

5/13/33

Dear Hal, and I hope, Steve, too,

I wish you had airmailed your letter of 5/9, for it would have arrived in time for longer response. I am about to leave on the trip, with the midnight assurance of the main witness that there would be emergency surgery today, thus assuring me I'd be able to do a minimum amount of interviewing. I am now making my own emergency arrangement to use the time thus released for other purpose while I am there, for I can never afford any of these trip and this even less, for Ivon tells me they are entirely broke. I've having to put out 100% of the cost, and I cannot meet the pressing obligations now overdue. This, at least, give you a measure of my than my poverty.

What you report on Youngblood is better than I had hoped you'd find. But that lazy John on it, Escan put out the little dough required. Get an extra glossy for Joel Palmer, who should already have been in touch with Steve. He also can make extra copies. He is a photog.

On Hall, Steve probably knows more than I. He should have a copy of the transcript of my and other Hall interviews (those following mine should have been much more fruitful). I have seen none, which is the new custom. This is also true of Howard. I get him to go to New Orleans, and what he said there is a total mystery to me. I expect much the same with Hall. The consequences can be great hurt, for I am in work that I can share with no one if the people are to survive, and it is in an entirely new but closely-related area. Hall phoned me from LA two weeks ago to see if I could be in NC with him. When I said I couldn't he said he'd try and fly here afterward. Having heard nothing, I assume he will not be able to. What he told me is consistent with your letter. I think the main two things are these: I have persuaded him that his survival and well-being require him to be with us, and that we alone can possibly add value to what he has and will not rob him of it. Knowing the New Orleans office, this may turn out to be less than accurate!

In haste, please accept my assurances that there is no triviality on Thornley that I should not have. He is entirely different that Dave takes him to be, Dave could not be more wrong, and the stuff he originally sent Garrison was very hurtful and quite misleading. - know. I have the proofs in hand already. There is so much I cannot pu on the phone or in the mail. My mail is being intercepted, I know, and things that are vital have never arrived, including CIA proofs. My vsguiness is deliberate. I encourage you to trust Dave with nothing. Either he is wrong because he is playing both sides or he is wrong because he is a human, with the problems of humans, or because he has special problems. But he is wrong, and very wrong. He recently tried to (and did) scare Fred Newcomb.

I despair of asking to be brought up to date on Hall and all the rest, but I'd certainly want to be. I think you will do better with Hatchcock than I. But I know you will send me what you can and as soon as you can, particularly the Miami stuff. If you have it in less than two weeks, or, say, by mailing time 5/18, send it registered c/o jim. Be sure to register. I do not know how long my limited money will hold out. I plan to stay with a friend and to diet. But I have a new associate there who can help and has no connection with the office, which has refused to trust him for a year. Real Crazy. (He's a grand guy and very much one of us. Just not an ass-kisser.) He has knowledge in this aspect as no one else in the world, and it would be fine if he is there and we can go over that part together. My searches in the Archives have led to the assurance this stuff is not there. It was. I saw it in the Spring of 1966. I just do not have time to go over all of my notes, if I did note it, or to go over all those thousands of pages again.

Hatchcock did promise me what he had. All of my calls to him never

reached him. Not a single message. I finally got him at home the night before I left. I so wish it were possible for me to get out there and brief you people.

Hall, please try and put Silent John to work getting the tapes of that stuff you heard on the radio, etc. I can get them transcribed here. They can be enormously important. In many areas. If you do, let me know the copies you put there will want. If it is 1 7/8 or 3 3/4 on 5 inch reels, my wife can use a foot-contril, which will speed it up.

I have the so-called Utley report, if you people need it.

I had hoped Moss Martin might keep his promise to me, of developing a trusted New Orleans contact.

Liebeler's exact words on New Orleans are of enormous importance. I have now interviewed vital witnesses he did not call - no reports. I will not pinpoint names, but they are in those you have. I have also established that he perhaps (but I think not) incompetently established a quite false record in part of what he could not avoid. Please send me the entire tape plus any notes. I'll certainly take time out for that, regardless of what we have to do on my return. He is now cast in an entirely different role, a meaningful one. Do not be deceived by that bumbling pseudo-sincerity. He cannot have been unaware of what he was doing. If there is any single man who had evidence of a conspiracy, it is he. I've got hours of it on tape, safely duplicated and out of my singular possession.... You did not give his answer, merely his regrets. He was recently and secretly in Baton Rouge, and what until you learn what is there! His was a short trip, there for but a few hours. The Archives has failed to respond to any of my recent inquiries along this line.

