

6/26/71

Dear Jim,

Glad to hear from you and to get the copies of the NO Mag articles. In the future when you send printed matter, why not use the special rate, which is so much cheaper? It comes slower, but there really was no rush with them. I'll catch up on them as I find a few minutes here or there.

Your letter is too kind, but I appreciate it. Wish I thought there were a chance of accepting the offer to visit the Gulf Coast. Never had the chance. When I was in N.O. I spent all my time working.

I'll not now have time to respond to everything you wrote, for I stay snowed under, to the point where it has long interfered with writing. I've also filed suits vs the government for suppressed info., and that takes time, too.

Mark killed the college circuit by killing the interest of those audiences he didn't milk. I've not had a request to speak in two years, not even from a black school after appearance of FRAME-UP.

With the Appeals Court decision in the Shaw case, I do not know what will happen. Perhaps it would be best if nothing did. I can't figure Shaw filing that civil action, which he cannot win but which can ruin him. He may be seeking blood, but that is entirely different than a criminal proceeding, and his would flow. He is lucky that indictment is also deficient, for there is perjury other than as charged. Maybe he just wants to hurt those who helped Jim.

If there are any "conspirators" Penn didn't name, he just forgot to use that particular phone book. Poor, sick man.

In fairness to Sprague, I did no more than start him on locating the pictures, turning over what leads I had, and names. Would he had stuck to that and not become an instant expert analyst, where he is far out and unreasoning....When Ramparts printed the Underhill story, they could not confirm it and had tried. ...

Knowledge of N.O. evidence has increased tremendously as we have dug new stuff up. With each cheat what was missed there becomes more tragic...I think I did have something for Boxley, for he'd asked me to locate an air strip and I had, among other things.... I don't have the Alex Gifford interview. I'd be surprised if Garrison did not say more than Playboy used. Norden did do the interview, and he did co-author and co-steal Flamonde's "work". I later heard he also tried suicide. However, I doubt that Playboy put words in Jim's mouth....You are right on the anything-goes school of thought, just so it hurts the government. Almost everyone belonged, alas, which helped me stay unpopular with almost all of them. There were exceptions, like Alcock and a couple of the lawyers, and some whose position required silence but whose attitudes were clear.... In fairness to Sciambra, for all his failings, some things would have been worse but for him...I see an occasional copy of Joesten's sickness. Terrible. ...Except for the phone slip lead (Bud also had a copy) and a few nothings on Bolden, believe me, all the little fact Skolnick had came from what was edited down to FRAME-UP, was copyrighted, and I have complete statements and letters from the guy through whom he got it, Sk's letter of thanks, the works. He, too, unfortunately, is sick. He needs publicity like you need air, to live. And he is cunning. But an animated disaster...I knew nothing of JFK's or RFK's feelings about Bolden. ...Character there is something new, by a woman lawyer, Mrs. Barbara Warner Blehr, that does seem solid and responsible, and on this element, the ballistics, I have copies if you do not. If I have a dipe, I'll enclose. I think someone sent it to me when the LA Free Press used, but I have the originals....

On the King assassination, I'd appreciate anything you may have. You are correct on Stein. He seems to have just disappeared. What is the trail that dead-ended at the new FBI, and where there? All of it, if you can. Can you recall the details of what Grinder said led the FBI and the local police sought? This could be important, for I know someone that is in E-U. Do you recall the Italian-sounding name? There could have been an unnoticed meeting in even the halls, or an elevator, anywhere. Or, that might have been just a meeting point. Did JG do anything on this? Did he know anything? I am sure that more than N.O., other places in La., may be quite important in the King case. I also encourage you to believe that any public inquiries can be quite dangerous, so be careful.

Our finances are such there is little prospect of my returning to that area without a paid-for college (or other) speech, and of this there seems little prospect. The young are turned off, largely JG, Lane and Sahl, who abused them. Can't blame them, but I do regret it.

Must get to other work. Thanks, and if I see anything worthy of special comment as I read N.O.Mag, I'll write.

Thanks,
Sincerely,

June ~~10~~ ^{24 (revised)}, 1971

Dear Hal,

First just let me say how much I regret that it has taken me so long to answer your wonderful letter of 5/9 - I have, as a result of last minute unexpected change in plans, moved to U.S.M., and please note that on return address env.

I cannot begin to tell you what your letter has meant. Nor can I express how deeply I appreciate all of the time and trouble you went to, to write such a long and detailed letter. Your friendship has been a great personal honor to me, as well as a source of inspiration because of your indefatigable quest for truth, no matter how great the sacrifice. My only regrets being that I do not get to see you more to talk to you and that I have not been able to be of more help to you personally. \$

Thank you for those copies of the reviews of Frame-up. I would have read it by now had I ordered it directly from my supplier, but have chosen to get it the hard way, by

campus, not since Mark Lane ^{milked it dry and then} left ~~the~~ for greener pastures. To my best knowledge, you are the only person left who has done the work and is still working to uncover the facts about how and why President Kennedy was murdered. I can think of nothing in our nation's affairs that could be of more importance, nor of anything that has received less attention by those in a position to do something about it.

