

Mr. Les Whitten
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8/27/76

Dear Les,

Not until close to 10 last night did the pieces missing from my no longer total recall begin to come back after Marc Szwed's call yesterday morning. That's why I called you last night. If Marc lives in Arlington, he also was not home. I kept trying with him until about 11, figuring your wife got enough of my name if you were not too late getting in. When I decide to leave bed these days I just lie there and think for about 10 minutes, giving the blood a chance to work a little harder before stirring. So about 5 a.m. I spent about ten minutes thinking about this, along the lines those whose work requires no more than a quotable source generally do not require of them.

Marc must have detected my feeling there ~~was~~ was something wrong with the Ruby-Mafia-Rosselli etc story based on that single CIA record he'd been given. I urged him to ask CIA if they have any others. Well, they have, and your faces are covered if you went with the item and they told Mark they have no more.

I read that stuff last April, maybe March. With the ~~changes~~ ^{changes} in my life I have time for little reading not relevant to what I'm working on currently. I save it for when I travel. I also make notes. So if you have to follow this further and if I can find what I've not been able to file, I'll have notes directing me to the right records.

The original source on that crap, unreasonable on the face, was a Britisher named John Wilson Hudson, I think with an alias or a ^{reordering} ~~reordering~~ of names. I have I think cables from London ^{on} ~~out~~ the CIA's checking of the guy and finding him totally undependable, a fabricator. So if your source did not give you all he did what I've been trying to caution you against- he used you. I'm aware of who your source is.

This is what I was thinking about a few minutes ago. And all of you people of good conscience who've ducked this major story except from certain angles for 13 years are going to be suckered because of your consciences.

What Marc is working on, as I told him, had been used and denied with credibility by Ruby's family. Now I recall where. Your source gave it to Dick Russell, who then phoned me about a different part. He used it in Village Voice. So your piece isn't even new.

On one side this alleged Mafia angle is the resumed Big Diversion. On the other, of which I am not part, it is the hot gas for the pot-boiling in which they have faith and I regard as utterly unprincipled and doomed to be self-destructive.

I presume the pot-boilers are stoking hard because I had a total of I think five calls on different angles yesterday. I spent some time on one that under other circumstances I would not have because it was Woodward and the Post. I can trace his tip with a ~~fair~~ fair amount of confidence and it is probably this same pot-boiling.

Mark has a personal longing for the Downing resolution to be passed. I tried to explain to him why I'm opposed to it, strange as it may seem when I'm the first to have demanded a Congressional investigation after the Warren Report. The pot-boilers lust for it. They begin with belief in the unprincipled in pursuit of what they conceive to be principle. This justifies anything and everything to them. They've done some pretty despicable things. The government is using some to confront me with a very serious problem in my litigation right now. Boy are they feeding it to me! So they have fed all kinds of garbage to the uninformed in the Congress. Bright as these people are their records in this field, from fact to understanding, has been lousy. They've also been unscrupulous. I won't go through all my reasoning but I think the best chance of defeating the possibilities of a real Congressional investigation in the coming session is to ~~the~~ pass any resolution in this one with the backstopping of the potboilers, which I can wreck ad lib and I'm sure officials will with an abundance of records.

I have other concerns in this. I know what my possibilities are in court. I do not know what will happen, only what can. I can break this thing in court. If there were any help for Jim Cesar, who is assisted on the legal end by only the help I, a non-lawyer, can give him, I'd be fairly certain of success. Anyway, this kind of game-playing with

the press in the end serves the Disinformation operators. I know what they have to hide. From what I face in court- what I'm working on right now - I know the risks they'll run.

So there now are two sides trying to manipulate the press.

What chance does truth have?

All of this is made easier because nobody in the press wants to do what is necessary- address the most basic fact.

From the first I've stayed away from the Ruby angle except where I've bumped into it. My reasoning, again, was simple: with all there was to do why work on that which has least prospect?

From the first I've been concentrating on the hard evidence. I've got more than enough and I'm not shifting because more than enough seems to be too little.

With the changes of these 13 years even more is now involved. As I see it, anyway.

If there are more changes, like the column abandoning its policies on this subject, if you decide that you would like to risk some really responsible journalism than can be historic, I'll give you all you want and more, all irrefutable, all official, all what over all this long and entirely unpaid years I've dug out.

I think I understand what had Drew and Jack hung up on this. They were had through their sincere beliefs and respects for personages. And it is impossible to do a daily column plus other things and become expert on any subject.

I'm not leaning on you but I am again offering. Try me.

There is no way of undoing what people like Warren have done. The best those who respect people like Warren and the good they did the country can hope for is that truth can lead to compassionate understanding. This is what separated me from the Lanes and the Epsteins early on: they dumped it all on Warren, Epstein even to defending Hoover. I have not since then been able to return to the other work I had already begun.

One of the consequences of the failures of the press on this big story has been the entrenching of a growing authoritarianism. This, not a whodunit, is what I've been working on - and against.

I've taken this time for several reasons. I'll try to get through by phone after you or Mark may be in but the past does not encourage hope I'll get through. And I do not believe any of you want to be used, meaning misused. Or should be.

Best,