothing but convictions. He is not an investigator. He is a Foreman of the other side, a gifted and able courtroom lawyer who presents the work of others in court. He has not done the real work of the investigating. He has fixed cases for cops to stay in good with them and get their help. This even include a justice official where he was a special prosecutor, an official whose son was a murdered Sprague turned loose. I was born on one side of the county where he was to clean up corruption and raised and was a reporter on the other side. I'm telling you there are few places where corruption is more traditional or flagrant. And he found none?

So here you have the papers that have supported him and praised him now editorializing against him and in every case on specifics of misconduct and the worst possible judgement. There is only a little of this that can be attributed to his persecution of the reporter for the conservative paper who was exposing police corruption in Penna. But that he did such a thing is a measure of the real Sprague.

Most of these stories make it beyond question that all the members of the committee begin with the presumption that Jimmy is the killer. It is explicit, most recently with Lane's pal Gonzalez. He is convinced Jimmy is the killer and questions only demand whether he had help. This is the Sprague line. All the committee signed a report saying that. Naturally the DJ reports says the same thing. Does Jimmy really think that there is anything he can say that will make these irresponsible, these headline seekers, change their minds? All they want from him is the names of co-conspirators. They really mean Jerry, as the OJR report says. All the stories are clear on this interpretation.

Now go back to my offers to Downing and Sprague. I took you alone, you may remember, in the summer of 1975 when I was asked to go to Downing's office. Why do you think they have never asked for the evidence I said I could give them with no conflict of interest? Why do you think Sprague did not when I offered it to him 10/20 of last year? Why do you think he did not let his research director come up here, as the research chief had said, with his own xerox machine? Simply because they do not want even in their files

what does not tend to incriminate Jimmy. Sprague simply would not take a chance on some member of the committee or of its staff seeing anything like that.

I have some inside sources. One of them told me and another confirmed this, that when one staffer said why don't we get down to the basic facts of the case at a staff meeting, why don't we forget about this theorizing and see what the facts really are, he was clobbered. And by the chief counsel on that half of the investigation, still another former prosecutor, as all their top people are. (And these are the people with whom Mans is now cozy!)

I can give you a political reading, too. The present compromise effort is for Sprague to give up being staff director. If he accepts that you know he went there to do a wrecking job and to do a job for his lifelong friends. Just as he has always done for crooked cops. If Gonzalez does not accept this there will probably be a new resolution offered by someone else, with the approval of the leadership. This will enable O'Neill to appoint a new committee without Gonzalez. Gonzalez is a light-weight and a nut but the others are no better, even the respected former judge, the conservative Freyer. Gonzalez was wrong on claiming that Freyer was campaigning to be chairman. But he was right in essence because the other members of the committee are all hungup on Sprague and the Jablonski case and they really did plan this. A simple measure of Freyer, the judge, is that he signed the report that says without any investigation that Jimmy is guilty and that he sat still for what Ozer told them on 9/16/76. This alone makes him as impartial as McGee.

What this really means is that the wheel has turned full scale and we have a truly unusual situation. There now is no possibility of any hope from the House. To make this sure the Senate protectors of the spooks have quietly activated a subcommittee under the phoney liberal Gary Hart. They are the ones who leaked the OPR report. Justice gave it to them in advance so they could. So the only hope in the Congress is from a standing committee. I now doubt that any in the Senate will compete with the so-called oversight committee. There has never been one not in the spooks' pockets.

The strange turn of events is that there may be a chance where Jimmy in particular but most of us in general would least expect it, in Justice. But not now. Not at the very least until Griffin Bell gets his own people in and we have a possibility of by-passing the bureaucrats all of whom are front men for the FBI and have their own asses to protect. This is not impossible. Bell and Carter will have political needs that may impel them to listen. By that time if there are no major interruptions I will have put together an overwhelming case. I now have it, as I'm sure you realize. None of the exposes of the past are anything like this. And this is the reason I departed from not wasting time on talk shows to do Gordon's. This is also why I sent you last night the end of that show on tape, so you can hear it. I know what Gordon has in mind and I'm sure he means it. I'm told he never ends a show as he did in praising me and even more in shaking hands on camera and on his initiative with the one he has supposedly been fighting. My information is that Bell is considering a pal of Gordon's for a top post in Justice. It has been in the Detroit papers.

