

6/20/72

Dear Bob Woodward,

Your today's story is an impressive coup. I do hope you (all) can carry this further. To me it represents much more than a news story, hence my interest.

I am aware of space limitations and deadline pressures, so I realize you must know much more than was printed. However, I hope you will not interpret a few suggestions as intention to intrude. They are prompted by my own experience with such deviousness and a study of government semantics that has been forced upon me by my own work.

Before noting these few things, may I make a few suggestions you may wish to convey to others on the Post? One has to do with what I would like to be able to believe is not excess optimism in interpreting the Supreme Court decision on bugging. Ron Kessler did some good work on bugging and tapping a while back. There is no restriction under the law on electronic surveillance, as a matter of reality, as I understand the law. It can be conducted indiscriminately until it is productive. Once the interceptors get what they want, they thereafter have 24 hours in which to get a court's o.k. If I am correct, then the restriction is on use, not surveillance, which can be continued. I ~~must~~ have ^{a number} of pages of FBI reports attributed to such things as a "source that has been dependable", a source not identifiable, and the agents regularly burn their handwritten notes after they are dictated and typed. Thus the product of such surveillance could still be hidden. I see nothing in the decision to prevent this from being taken over by local police and private dicks....The second has to do with what happens to the \$10,000,000 collected for the primary campaigns Nixon does not have to fight after the primaries are over? Is it violation of the Corrupt Practices Act to use this money in the election campaign? What else can be done with it? I'll give you two clips from today's Post that bear on this.

Does it seem reasonable that Howard E. Hunt should have an office and a phone for but 24 days of work in almost half of 1972 and but 63 days in 1971, and that the White House operator seems to know his whereabouts? Is it possible that Robert W. Mullien & Co. is working for any Republican committee? Clawson'd denial is less than all-covering, for it is restricted to Colson and "anyone else at the White House". Hunt, for example, was not "at the White House". Is this not true of other staffers?

It is too easy to get too suspicious in such matters. Yet it seems strange that a man with more than 20 years of experience in intelligence is employed as a "writer", especially when his language is, "in view that the matter is under adjudication..." (and it was not at the time he said this.) and then subleased to the White House? "Consultant" on what?

You (pl) were told that "McCord had been hired through the committee's personnel office." Sure, they shuffled the papers. But selected by the personnel office for security work? I think Odle may have been withheld to prevent reporter questioning. I doubt if the guy who gets typists and file clerks hired such specialists on his own. If this hunch is correct, it suggests the possibility something else is being hidden.

As of now, nothing of Hunt's past has appeared in the Post. (I've seen no other reporting.) If he has no Cuban connections of the past, he is the only one. With all the experienced pros, why get a bunch of bumblerers all of whose associates in anti-Castro activity always bumbled? There is, I think, a missing element. My original hunch is that this was done by a Cuban Republican committee. Your reporting of Suarez' connection with Barker does not discourage this belief. And unless there was a change, it would seem that in his campaign if not his selection, Suarez would seem to have required the help of one Fernando Penabaz, I believe then Dade County chairman and, like so many Cubans besides Diaz Lanz, closely connected with Billy James Hargis. In a May 1968 interview with a friend of mine, Penabaz mentioned Fiorini as a source of information for my friend. I believe Penabaz got his law degree at Duke. He is a Baptist. I have a file on him, as on the Cuban-Americans for Nixon--now. They should have filed under the Corrupt Practices Act. I think it would be worth getting copies of their return(s) from the clerk of the house. I'd like to go over them. Some of the names may mean things to me. Unless the law has changed, the reporting should include contributions and expenditures over specified amounts.

Normally the CIA will not discuss what employees or former employees do/did. Do you think it worth giving them a chance to deny that McCord and Hunt worked on Cuban matters? (If Hunt is a writer, remember, the Cuban Revolutionary Council statements were drafted by or for the CIA.)

If Barker is as described, an investor in a number of apartment developments, then he seems to have come a long way from or to have gotten much out of his Guatemalan and other Cuban adventures. It might be worth the time, if this development, almost do, required financing, to see if any of it came from a Key Biscayne bank. ?

McGovern's phrase, quasi-fascists, does not do justice to the legacy to which he referred. In the late 30s, in opposition to FDR and before the proliferation of campaign committees, the Republican National Committee employed a number of then-prominent fascists. I have not looked at my files since before I entered the Army in World War II. I know I had records of payments to Harold Lord Varney, Vonsiatsky and others. I am reasonably confident there was open association with anti-semites, less certain of other racists. It depends on how this develops whether such data can be of possible interest to you.

I am not anti-Cuban, by the way. If you need a dependable source on Bay of Pigs veterans I can refer you to one. One who was housed by Pepe Rebozo when he was repatriated. It is my understanding that the veterans association published the equivalent of a classbook. In 1967 Julio Rebeull was, I think, secretary. His address was P.O.Box 533, Miami. Some, who accepted the U.S. offer of military careers, went to Benning. I understand that they also had a classbook. I've never been able to get either, but in neither case was it important for me to make a real effort. I don't know that it will interest you.

If Fiorini was a Minuteman, as I have heard, one of the more likely sources of information might be Harry Jones of the K.C.Syar, who knew deLough and did a book on them. Almost all the anti-Castroites I haven't met are of this type, including several with whom in Batista's day were doctorates.

Hastily,

Harold Weisberg