Superficially, Lane is right. This is the answer you'd expect from a man who has only limited, second-hand knowledge and refuses to do the most promising kind of work when he is on the spot. If the Shaw case gets into federal court it may be the end of Garrison, or that part. It will not be the end. Mark wants to enjoy his wealth, make all the dough he can (and rightly), and do as little as he can in return. His ignorance of the New Orleans story, for all his pilfering of the files, is astounding. Do not be of faint heart, but do be prepared for serious reverses. There can and may be rather forceful counter-moves from the other side. I have an advance copy of what might be one! I can here say no more.

If I can get a lawyer to file a civil suit against Carlos Bringuier, in New Orleans, I think we can do something. I'll file against the government as co-defendant! I've got new stuff in him, and the old was so grossly misrepresented. It is, again, the story of the purloined letter, and the fault is as much mine as anyone's, for not seeing it earlier. His suit is important in its timing and cast. It is a blackmail designed to keep me out of N.O.

I am being so carefully studied I'd rather than flag my interest. If Paul has a copy of CD301, p. 289, I'd appreciate it. It must have been missing when I went through that file.

On Thornley, again, please, everything. Calixta, anything. It is improbable that this name is duplicated in Mexico. It is rare. I have seen it and cannot recall where. It is not in any of the name files in the Archives. Whatever mention of it and any of the other names is essential. She also used the first name Theresa. She had five identities. I know her.

I hope the greater than usual haste and its adverse effect on the normally terrible typing makes no insurmountable puzzles for you, for I had no time for this letter. The machine is broken and I'm taking it in for repair while I'm gone (it is older than you!) I also hope I've omitted nothing.

Ask your Cuban experts if they have seen the name of a small group calling itself the Cuban Rehabilitation Movement For Better Government, which may be on the hazy recollection of a youth after five years. It is part of CEM, if my presumptions are correct. Try Bernardo on a name that phonetically is Con-seal-10 or Son -Silly-o. Ask him also if he has any answers for me.

Things may be a little different when ~~xxxxxxx~~ I get to New Orleans this time. Jim knows and resents the fact that I have had to hold back on him in some areas until his moment of need. I have made it explicit: he is the least-trustworthy man in his office (and I know there are three leaks at least from my sources on the other side), and I have seen to it that he learned of my resentment at doing all this work free and having others make money from it, with his blessing and assistance. There is also some resentment, I think, at my going down there and picking up what is under their noses, in those very-brief trips. The crew they have working outside the office is mine, and they cannot manage even it well. I know, for I hear from my own people. I also hear that Jim is not happy about this. Probably true, but there is no alternative for me. He will not sign the death warrants of my witnesses, and he is blowing the good things he is into through ignorance, bad advice, perhaps other things, including a great trust in those who know little but the judicious use of the tongue. Four recent cases are glaring. He didn't even have the address on Dulles, didn't know Behmer hasn't been archivist for a while, and this looks awful to the press. A phone call would have gotten him both, but ego and envy preclude it. However, I will continue to do what I can. I expect to spend almost no time in the office at all this trip. It is the way to waste most time. I have established my own file there, with Louis Ivon, and the stipulation that no one outside the office, particularly no writer, sees any of it. I am not sending things to Jim at all. Louis shows him what he should see. He hasn't time to see all of it, anyway.

