

12/7/70

Dear Sir,

I'm sorry I can't get to respond to your letter of the 1th (and I'm not
in a hurry to get another of my articles and should like to have them), there are
some things I'd like to do.

I don't believe I've ever met you. I don't know how you are, so I can
only say that I'm glad to hear of you. I don't know if you are still in
notes on the subject of the book.

With the good news, when you see something again, see if you can get
any more information on the subject. A review of the book in the (in the USA
and in Spain) is a good thing to have, but I don't know if you can get
in the book. I don't know if you can get it. I don't know if you can get it
and I don't know if you can get it. (I don't know if you can get it).

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Yours truly,

William Carey College
P.O. Box 405
Hattiesburg, Mississippi 39401
December 4, 1970

Dear Hal,

I still feel so badly about what happened. Washington is a terrible place to get stuck, especially in the winter. All the way home on the train I kept thinking about it (what you said about being patient, etc. got to me), and I have decided if there is any way humanly possible whether I can afford it or not I will come back in December instead of February. I'll let you know definitely next week, so wait till you hear from me before writing back. We need very much to see each other again as soon as possible; the stuff you mentioned about the Panthers and Toledano, Treen, etc. is intriguing. I can help there, I know. I had intended to wait to talk this over with you but due to the time factor I'll tell you now that I worked on Treen's campaign staff and trust you'll wait until we can get together for discussion, as it requires considerable explanation. Over six years ago, I worked with the Goldwater campaign for a two-party system in Louisiana, which was fairly successful. After the campaign I stayed acquainted with the organization which held regular meetings under the title "Louisiana Conservative Union". But the more time that went by the more I began to realize that these people were more anti-American than patriotic, that the goals to which they aspired bordered on neo-fascism. I did not know Treen very well, but I do know his organization, and you are right in saying they are extreme, very anti-black, racist (some dropped out when George Wallace announced his third party candidacy, and others when Goldwater said he would enforce the 1964 Civil Rights act and that he was not a segregationist). I'll tell you all the rest of this when we get together. But I am sure I can find out whatever you want about them. And regarding Treen, I think you are correct in your delineation of him; although he is not a KuKluxer himself, he did nothing to discourage Klan support, and they gave him plenty, including Kent Courtney (of "Let Freedom Ring") and others. Anyway, we'll talk all this out soon.

As you know by now, I did not leave the Brinsquier tape for you with Fensterwald and them. What you said on the phone confused me so I took it back with me and will make an exact duplicate to send up there to you, and if they ask me any more about it I'll just tell them I gave it to you and you decide what to release to them, okay?

Let me put it this way - ^{Treen} ~~the~~ and Butler are cut from the same cloth.

and, you're right, this might be misunderstood.

I think that's the best way because, as you suggested, to catch C.B. as off-guard as possible I tried to talk to him on his "level", which is, as you also suggested, fascist. I have been wrong before, as you know, but this time I think we've really got something. He answered all the questions you gave me to ask him, some he dodged (e.g. the second agent, he told a deliberate lie about), but others he made significant slips about. For instance, you know in that Hargis pamphlet he set the exact date of finding out about the camps at August 3, two days before Oswald came into his store. On my tape he says it was a week or so before. You, of course, know the significance of that, and you may find other things I didn't catch. His indefiniteness about the date is another contrivance I'm sure, because he has an excellent memory for dates, including insignificant items. His off-mike conversations were also quite interesting, not about the assassination (I was very careful to get everything on that subject on tape) but on other matters, and I'll tell you all about them when I see you.

I'll get a copy of this up to you as fast as possible. Unfortunately right now the tape (due to another foul-up I'll explain later) and most all of my files from working for Garrison and *since (which I took with me) are now* at my Houston office but I'll be down there this weekend. Otherwise I'd enclose it right here.