I regret now, at long last, to admit what I had long feared was true - that much ~~of~~, if not most, of the Garrison investigation was a ~~sham~~ sham, ~~that~~ that many of his witnesses were liars or lunatics, and that it did not succeed in solving the case nor of bringing the guilty parties either to justice nor to the national attention. I do not mean that the probe was a deliberate (or accidental) fraud, nor any question of Garrison's integrity, of which I have utmost respect and confidence.

However, your letter does explain almost all of the questions I had had about the situation down there, and I'm sure

expected the New Orleans office to be the center of the most intensive activity, with floods of new revelations, and answers, and a desperate need for competent volunteers. To my chagrin, all I saw were a lot of people coming and going, a sullen switchboard operator, many police and crime investigators in mass disorder, a "researchist" in the person of one Tom Bethell, whose shirttail and tie hung out like old paint rags, and a huge wad of gum in his mouth, and a boss who seemed at times like the Wizard of Oz, whose grand pronouncements to the press often left his staff in bewilderment.

I could not agree more with Sciambra when he said you saved Jim from being disbarred. I know even better, for I heard that you, ~~often~~ ^{several times} functioned as a diplomat to break up various and sundry little bruhahas among the staff and even the lawyers, including Alcock and Sciambra. I may have it wrong, but I was given to understand that the latter two had tried but just could not get along with each other except when either Garrison, or probably you, stepped in to settle things. I was not at the trial either, but I heard

To indicate his dislike for Moo. You are right, though; it's all spilt milk now, so I will not waste any ~~more~~ more of your or my time on it, except insofar as your kindness and trouble in writing me that long letter is concerned.

I did not realize, either, about Penn Jones, until his 3rd volume came out. You may not have noticed it, but he also implicates President Nixon as well as Brown + Root, The State Dept., etc., as you mentioned. I suppose the only thing I can add now to what you've made me understand (and for that I am, reluctantly, grateful - reluctant, I suppose, because I'd hoped you were wrong, but you're not) - is that the fact the President of the United States could be assassinated on a downtown Metropolitan city street, ~~and~~ his killers escape free, and the government issue a false report of how it happened, is so fantastic, so inconceivable, yet true, that to most people it has to read like Seven Days in May, it has to involve sensational, fantastic details, and high officials.

I must in other areas of which you speak, simply confess ignorance, and, above all, disappointment, for they seemed,

contribution in his ^{almost complete} list of films and pictures and tracking them down, but by now I wouldn't be surprised if he got that from you. And speaking of those "confessions", all I had to go on with respect to Hicks was what appeared in the papers, and not knowing what you did, it could be conceivable, with the exception I suppose of that radio antenna. The same goes for the stories of Nagell and Underhill; the confirmation of their positions as agents for the C.I.A. lent credibility to their stories, without knowing the facts that you have now brought up. But in any case, these were not the areas that I worked on in New Orleans. So you have in no wise hurt my feelings, although I deeply appreciate and am sincerely touched by your strain to avoid doing so. And even more am I grabbed by the fact that you went to so much trouble just to help me, to keep me from being hurt and embarrassed by all of this. It was hard to believe you could be that thoughtful and kind, and that such an important and busy man like you would sit down and take such an enormous amount of time and effort just for me is still hard to get over. You are indeed a wonderful

I did know that you were ~~the~~ ^{the} major force in the actual spade work down in New Orleans, although I regret to learn that, as you say, Garrison ~~did~~ virtually no investigation, and conducted no competent interviews. It was clear from the beginning that you had supplied him with most of his original source material on Ferrie, Bannister and 544 Camp, but I am shocked and dismayed to learn that he ~~did~~ not carry it through, as I had trustingly believed he was doing. Much of my faith in him was based, I suppose, on the positiveness and absolutism of his statements, spoken with authority, usually prefaced by, "We know this beyond any shadow of a doubt, our office established this months ago, ~~and~~ our investigators have assembled all of the eyewitness and physical evidence, far more than necessary to prove it, and we will introduce it in court as exhibits, but not before that." I do not mean to suggest that I believe he was dishonest, but I must regrettably agree that he was excessive.

The first, last, and only time I saw you was brief, but it was enough to convince me about you, and I regret now that I ~~did~~ not take up Bethell's offer,

Dallas or Washington, I forget which), you asked to see Boxley in private, and the two of you went back into another office. I assumed (and Bethell agreed) that you probably had some new evidence to discuss confidentially with Bill Boxley, and I did not want to interrupt your session with him, as I assumed it was productive. I wish like hell I could go back in time, and reassert myself, and insist that you crash at my pad there in N.O., where I was living at that time, in either June or July 1968.