The situation there is worse than I here indicate. There is no one competent to do any real investigating. Moex is lazy and can't even keep simple promises when they interfere with his petty pleasures, and he is the only one helping Jim. God know which of the investigators are untainted. They are not, in any event, skilled in this kind of work. Some I like. If I tell you Gary is the best, do you know enough? Things that are sent there by people working with me cannot be found. Some that have been sent by some of us, personally, have never been delivered. I presume, at some later date, we may read of them in books. So, very little original work is done there at all. Morale is low, and how can it be otherwise, particularly when these powerful forces are aligned on the other side. Some work very hard and very well, like Louis Ivon and Jim Alcock, who carries the load of the legal work and does find time for a few other things. He spent part of Good Friday working with me, as did Louis. I'll probably know more when I am there. But last trip, some of the amateurs were despondent. I arranged for a woman to transcribe a dubbed tape of an interview. They failed to erase the tape, gave it to her backward, and she, with great labor, transcribed office secrets. My wife had to type the equivalent of a quarter of a book, in addition to her other work, to give them a transcript. All for nothing. On my return from this trip, once I've got all the notes typed, I'll return to the work I was on. I'll still be working on this, but not as concentratedly. If they blow and go down, we cannot go with them. And we will not. But I am not encouraged by the inability to work with anyone, incompetence, waste and general dismay I find there.

Hurriedly,

May 9, 1968

Dear Hal,

Steve Burton phoned me about two days ago and said that Loran Hall had left for New Orleans to testify. I've seen nothing in the local press here about this latest development but it looks like a good break for the pro-Garrison forces. Have you seen anything there concerning this?

Several days ago I did catch the tail-end of a radio program which said that Hall had identified the voice of the Miami, November 9 tape and that it was the same man who was in on a plot to kill JFK he heard in Los Angeles prior to the assassination. Included in the same radio report I heard was the statement that there was a tape made in Los Angeles of a threat on the life of President Kennedy which Garrison was getting. Steve asked me to come down to Los Angeles and obtain the tape which Hathcock promised me and I presume this may be the same one. This tape was to be exclusively that of mine and Dave Lifton's (It was Lifton who set up the meeting). So far Dave still has not received it nor, of course, have I. I've written Dave asking him to get in touch with Hathcock and arrange to have him meet with me since I plan on being in Los Angeles within two or three days from now.

As I indicated before Hathcock had a very extensive file and knew both Howard and Hall. If there are any questions you think I should ask him see if you can ask them so that I can have them ready when I'm down there. This may not give you ample time to write me while I'm still here but since I hope to be there by Saturday perhaps you ought to send a letter to Steve Burton for me and I can pick it up there.

I've managed to check out the Youngblood you requested me to look into. There was ~~XX~~, indeed, a Walter A. Youngblood as Gary Murr indicated in his letter to both you and me. I'll herewith indicate the stories that appeared in the San Francisco Chronicle on him, as follows:

S.F. Chronicle, December 15, 1960

"MEXICAN ADVENTURE - JUNGLE ESCAPE TOLD
AT FRAUD TRIAL OF FLYER"

"A tangled tale of intrigue, marked by such exotic elements as a harrowing jungle escape and an armadillo feast, was told in Federal Court here yesterday.

It was outlined in testimony taken at the fraud trial of Walter A. Youngblood, a soldier of fortune flyer who says he once ran guns to Fidel Castro's revolutionaries in Cuba.

James H. Forester, 41, a Florida businessman, said he ~~spoke~~ first met Youngblood in an Akron, Ohio, cocktail lounge.

Forester said Youngblood told him that he and a partner had lost a two-engine Piper Apache plane in the jungle on the Mexico-Guatemala border.

Aboard the plane, Youngblood added, had been two Cleveland gangsters fleeing with \$8,000 in cash. Both were killed, but Youngblood asserted his injured partner had been taken out by Indians.

His interest whetted, ~~Forester~~ said he flew Youngblood down to Mexico several days later to look for the plane and its load of treasure.

But three days of flying over the area brought no results, Forester testified. So they turned the trip into a hunting safari only to have their own plane crash deep in the jungle. With little for food, Youngblood, Forester and a companion had to hack their way out.

"If it hadn't been for Jack (Youngblood), we never would have made it out of the jungle," Forester testified.

But Assistant U.S. Attorney John Kaplan said he intends to prove the story of the lost plane with its money was just a hoax, and that Youngblood took Forester for at least \$3,000.

Youngblood is specifically accused of using the wires to defraud another man in the same "lost plane" plot.

The trial is being held before a jury of "men and one woman in the court of Federal Judge Louis E. Goodman."

(Article above contains a photo caption of Youngblood that reads: "Walter Youngblood - Hero or Cheat?").

