

Dear Moo,

5/2/91

After we spoke last night I phoned George Gardner and told him you have decided not to talk to any reporters and why. His reaction was that it might work out the way you anticipate, that if you talk to one reporter that could attract questions from others that you want to avoid.

I'm not writing to disagree or to argue with you. Rather do I suggest that you and Alcock might want to think ahead to what can eventuate if as I think this 'Oliver Stone commercialization of that great tragedy develops into the scandal I believe it is. You have no real way of knowing who might say what in his own interest that may reflect on others or what some of the people who went to New Orleans in those days may say or extract from their files.

Or what reporters may dig up if this becomes the major story I believe is possible.

Then there is the fact that although loyalty should work both ways it does not always and not all people practise it.

All I am suggesting is that you and Jim may want to try and think back more than 20 years when you have time to see if you recall anything that at some point it may serve your interests to recall. It may not happen but it will not hurt to be prepared in the event it does.

Should the time come when either of you thinks his interest could be served by talking to a reporter and not being identified in what he or she writes, with most you can do this safely by insisting on absolute confidentiality. Principled reporters keep their word on this. Right now, despite enormous attention and the threat of jail, a woman reporter for the Washington Post faces jail for refusing to identify her source for a story - and this after others did identify him. But at the same time I encourage both of you not to do this with any reporter who in the past was a personal adversary. But I suppose that most of those then with the N.O. papers have retired.

IlluminiNet Press, whatever that is, sent me a copy of Kerry Thornley's pamphlet of a book expanded somewhat. I've not read it. It has an introduction by Lifton that it largely a personal attack on Jim and it is plugged by him, Fensterwald and Hoch only. I believe it is not worth a moment's thought. I use it as an illustration of the kind of think that can be done were any response to be required. If Jim wanted to respond to Lifton and Thornley he could refer to Lifton's getting Thornley to file an unsolicited affidavit in which he swore falsely, that John Rene Heindell used the name and was known as "Hidell." I have that somewhere. ...While I do not know that things will develop as I think is possible, I do suggest that it can't hurt to try to think ahead and not be caught by surprise.

Best wishes..

Hal