6/19/69

Dear Gary,

I've a few minutes before taking Lil to shop so I add a few things to last night's note. Bud also said Burton is still badly torn over Garrison. Is it not too late for that to be a normal reaction? How many months does a man agonize over such events? Assuming it to be true and then assuming it not to be put on, does your treining permit a deduction? Without benefit of your science, were I to draw a conclusion, I would believe this abnormal and a reflection of a ~~permanent~~ feeling of personal guilt. I've not heard from any of those people in months.

Bud's portrayal of the N.O. is of more despondency than I indicated.

Yesterday's release of the "secret" so little secret of the FBI bugging of Kinf, for years, is in papers I haven't yet seen. I'll have the Wash Post and Star (being mailed me and likely the larger story if there is any FBI effort to get wider attention, for the Star is close to FBI) and, if one is available when I get to town, the NYTimes, should you have any special interest in any. If your papers have any stories by their own correspondents with any details not in the wire-service stories, I might be interested. This is an issue that real Kennedy people, if any there be, would take up, for it is pretty blatant misuse of Bobby's name. That he signed such an authorization I assume to be a fact, for I also assume that Hoover would have been reluctant to bug without it. However, the basis for his giving approval is not mentioned in any redio or TV coverage. Hoover is in a perfect blackmailing position, I think not by accident. Few AGs will dare resist Hoover when he says there is a major point or issue. There is no liability for Hoover in being wrong, for there is always silence about it. There is no possibility of any AG depending on Hoover's silence if there, from police developments, be any possibility of later saying there should have been a tap. What I'd like to know is how many bugs and taps Hoover asked for that Bobby turned down. With Hoover's hatred, I doubt if he dared any.

Haiti: I assume there is an enormous FBI file on the mercenaries not in the WC material. I also assume that the reports are not favorable to the mercenaries. But I do not assume an unfavorable FBI policy, which is something apart from the opinions of the individual agents. I regard the absence of any prosecutions under any of the many violated laws as ample indication of policy, FBI and other federal. There may be no significence in the fact that prosecution is under customs in the current case (and they are the ones who buster Hall in 1963). I think significance is possible, though it escapes me for the nonce. Last Friday, as soon as I got to Washington, I phoned the lawyer who had responded to my first letter to Mitchell and to none since partly for this reason and partly because ~~she~~ he is in charge of "general crimes" and is in the criminal division. Before she realized, I had gotten his secretary to say he was in. I gave my name and said the call was on a subject other than that of our correspondence. She was an inordinate time returning to the phone and then, slightly embarrassedly, told me he seemed to have gone out undetected, but would I care to speak to a Mr. Murrown, to whom she would transfer me. I said I'd ~~no~~ speak to anyone, but would it not be better to know the purpose of my call in order to know to whom to transfer me. She agreed and I told her. She then said Murrow was wrong and in the end I was transferred to a Mr. Morrison. He didn't know me but he was quite obviously excited by what I had, as I would assume any lawyer interested in prosecuting a case in which it could be such vital evidence would be. How often is a potential criminal stupid enough to lay his criminality out in advance and on authorized tape? How could he get in touch, M wanted to know.

I gave him my home phone and told him I'd not be available during working hours at it until the next day. He indicated he'd be wanting to get in touch with me as soon as he coukd get an FBI agent. I alughed and told him I deemed it unlikely the FBI would send an agent to see me. He askdd why and I told him they didn't like me, my work or the things I said of them which were never wrong. He still wanted to know and at 9:30 a/m. I told him where I could be reached until about noon and then at about 1. By happenstance, as I was getting ready to leave the place I'd planned to be at 1 to keep a date and to which, without having planned it in advance, I had returned at 3, at about 3:30 I got a phone call there from a Mr. James P. Morris, a lawyer in the Internal Security Division of the DJ, not in the main DJ building, who wanted to see me right away. I went, with Lil, and we spoke for something over an hour. I leveled with him about the FBI and me, told him exactly what I have, not alone the tape of this interview, offered him all of it, including a dub of the tape(s) and copies of the previous transcripts, copies of the pictures, etc. and he said he'd went to come up Monday (this was then after the close of the Friday working day) or that a lawyer from customs would. It is Thursday morning and there has been silence. I am not surprised, for aside from the potential value of my data in their prosecution, it also embarrasses them for a number of reasons. Part is the stature it would tend to give me, part because it is a pretty stiff indictment of the feds, who should have been keeping these guys under observation, partly because of the error of the past involving them, and other reasons that may be obvious to you. However, I gave them the names of those who could confirm what I told them, who they could reach by phone, like the nice kid who drove me there and was goggle-eyed during most of the lengthy interview, Burton, who knew of this involvement because they had told him, Kevin, to whom I had reported it, etc. So, maybe from their point of view, I gave them a problem and put them on the spot.

They may yet decide they do not dare avoid what I will give them. We'll see. My purpose in writing, aside from the fact I'd not taken time to make a memo and this can serve that purpose also, is to suggest to you that this combination of stupidities may require more attention to the mercenaries, including their past (for I got from Howard those pictures everyone is taking credit for that show some of these guys in association with others and all of this, inevitable traces back to the Cuban days and, at the very least indirectly to the JFK murder. Which also means to the deficiencies of the investigation and investigators, who want it believed they never errr or do too little. So, watch anything on the mercenaries or Haiti that may appear out there, if any. I do not now anticipate any public statements nor do I anticipate any enterprising journalism. I have, however, tipped off one magazine editor and I will fully background a foreign correspondent when he has time. I have tipped off a couple domestic reporters but do not anticipate they will be able to do anything.

A few hurried, offhand opinions: all the public disclosures of wiretapping represent a policy decision to the right. There was the option, with Clay and Elijah, to abandon prosecution, which would have had no serious consequences at all. However, disclosing this meant there was a determination to get tapping generally approved. King, with the King thing giving them the best propsects they could anticipate for getting approval of the very worst case. Once there is acceptance of tapping King, anything will be accpeted. Meanwhile, they had this extensive Mafia stuff, which almost everbody would approve, to give the appearance of solifity to their case. In short, I am suggesting it is the beginning of bad, or should I say worse. Gotta quit to leave now. Best,