You are so right in calling him a packrat. I thought I held the world's title as the number one string saver, but I play a low second fiddle to Bringuier. He has an attic above his store at 111 Decatur (right next door to where Oswald came; he has since moved), and he guards it with his life. I am sure the contents of it rival Pandora's box. He gave me a few copies of his literature, and I'll send you photostats next week, but I'm sure this is mild compared to whatever else is up there. I'm sure only his wife and Fulgencio Batista would be allowed up there, though.

One thing worth mentioning, and maybe we need to discuss this, but I did not detect the adversity you hinted at between Bringuier and his brother-in-law, and Bringuier and Butler. Bringuier introduced us to his brother-in-law, Rolando Pelaez, and the latter did not seem to mind the fact that C.B. seems to run the show. Bringuier left with us and went in our car to his house at 501 Delmar in Gretna, across the Miss. river. He seems to come and go at will, and that seemed fine with Pelaez. They seem to get along beautifully, at least now. Maybe there was something more to it than you mentioned. Also, we were wearing buttons which Butler puts out which say, " 'Yes, I am a Marxist', Lee Harvey Oswald' ". (I'll send you one for your collection if you'd like.) Anyway, he asked us for one, which we gave him, and he asked us where we got them. I told him we got them from Ed Butler;

I was a little apprehensive in that. But he acted like it was fine, although they evidently have not been in touch for a long time since he knew nothing about Butler's Square movement and had never seen these buttons or the bumperstickers before. (We also gave him two bumperstickers which had the Oswald quote, and ^{one of} a pix of Castro with the inscription "Hitler Is Alive And Well In Havana".) Before we went down there, I put these on the back of my car window, for his benefit. We really did everything right. René and Salvadore are both natives of El Salvador, Central America, and their native tongue is Spanish. We really gained his confidence that way, although they know nothing about the case, and I was afraid they might blow it for me. No problem, though. In fact, they really got him to open up about Castro and the revolution, etc. Interesting stuff.

René also said he only knows Brinsquier vaguely, and his opinion seems to be mine, although he too is of the same political orientation I think that's why they picked him, and because of his excellent contacts. This is what he told me and I said this to you over the phone but I don't know if I made it understood. He told me that the first time anyone ever talked to him at all about the assassination was when Garrison's men came to him, before the case was public. This shocked me, because I had understood otherwise. So this at least explains why this is not in the Warren Commission files, but I realize it seems like a contradiction in my previous letter. Actually, the first letter I wrote you about him was based on our conversation. The second was based on my interpretation of the same talk. But I was going by the story in your book, which he said was incorrect. (I assume you got that from the papers.) The 100 hours the F.B.I., C.I.A., and Secret Service spent questioning him was after Garrison's men came to him. He said they asked him if he had had a man by the name of Sergio Arcacha Smith working for him. He answered yes. "They were interested in him," he said, "for stealing those blimp bombs from Schlumberger in Houma". So he gave them his employment record file, with a photo "and you'd have thought I'd invented some new kind of salvation. Then after that it was just a regular parade, and they all wanted that same file. And I just told 'em-- I don't have it; Jim Garrison has it. Then after that, somebody came out with the story that Oswald had been in my office ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ It's altogether possible, but I don't remember the sonofabitch." He said that at that time, he was working in the Cirali Building, and he was also working part-time for some company (I didn't understand the name, but I think it was connected with Michoud) and he was in charge of getting draft deferments for these young men, and he thinks Oswald may have been one of those but there were so many he says he really does not remember. Earlier, I asked him if he remembered the names of the agents who talked to him and he was annoyed "Hell no, that was so damn long ago" (He is not a peckrat like Brinsquier, and even if he had any

