3/24/75

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Dear Steve,

When you were here Saturday and read the transcript I gave you, you raised the question of possible rebuttal, in the sense of an effort being made to rebut. I told you I have an abundance that makes rebuttal impossible on whether Hoover ever ran down all those leads that as of the time of his "solving" the case he had not.

It had been my plan to take a series of relevant but also fairly uncomplicated documents from my files and have copies made for you tomorrow. The combination of overdoing the Paul Bunyan bit over the weekend and moving all those loaded file cabinets today were a bit much for me, so I'm too tired to remove these files now. And in the morning I must get a new tailpipe or I'll get some police trouble I'd prefer to avoid.

So, let me tell you of a few of these items all of which are more than adequately covered in my files almost entirely by FBI reports. I have in mind a possible follow-up as well as meeting anticipated efforts to rebut.

Hoover personally was worried about an "imposter" in Russia when Oswald was there, I believe 1960. This was before the assassination and before the Commission. However, there is avoidance of this in the Report and not any investigation.

A corrupted version of part of this was carefully fed to the New York Times by a Nixonian pretending to be a Kennedy man, James Harris. Ben A Franklin did a piece that appeared 2/23/75 under the false head, "Data on Oswald Apparently Withheld from Key Warren Investigation Aides."

None of this was ever "withheld" from anyone, investigators or researchers. I have copies of much more than the Times was fed from the Warren files. The Hoover letter was written 6/30/60 to State. (The pointed language is "...there is a possibility that an inposter is using Oswald's birth certificate...")

Despite a gangup - Panorama had both Harris and former staff director Howard Willens, the eminent lawyer, opposed to me - I think it is fairly safe to predict that Harris will not attempt to pull this dirty trick to exculpate Hoover again or that Willens will again leave his shell. Happily Willens was on the Justice payroll and loaned to the Commission. He was also Commission-Justice liaison. So when he started this pretending about not knowing I dumped a bit on him. Beginning with why he didn't see to it that the FBI investigated all the leads it had on an imposter. I stuck to one you may remember from Oswald in New Orleans. From the Commission's own files.

They had an abundance of such cases, all over the country, some faked by Cubans later Watergaters.

When we discussed this Saturday you referred to a "second" Oswald. I prefer the formulation of that chapter of Whitewash, "False Oswald."Second tends to limit the number to one other, this second; and it connotes the same function, which I doubt was the case.

At the time Hoover was worrying over someone in Russia pretending he was Oswald when the real Oswald was actually there, someone else was pretending to be the real Oswald of all places in New Orleans, in an attempted purchase of vehicles for anti-Castro use. I handed Willens, on camera, the FBI report on this. It says these things and more, one being that the FBI got the dealership's papers on the deal. So, asked I of Willens, why worry about whether anything was withheld from you when it wasn't, why don't you tell all the good people looking and listening why you as liaison did not get those papers from the FBI and why you did not demand that the FBI investigate

fully instead of not at all. Indeed, why should anyone have wanted to counterfeit Oswald in New Orleans when Oswald was in Russian? And why were all of you so incurious? He could not and did not answer and when he pulled the typical lawyer's trick of a fillibustering evasion I haul him back and got his silence.

Fiorini/Sturgis, by the way, was one of the Cubans, and his sidekick in that canard so many Cubans fed the FBI was the man just convicted of car-theft with him, Buchanan. I also have those FBI reports, some of what I gave Bob Woodward that the Post wasn't interested in. The same series includes Miguel Augustin Shares as knowing in advance of JFK's coming assassination. The identical name figures in the Ameritas diversion in the Watergate early days, when it was so necessary to misdirect investigators.

(Another, Fernando Penabaz, whose records is about as ~~mmmmmm~~ unsavory as nay, pulled the identical stunt when Bobby was offed. I have a full story on that/him and about 15 FBI reports of his doing it when JFK was assassinated. Naturally Penabaz became Dade County GOP chairman and was Billy James Hargis's biographer and foreign-affirs expert. I have FBI reports putting him with General Walker and the Cuban who gave Oswald his cover identification as pro-Castro in New Orleans, Carlos Bringuier.)