S.F. Chronicle, December 22, 1960

"DRAMATIC END TO TRIAL - Youngblood calls it off,
Admits Treasure Hoax"

Walter A. Youngblood dramatically halted his fraud trial yesterday and admitted his story of ~~at~~ a treasure lost in a plane crash in the Mexican jungle was all a hoax.

After the noon recess, Youngblood's attorney, Al J. Zirpoli, informed the court that the 30-year old promoter from Miami was ready to plead guilty to using the wires to defraud.

Youngblood apparently spared himself a sure conviction as jurors said they were agreed that his story was a hoax. The trial was in its sixth day.

Federal Judge Louis E. Goodman set January 17 as the date for sentencing and a probation report. The maximum penalty: five years and a \$10,000 fine.

Judge Goodman allowed Youngblood to remain free on \$7,500 bail, admonishing him to stay out of trouble, "having in mind your adventurous activities."

He was referring to Youngblood's adventures in persuading victims to ~~pungle~~(sic) up sizable sums for fruitless expeditions in search of a light plane that supposedly crashed in the jungle near the Guatemalan border with \$800,000 in cash abroad.

Assistant U.S. Attorney John Kaplan said he was ready to prove ~~ix~~ that a spurious story the same in every detail, had appeared ~~xxx~~ in a men's magazine six months before Youngblood began using it as bait.

After the jurors left, Youngblood told Kaplan: "I just want you to know that you have prosecuted this case very fairly and, needless to say, effectively."

"Donate your energies to honest living," Kaplan replied, "and you could make that million."

Earlier in the day, Youngblood said he had been paid about \$100,000 in 1953 and 1954 for helping rebel leader Castillo Armas overthrow the Guatemalan government of Jacobo Arbenz. He said he had never ~~filled~~ filed an American tax return listing the income."

(Article above contains a photo caption of Youngblood that reads: "Walter Youngblood - Too Deep in the Jungle").

This was all that I could find on Youngblood. Incidentally,

regarding the setting of the date for sentencing (January 17, 1961), I checked the Chronicle to see if there was any story on this but there wasn't any. I don't know what the outcome of this trial was but perhaps his lawyer (Zirpoli) should be contacted on this. I would suggest that John Christian look into this if he can. I'll speak to him regarding this before I leave for Los Angeles.

You wanted to obtain a photo of Youngblood. Both articles contain a photo of Youngblood which are identical and I visited the Chronicle library where the photo is stored. The photo of Youngblood is part of a photo of Youngblood and his lawyer standing next to each other, presumably outside the court room.

I checked on the price for a copy of the photo of Youngblood and they quoted me the following figures. For a glossy 8x10 the cost is \$5.25. For the same size photo in a dull finish it would cost \$6.30. They said in either case it would take about two weeks to receive the photo if I put an order in.

This seemed quite expensive but I couldn't afford either one and I told her I would let her know. She said a microfilm copy of the Chronicle could be zeroxed at a price of \$1.00 but this would be of the articles only on Youngblood and not the photos. (On this zeroxing I'm sure I could get a better price quote on Xerox but perhaps this standard for microfilm reproduction costs).

You'll be interested in learning that I finally got to meet with Moss Martin who called you on the Jim Eason show. Martin was unable to be of any help since he said he really knew nothing about Shaw being in town except for recalling a column by Herb Caen that mentioned a Turkish bath club being connected with the Garrison case and that this might refer to a place in S.F. known as "The Club" on 140 Turk Street (which is not too far away from where that cab driver said he left Jack Ruby off a few days before the assassination, if we are to believe the cabbie's story).

You will be interested in knowing that Wesley Liebeler spoke yesterday at Mills College (an all-girl school) at which both I, Paul Huh and Bob Douthitt were present. I brought my tape along and will check to see how the quality is and if it came out I'll send you a copy. I imagine that Paul will send you some notes on this.

Liebeler was not as harsh on Garrison as he was previously. This time he said something to the effect that while Lee Harvey Oswald was the lone assassin of President Kennedy Garrison could conceivably find some evidence of other plots brewing to kill ~~GARRISON~~ JFK around Los Angeles which he said he wouldn't find hard to believe since he knew something about the Los Angeles area.