records of anything he would have lost them in the hurricane, because he lost everything, and what was left was hauled to the city dump by the Army Corps of Engineers.) Anyway, he said that he had organized several prominent civic leaders of New Orleans into a "Crusade to Free Cuba Committee", to raise money. But he said that when they would meet that the Cubans wouldn't worry about how they were going to raise money, "they were just fighting over who'd be king when they got back." Anyway, he got tired of that, and the group folded. Then when Garrison's men came to see him, he cooperated with them "because at that time I was extremely p.o.'d with Sergio because he had left me holding the bag." He said Sergio had gone down to Miami (this was around 1966) and they were supposed to go down to Mexico City for an account Arcacha had evidently lined up, "so I had the car all packed and when I got there-- no Sergio." You have no idea how funny this was to me. I used every ounce of strength to hold in a huge laugh; if you knew Ronny better you'd know what I mean. Anyway, he was supremely hacked off with Arcacha, and, oh, I forgot this, Sergio had heisted a car, according to Ronny, then he corrected himself and said, well, I don't know if he heisted it, anyway, he acquired it, and he had gotten mixed up with a girl and that was the reason for going to Miami. Then later, he said, "I got a card from him in Dallas, saying he had suddenly found it necessary to leave town in a hurry, and ~~would~~ I please forgive him and all that balogna." It was some time after that (not very long after) that Garrison's men came up to see him. I asked him why Arcacha skipped so fast. He looked at me sideways, "You don't know how the F.B.I. operates do you?" No, I don't. "Well, you see, they don't employ anybody they can't arrest." At about this point, his lovely wife Katy interrupted to ask about what to get at the grocery store and Ronny told her we were talking about Arcacha. "Yeah, Jim, he was the nicest man," she told me; "he was just a perfect gentleman, had excellent manners, and dressed real nice." Ronny said, "That was what got me about him; he had alot of guts for a guy with soft hands." He has no idea how important this is, and he shows remarkable unconcern for the fact that the F.B.I. reports on him are classified. I tried the same trick on him that I used on Bringuier and said my theory was that although he had told them nothing of value about the assassination, that they must have investigated something he said which indicated he ^{was} working for Castro or connected with the Communists in some way and that they suppressed it to avoid an international incident. He interrupted me and said, "I don't think he knew who the hell he was working for. That was just the problem; he was off his rocker. That's what Sergio told me. He said he was nutty as a fruitcake."

I give you all this for your information, and anything else I can get so that we can explore what areas need to be re-opened in the case. For the present, I think we've gotten all we're going to get out of Ronny, until the case is re-opened. And I have some ideas

for the investigators who interview him. First of all, speak to him at the end of the day when he's tired, preferably after dark, before or during dinner. If possible, they should take him to a very fine restaurant maybe in the Quarter, and, convincing him that it's all on the expense account (so he won't feel guilty about making a hog of himself) let him drink plenty (preferably Bourbon, and let him get relaxed), and just ask a few simple questions, then sit back and listen. It is very important that they be people in whom he has confidence (if his wife can be along that'd be fine), I will gladly volunteer for this assignment, if no one else can, and perhaps you could be the other, depending on exactly how the case is re-opened. But for the time being I think we should avoid pestering him again.

I do have some good news regarding getting the case re-opened. Like you, I have always favored an investigation by an appropriate committee of Congress. So recently I contacted my Congressman, the Honorable Bill Colmer, chairman of the Rules Committee, and one the nicest men ever made. He promptly answered my letter and expressed some concern, and has agreed to see me. Unfortunately, when I was there his legislative assistant was not in (as he had promised to be). The Congressman had suggested we go to the Judiciary and/or Internal Security committees. So, on my own, I walked blisters all over my feet, with some success. Bud Fensterwald was of help and sincere, enthusiastic encouragement. I met, first of all, with Mrs. Bess E. Dick, staff director, and Mr. Kenneth Harkins, chief counsel for anti-trust, of the House Judiciary Committee. The discussion was considerably more serious and "tense" is not quite adequate because it was friendly, but extremely formal and without levity, which I am prone to inject frequently. They listened patiently as I told them that I had evidence of the existence of a subversive organization (good beginning) for the purpose of violently overthrowing the United States government and instituting a complete change in domestic and foreign policy, and that it had already accomplished its purpose partially; thus, I concluded, the leaders of government were- and are- in danger; the President's life, and the Congressman's own life himself [the Honorable Emanuel Celler, D*NY]. They listened with courtesy and deference, and when I was finished explained the procedure necessary for a private individual citizen to request a Congressional investigation. First, they said, everything must be reduced to writing, and documented with facts and evidence, not just innuendo or suspicious inference. Enclosed should be copies of all correspondence with the Justice Department to prove that their official position is that the case is closed. Then they will acknowledge receipt of this document, and will read it and examine it carefully. If it merits attention in their opinion, they will take it to the Justice Department, and if they get no cooperation, they will consider making an initial inquiry. All of this, of course, is primarily at the discretion of the committee.