There was a consequence of the Gordon show that will probably tickle Jimmy. There is a panel TV show in Boston. The Gordon show is aired there and in other cities as far away as Los Angeles. (I have a friend out there who has a videotape of it, no less! He called me to tell me. And also to tell me that this week "Mans" was out there bullshitting on a talk show he heard.) A reporter caught the show and then was asked to be a panelist with McMillan the guest. He called me to prime him. Did I! I don't know if he can make a tape but he promised to try. If I'd had advance notice I could have arranged it. But George has had a few unhappy moments. And if any of the others caught the Gordon show they know I called Curtis a pathological liar. They don't know the proof I have but they should ask, if they are good reporters, how McMillan could depend so heavily on such a man. And, of course, about his preconception of guilt.

Down there and under his conditions Jimmy has no way of knowing how much better his situation is over what he knows nothing about. I hope you can find some way of letting him know what you think about this and encouraging him to stop doing these desperate, counterproductive things, to just be quiet for a little longer. He did not believe me when I told him a year ago that in a year I'd have what would be important and promising for him. I had it in less than a year and I'm improving it constantly. It will not require much more patience but it does require not being interfered with and an end to the need to waste time undoing what should not be done to begin with. You could have written any number of motions and briefs in the time it took you to cope with the unwise letter to Tony Lewis and the fink O'Leary, for one example. And I could have done much with the time I've had to waste to be able to protect Jimmy against his un wisdom in having anything to do with Lane and Freed. By the way, when you get the tape one of my sources is sending you, of Lane's boasting, listen in particular to the part where he says "Ray told me." You will have no problem knowing Jimmy never said any such thing. Then listen to the part about his "investigation." You'll then see why the OPR was delayed. When you read it you'll find no blanks for "sanitizing," the official explanation. It was more likely delayed for two reasons, either or both. One is to let Lane's bullshit get frozen into type. The other is to let the committee situation deteriorate even more into the Keystone Cops wire in which it is now bogged down.

Jimmy does not know it but Lane has always been all bullshit and a barnyard wife. He has already been rebuffed by the OPR and that is only the beginning. They have held back the really powerful stuff. And on this I hope you can find some way of getting Jimmy to listen if as I ask you to do you caution him. I have already written him and asked him to tell you all he told any of them so you can know because they always make it up. On this Freed is even worse than Lane. Both have long careers of being running dogs of the super-radical wkk left of the FBI.

Freed has been explicit in taking the official line. I have a copy of the story he and his crew could not get published. The Times can almost want for it but a friend of mine kept asking them such pointed questions Seigenthaler killed it. It has Jimmy the assassin with Jerry and Stoner and co-conspirators. Now this is from back last year. You now find it is the line of the OPR report, uncritically accepted by the media. Now also Freed can anoint this with "Ray told me that..." As Lane has already. And what this means is that the more attention Lane gets when his book is out the more it will hurt Jimmy and destroy all credibility. More when he and the nit Gregory take the stump. They are being booked by the agency that put E. Howard Hunt on TV last week in his great defense of the CIA. The same one that refused to book me in defense of Jimmy long ago. Even when I offered to make the first speeches free. Small world, huh? At the time of the Garrison fiasco they also booked Clay Shaw. Smaller world?

Freed is already being published by the Black Panther Party. So it is important for Jimmy to understand that has however it appears to him he must be silent if he is asked anything about these writings. He does not need to say anything if he thinks they help him, as I'm sure they don't. He does need to be disassociated to the degree now possible if as I am sure they are hurtful.

It is my expectation that by the end of this week I'll have completed the setting up of separate files by subject on all this new evidence. I'll then be ready before our lawyer friend has picked out each and every allegation of the part he promised to do. I have already done this with the OPR report. So after we get his work I'll get to the final assembly. This will go faster if what I was working on last Wednesday pans out. I should know in perhaps two weeks. Their decision will be of backbone. If they have the backbone I'll get help right away and will be able to work much faster. With help I'd say two months at the outside absent unforeseen interruptions.

I'm sorry to have to take this time to update you but I believe it is necessary, particularly so you can try to guide Jimmy. Best,