The classic case the FBI and the Commission both ignored is that of Sylvia Odio. When the Report was in page proof the Commission decided it dare not run that risk and the FBI actually found the characters. I go into this in the chapter The Hoover Diversion in Whitewash II. When Liebeler was under pressure after this was out and sought to exonerate himself before UCLA students (he then taught law there) he told the story I told you, of learning that the FBI had found those characters the very night the presses were to roll with the Report. I have Liebeler on tape telling how he alone made up that non sequetur that this was not the real Oswald because the real Oswald then was in Mexico. Tape is tramscribed, too.

The actualities are that the FBI ran none of these to ground and the Commission did not demand that the FBI do it. It ended where it all began, as put in that 1/22/64 session.

I have FBI reports of the counterfeiting of Oswald in Atlanta (Hal Suit, the reporter, had that story), all over Florida, New Orleans, Dallas and other places. None run to ground. Repeated instances in same places. Substantiation in some, too.

Here is the way "investigation" went when it could not be avoided, a New Orleans case. Oswald gave out this Fair Play for Cuba Committee literature. Some, bought from the FPCC, had the return address of the largest and CIA funded anti-Castro group, the one that was to be the government in exile, Cuban Revolutionary Council. (Oswald in New Orleans beginning p.251 and resumed later.) A pro-Castro using an address that would deliver pro-Castros to that gang? The Commission said that Oswald had this literature, other than obtained from national FPCC, printed in New Orleans. Wall, the FBI field reports said the opposite, that it wasn't Oswald. I interviewed the only two people who knew about that printing, with a public official present and on tape. Both independently repeated it was not and could not have been Oswald. Both also picked the same character from 100 pictures I showed them. But in Washington the FBI changed the field reports around and made it come out that Oswald using the name Osborne had this printing done. The Report uses that language and all knew it was false. Where some years ago I made xeroxes of some of this stuff I have them and enclose them. These are not complete. They are used in Oswald in New Orleans. Of the others I do not have duplicates.

(Bartes was in Oswald's notebook. The FBI did not have to ask him if the CRC was anti-Castro and their purpose in speaking to him is not included in this report. Bartes told me in New Orleans about April 1968 that he was still under federal protection. He also confirmed that he had flown planes for the CIA in the Congo.)

Neither the Commission nor the FBI was innocent. It was not all Hoover and it was the Commission staff, the Willenses and the Liebelers and the Rankins, as well as the members. One of the largest joint operations was making lids for cans of worms.

The FBI had pictures of an Oswald associate and withheld them from the Commission while giving it the reports specifying these pictures. Cunning Hoover! They thus could not complain about him. This is not the crap in the New York Review, which I have not seen. I have those FBI reports and I have asked the FBI for the pictures under the amended FOI law. I did this verbally 3/14. Lesar is to give it to them in writing for me. (Before I got the transcript and for other writing.) Ditto for two other home movies of which I know, made of Oswald being arrested in New Orleans. They didn't even tell the Commission that one was taken and they didn't tell it that they had the second. Typically, the Commission did not demand that they get it. Both photogs told me they did not get their originals back and both said their film was edited. I have a copy of one. The day I got it is the first time my luggage was intercepted. It was not in my luggage luggage.

Running to cover not running to ground was the name of the game.

Would I love a rebuttal with me to rebut it in the Press Club auditorium!

I have all of this in documents and it is a minor sample on that one subject.

If any of this can be funny, then the funniest has to be the Commission playing a false Oswald as the real one in New Orleans, one instance, at a time when the real one was accounted for as home in bed by his wife. I still hear from one of the Commission witnesses to that caper, again part of establishing a cover. He used to fink for the FBI. They gave him a rough time so he helped me and hates them. His last mailing to me is postmarked a week ago today.

If they do undertake to rebut ex parte (is there another way?) I'd like to know where I could hold a press conference in D.C and read from a big stack of FBI reports! And, naturally, the Commission's.

Best regards,