Things might have turned out differently. I agree that much of Garrison's PLAYBOY interview did, tragically, turn out to have been improvised, and rather poorly at that, but it may not have been all Garrison's fault. In a televised interview after the Shaw trial you may not have a copy of, Alec Gifford, ~~the~~ News Director of WVUE-TV there in N.O. confronted Garrison with his statements promising various witnesses and evidence in court, which were never produced, and Garrison replied that he did not make many of the statements attributed to him in the Playboy piece, that a great deal of material was inserted by Eric Norden who

Norden, as you know, assisted (in fact, according to Publisher's Trade List Annual, co-authored - [Bowker's Books In Print so designates him].) Paris Flammonde's book The Kennedy Conspiracy. This was the most thorough, most well-written, most complete, collection of misinformation of everything written about the Garrison investigation. He did not check out most of his facts, apparently just publishing at random every sensational scrap of paper he could find, and it evidently had Garrison's blessings. This, until your letter came, was the source of a major part of my consternation. I do know that there was a school of thought, at that time, to which Garrison must have subscribed, to the effect that even if a particular story (such as that of Broshears, for example) were untrue, that if it pointed to a conspiracy to kill President Kennedy, and that the facts were withheld by the government, that it would contribute to the public clamor for a new investigation. This troubled me deeply, and still does, and there is much more about it that we need to discuss. This type of thinking allowed,

As for Skolnick, I will just have to take your word for it. I had spoken to him several times by long-distance telephone in Chicago where he works (also teaches law part-time at night), before you warned me about him. He also warned me about you, and said something to the effect that you were part of some sort of plot to get rid of him because he was getting publicity, and results! He said ~~you~~ you had told the radio stations in Chicago that his material was unreliable, and stolen from an unpublished manuscript of yours (he denied that vehemently). Otherwise, ^{though} he seemed like a very bright, cordial person, but you never can tell. Bud said he gave Skolnick some data he ^(+CTIA) had on Bolden, but that Skolnick misunderstood it badly. He charged that many of the "critics" wanted to keep the Warren Report legally intact so they can keep writing about it, particularly, he said, Dave Lifton. And they may be racists, because of his efforts to free the first Black S.S. agent who was falsely charged + imprisoned, he added. As for Bolden himself, I ~~was~~ ^{ONLY HOPE} that he's not really as sick as you say, but I don't doubt that the torture he has been through has affected him severely, and

I think you're right about New Orleans magazine. A very nice lady in ~~the~~ N.O., whom I did not know, was so kind to make copies of their complete files. I am going to copy them for you and send them, and hope you appreciate it. Some are interesting, others amusing.

I must agree with you that Charach was solely out for publicity, ^(+ maybe money) unfortunately. That became clear to me instantly, although his material may not be totally valueless. I had heard, but not seen, that he had a great deal of photographic evidence. Also, I agree with your respect for Dr. Noguchi, and the fact ^{he reported} that ^{the} bullet was fired 3-6 inches from behind, while Sirhan was 3-6 FEET in front, is certainly intriguing at the very least.

Finally, I can neither confirm nor deny that Garrison ~~felt~~ ^{wanted} you to stay away from N.O. The communication between us even while I was working for him was about as easy as talking into a dead phone (I drove some of the girls crazy, particularly Lorraine), and since then has been nil. If he thinks I deserted him, it is only because he can't or won't read his mail, as I was one of his most loyal, and in the essential respects

The line went dead again. ~~I~~ AT that time, Charles Stein was a major witness in the Ray case, and made New Orleans appear to be a key checkpoint. One of my jobs in searching out links between three assassinations was to try and find out who it was Ray met in N.O. to collect a fee from. I wasted an enormous amount of time on it. The trail dead-ended at the new I.T.M. bldg., where the Managing Director, (a Mr. I.E. Grinder), told me that the F.B.I. and the local authorities had searched the bldg. without success for the Italian-sounding name, and were unable to connect it to anyone in the bldg. They could have met on the observation deck or ⁱⁿ the "Top of the Tower" restaurant, and exchanged money. This was one of many promising areas I was not able to persuade Garrison needed pursuing, and I did not have the competence nor the resources to do it.

~~But~~ I went through N.O. last Sunday briefly, and had it been a weekday I would gladly have stopped in and talked to Ivon, whom I also liked. The next chance I get, I will, and will let you know.

I am living on campus this summer in Room ²³⁷ ~~238~~ Bond Hall, telephone (601) 266-7537. Also may be working part-

on weekends. And I know you know that your standing invitation still stands, indefinitely. The house in L.B. is bought and paid for (no note), so it is ready and waiting, anytime. IT is a large (about 100' wide) red-brick one-story home 1½ blocks north of The Gulf of Mexico, and ~~with~~ has a guest bedroom with 2 beds where you + your wife are always welcome, honored guests, since you already occupy a ^{large + warm} reserved space in my heart. I hope we can get together soon.

Thank you again for everything, and please to keep in touch. I know if you ^{ever} have something for me to do for you, that you won't hesitate to ask. Don't.

Sincerely your friend,

A stylized handwritten signature, possibly reading "Jim", written in black ink.