I met with Mrs. Mabel Baker, on the staff of the Government Operations Committee (which I considered the House counterpart of the old McCarthy committee). She said their committee does some investigations, but evidently just of governmental efficiency, that this matter would be primarily under the jurisdiction of Judiciary, and that the interests of the two committees do not overlap. This of course is hogwash, since everybody steps on everybody else just in the elevators much less jurisdiction of investigations, but she said it so emphatically that maybe we should be careful so as not to offend anyone. Anyway, on this particular committee, I think it looks less hopeful than our other two possibilities,

for the time being.

The second of which is House Internal Security. (Incidentally, I worked strictly the House side since Fensterwald said he was working on the Senate side, mainly James Eastland of my state, and others.) I met with Mr. Robert Horner, chief investigator, and Mr. Neil Wettermann, staff investigator, and gave them copies of my files of correspondence showing refusal of cooperation by the Justice Department. They promised to read it all over carefully, and expressed interest, so I told Bob, and Bud Fensterwald, and they said they would follow-up. ↑

The investigator also stressed that there must be a reason to question the Justice Dept's closing. And he said that any investigation they would have to take would have to have a legislative purpose.

That's it in a nutshell. Actually, there's much, much more to this but I can't get it all in a letter. I am going to try to get everything together I can, and everybody possible to work on preparing this "brief". I'll write out to Los Angeles and see if I can get any one out there working on it, and Skolnick up in Chicago has some students ^{who could be} working on it, and whoever else I can think of. Let me know of your feeling when you can do this. And we'll get together as soon as possible.

Oh, on the Ed Butler stuff, I'm still collecting everything I can get. I know I haven't sent much, and I'm sure that can't be all there is, because I understood they had a big splash with commercialization of the assassination a few years back, as you said. A friend of mine went out there to SQUARE headquarters, and gave me a vivid description. It's on Wroxton Avenue, just across the street from D.C.B.A., and they really have quite an operation, with posters and bumperstickers, and propoganda galore. He said they have a big store, and along one whole side wall are books from top to bottom end to end, some, he thought, about the assassination, and lots of propacanda. Unfortunately, though (which is the hazard of asking an only mildly interested friend) he was in a hurry, and everything was for sale and he didn't have but about two dollars. Anyway, he came back with a satchel full of newspaper files, but I take it this was from his own personal collection, not from

Butler. He is a native Central American and we sometimes have communications difficulties. Anyway, I'll send you copies as usual, next week when I write you again. When he goes home over the holidays, he is going to bring me back his exhaustive files on the assassination, most of it in Spanish, but he will translate. Evidently from what I understand shortly after the assassination the foreign correspondents who left rather quickly with what material they had and, in fact, some who stayed over for the Oswald killing, managed to escape the clutches of the government with some vital information, when an embargo had been placed on almost all data to domestic correspondents. (see, e.g. Lane's testimony at 2H42, top page) I know you know far more about this matter than I but I state what I know in case you need to focus my understanding. In any case, I think Salvadore may have some of that material; I don't know. If I see anything even remotely of value, I will, of course, pass it along.

And you'll hear from me again toward the latter part of next week, I am pretty sure, and I should know something definite by then.

Hope this finds you well.

Your friend,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jim Brown', written in a cursive, stylized script.

Jim Brown