

Dear Dan

6/22/77

Relet 19, Ray: I was away, in Dallas working on an FOIA case when it happened. When he could be offed inside the jail easier than in an escape attempt I never believed there was any conspiracy to get him out to off him. Despite what UPI put on the wire out of Dallas, probably misled by WFAA, which wanted the story/plug.

Considering some of the less than golden work in Fonzi's past that he is getting disillusion with his committee ~~work~~ can be a sign. CBS reported 20 staff resignations.

On the FBI files, I've been keeping a low profile, making no public use of any. Or any distribution. There are many reasons. However, there will, within a short period, be the end of the file from which they are now complying. I will then send you all on Somerset. In part this is because of the enormous backlog of copying that is exhausting L1. Also it may suggest something else. Won't be long. Maybe end next week.

I'm expecting proof of an investigation of Somerset's Washington tale. My suspicion is that the record will say it didn't happen.

Scott is a nice giant of a kid. I've known of his mafia-did-it belief for a long time. He knows I do not credit it but have done all I can to help him. He has yet to return anything, though.

The McLaney-Benton connection may intrigue you and it may make a good story but when you connect it with JFK let me know.

During the short Hall hearing I sat next to Scott. He told me he was going there. If he did not tell you Hall's coming over to me to greet me ("lets go talk when this shit is over") and our departing together and our leaving together seemed to upset those with feet in mouths. I paid no attention. Scott told me. They upset easily, I guess.

There has been no release of FBI documents on Somerset. What I referred to is those I got by suit. There likely have been CIA general releases, because so many of us are after them, that include McLaney. I have them all. Supposedly, anyway. But I've read few. Surprised Weberman did not give you copies. Give me the numbers and we'll send them. Without the numbers the CIA added this is now impossible simply because we've not have time to read or even break into files. Just great big stacks.

If McLaney's lawyer send the mag a threatening letter you have some kind of credentials for it. Probably intended to discourage publication. The cost of defending a spurious suit can be high.

There is not only the accumulation of records I've not been able to go over and other work I can't get to, I have FOIA affidavit drafts to do. And other things I can't get to. So if I haven't sent the Somerset stuff in a couple of weeks remind me. I'm pretty sure I've told you all the little these pages say.

est ti Nikki and the animals,

June 19, 1977

Dear Harold,

Finally I have a chance to write! It has been so long since I have gotten the chance to sit down and bang out a few of the letters I am ~~a~~ remiss about.

First, let me ~~a~~ say that I hope both you and Lillian are well and enjoying the newly arrived summertime weather. As you might imagine, the heat and humidity ~~is~~ getting extremely intense down around these parts. ~~We~~ ^{we} are into ~~the~~ rainy season now, and hardly a day goes by when we ~~don't~~ ~~in~~ don't have at least a sprinkle.

Both Nikki and I are fine and reasonably content. And ~~Despite~~ some financial problems, and an occasional battle between two or more pets, we're coping.

Well, with that out of the way, what did you think about all the hubbub over Ray's escape? I imagine you would agree that most of the House committee again suffered nearly fatal ~~ff~~ foot in mouth disease? The more they continue, the more they amaze. Even Gaeton Fonzi appears to be disillusioned about the lack of any kind of direction and sense of discipline.

I have been doing quite a bit of research at both the local and federal courthouses lately. There ~~a~~ are quite a few cases involving some of the characters I've been researching (most notably McLaney and Somerset). I've also ~~x~~ found some stuff on Sam Benton. The more I get into the McLaney-Benton connection, the more it intrigues me. And from some of the things I have been picking up from other researchers who have been coming into town lately, that interest is not ~~x~~ confined to me. Scott Malone, who is doing a piece for New Times on Ruby-Rothman-Trafficante was also interested in McLaney. He told me he had been speaking to you. I tried to help him out as best I could, and he gave me several documents I hadn't seen before. (Oh, while I think of it, can I ask if you can send me ~~the~~ newly released documents pertaining to Somerset you said you had gotten from the FBI? Also, do you know anything about CIA documents on McLaney? A.J. Weberman claims to have some. ~~If~~ they do indeed exist, I think they could be extremely useful in what I am pursuing.)

Did I tell you that Miami Mag. received a threatening letter from McL's atty.? A guy by the name of Martin Blitstein. ~~x~~ ~~k~~ It seems McL learned of my probe via his ex-wife, whom I contacted. ~~There~~ are rumors that he is desirous of reentering the Bahamas; could that be why we got the letter?

~~x~~ Well, I must get to bed, it's about 2am. Our best to you both...

Regards,