I asked him if he knew that Dave Ferrie had connections with the CIA-sponsored Cuban Revolutionary Council and that Ferrie also knew Arcacha Smith why did he not question Ferrie as a potential witness in an assassination attempt. I pointed out that both Ferrie and Oswald used the 544 Camp Street and Liebeler explained that there were lots of witnesses in New Orleans he didn't call to testify. He then said "But, I wish I had" (referring to Ferrie).

Liebeler also invoked the use of ~~xxx~~ an often-repeated theme of defenders of the Warren Commission saying that the Commission had never ruled out a conspiracy in its final report only saying that it could find no evidence of any conspiracy.

Last night (or rather Tuesday night) Lane spoke at a junior college and was well received. I met many people after who wanted to work with me in helping in whatever way they could. These are

persons who have not been involved in this case before and are familiar with some work that has been done by Lane but not much by anyone else such as yourself. They were expressing great frustration at seeing little being done until I talked with them. I told them to set up a chapter in the name of the Citizens Committee under local control and to contact Steve Burton. They had already set up a committee under a different name until I mentioned my suggestion. I suggested they get your works and study them.

I just picked up a copy of today's S.F. Chronicle and a story in it says that Garrison had "tentatively" set the trial for June 11. Do you know anything more on this? Lane said the other night that Shaw's lawyers had appealed to the Federal Court (May 7) on the change of venue and that this was an "unprecedented" move. He stated that if the Federal Court approved it would be the "end of the case".

Here are some notes of other items I have looked into which I'll pass along to you:

If you have ever wanted to establish the fact that Regis Kennedy was in New Orleans on November 22, 1963 at the Marcello trial you can find this in CD301 (P.289). I recall that you wanted some documentation on just which FBI agents were there.

For your Department of Coincidence file: Henry Cabot Lodge stayed at the St. Francis Hotel on Nov.22 which is where Shaw also stayed.

Somewhere in one of your letters you wanted to learn more about anyone who had possibly conversed with Oswald in Russian while he was in the Marine Corps. If you'll refer to Ex CD1076 you'll notice a reference to Erwin Donald Lewis of Anaheim, California. When I was in Los Angeles the last time I heard an interview (on tape) of him and it turns out that he knew Thornley also. They were all in the same MACS-9 unit at El Toro. He was asked if he knew John Reine Heindel but did not recall him. Lewis did recall a real stocky individual at the base who seemed to have a Russian name who spoke Russian possibly with Oswald. He could not recall this precisely except to remember that the man was about 6 feet tall weighed 220 pounds had dark, brown hair and wore thick glasses. He said he recalled this Russian-speaking person around June, 1959. He also said that this person was a radar technician. Unfortunately I cannot obtain the tape since Dave Lifton will not release it and he is the owner of it. However, Anaheim is close to where Steve Burton lives and Lewis is listed in the phone book. Perhaps Steve can visit him if you think it worthwhile.

In another letter you commented that Thornley had shown the manuscript of his book to a certain person (I cannot locate this as of the moment) before he had his book on Oswald published. You indicated that this was the only one he had shown it to. I've learned of another person he showed it to who was a professor at UCLA (name unknown) and I believe, in the Department of English. I hope to be able to learn more about this person but I cannot do so until I get to Los Angeles. An interesting fact (if my memory serves me correctly) is that this same person recommended a certain lawyer to help Thornley in his defense against Garrison, and as I recall this person was formerly government-connected. I'll pin this information down when I get to Los Angeles, however, so my accuracy of recollection may not be total in this instance. As I recall the professor had a Jewish sounding last name.

All the ~~XXXXXX~~ names you mentioned in your letter to Paul Hoch you wished me to look into do not ring a bell. On one, it seems to me that I recall a reference to a Juan Calixtas somewhere in Oswald's

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Mexican travels(in the volumes). The name you gave was a Deyahn Calixtas(aka Dion(e) Turner). These names have been passed on to Jim Schmitt to see if he can utilize his photographic memory to advantage.

Well, this is all the news I have from this end of the Coast for now. I'll be writing to you ~~xx~~after I return from Los Angeles and see what can be turned up there.

Hope that you and your wife are fine.

Best,

Hal Verb
Hal Verb