

Dear Tony,

4/10/89

Your contact seems to have garbled the telecast HSCA testimony of retired FBI SA Arthur Murtagh. Published, if you don't have Jim and I do.

Something like the joy he attributed to Hoover when he learned that Dr. King had been killed is what Murtagh testified to observing from the Atlanta SA who, if I recall correctly, was a King case agent, something like Santanella.

It was just after they'd gotten the word that Murtagh and the other SA were walking together, perhaps to their cars, when the joyous exclamation ensued.

Also, I think it is unlikely that Hoover would have been in his office at that hour, after 7 in Washington, absent some compelling emergency. He seems to have enjoyed his suppers with others.

In addition, all the records I've examined seem to indicate that Hoover not only was not in his office but was not consulted pronto. Soon, I'm sure, but not immediately.

When Memphis SAC Jensen phoned FBIHQ, according to his guilty-plea testimony, he was not put through to Hoover and he made no claim to instructions from Hoover personally.

In fact the FBI was never able to come up with authorization for it to involve itself in the investigation from the AG. Had Hoover been in the office I'm sure he would have seen to this because he had no jurisdiction unless he alleged a conspiracy, required to trigger the civil-rights statute.

Ultimately he did this, after a couple of weeks, but he had a phobia about assassination conspiracies.

I'll send a copy to Jim to see if he recalls anything not in accord with what I say.

Glad you stopped bleeding. I'm familiar with that problem. Had to spend five days in Johns Hopkins for what is ordinarily out-patient surgery. I think Jim said it was ulcer. If so it is important to talk to yourself and not provoke it. Mine never gives me trouble and I live on a high level of anticoagulant and take three medicines that irritate it. also three drinks a day. Of course they are not all the same but I think you can help it behave.

You ask what I think is the best try. I think Murtagh and if he published testimony is not enough as of a decade ago he was teaching constitutional law at Clarkson College, Potsdam, N.Y. He then lived at I think Constable, N.Y., not an inappropriate address. But I'm sure you've gotten a bum steer. Very common in the ring records. People looking for some benefit made up stories they thought might do them some good. I was often able to trace these things to street information, not infrequently improved upon.

As a generality I think Hoover would never have been so demonstrative unless, perhaps, with Tolson. About anything at all. Certainly not before a SA.

Beware of geeks bearing gifts!

Harold

PHONE
353 (Ireland)-24(Youghal)-96210

ANTHONY SUMMERS

STILL POINT,
DROMORE,
AGLISH,
CAPPOQUIN,
CO. WATERFORD,
IRELAND.

Mr. Harold Weisberg,
7627 Old Receiver Road,
Frederick,
MARYLAND 21701.

24.3.89

Dear Harold,

I am sorry it is so long since you heard from me. No sooner was Christmas over than I got sick - with a bleeding stomach - and ended up in the hospital, and having to rest for a few weeks. However, at long last, I am settling down to the Big Write on the Hoover manuscript.

I am writing to you now, in particular, because a contact has sent me the following suggestion for follow-up research. During the H.S.C.A. hearings on King, he says, a retired F.B.I. agent mentioned having been in the company of Hoover when the word of Martin Luther King's murder arrived at headquarters. The retired agent went on to say that, upon hearing the news of King's death, Hoover indulged in a sort of triumphal outburst - somewhat along the lines of "We (or they,) finally got the sonofabitch".

Does this ring any bells with you? It is, of course, important to me to know whether Hoover said anything like this at all. Would you let me know whether you have any recollections of this, or - if the story has somehow become twisted - if you can construe which witness my contact may be remembering? If you can't remember anything about this, who do you suggest would be my best next try?

Warmest regards from me,

Tomy.