

Mr. George Lardner  
Newsroom  
Washington Post  
1150 15 St., NW  
Wash., D.C. 20005

1/21/78

Dear George,

I write rather than awaiting Monday to phone because this will be a reminder to you of the records you promised to copy for the doctoral candidate who has been here taking what she wants from my file and because your yesterday's story is based on more of them, including a quote you did not use, the "toad" quote.

As I told you when you asked <sup>about them</sup> me/on Thursday, some of these records relating to Ford may be pertinent in my suit for the executive session transcripts, now about to be argued before the appeals court when it sets a date. I did not get yesterday's paper until today. However Jim did and independently offered the same belief. It means more from the lawyer.

I'm not asking for a second set. I can make copies for Jim when I read them before sending them to Nancy, the woman who is the doctoral candidate. But I would like to read them as soon as possible and then pass them on to Jim, so he can use them in his preparations. Perhaps I could do something from reading them first.

The records shipped to me are in 16 cartons. Perhaps you are aware of this from your own purchase. I have no place to spread them out. There is no inventory in what I received by first-class mail. That I do not yet have the records themselves and won't until after a thaw is not the fault of either the FBI or the post office. I requested postal rather than UPI, which the FBI was going to do, because the UPI trucks cannot get into our pine-covered lane and it would have meant at least 8 trips of 250 yards each for the UPI driver. The post office here, where all the people are and always have been very good, was about to prove that neither rain nor snow <sup>lines</sup> before dark of night when I urged them not to because of the condition of the hill at our place and the fact that the county had not finished clearing the primary roads. Yesterday it was even worse, as I'm sure you can guess. They would have done it today, I believed, so I went out for the first time in two days and measured depths of snow, underlain with ice. Up to 15 inches. I called them and encouraged them to delay it until Monday - and then to check with me first. They appreciated it because they are moving the mail-handling part from several miles in the country to the new main post office this weekend.

So when I get the boxes and can take the time from my court-imposed obligation to work for the defendant in my suit I still will not have easy access.

There is another problem. They send me records bound with Acco clips. These present a cutting hazard to me and I have to be very careful of any cut or bruise. I have to sit for a quarter hour after my Thursday blood test to be sure I won't bleed. I can't handle them easily because of her arthritis. So even if you can provide me with the citations, as I asked, it will not be easy for me. I hope you can provide copies I'll send to Nancy for her thesis, which it suits admirably. I'll make the copies for Jim and court use, too.

I was disappointed that you did not use the "toad" quote. That is a side of Hoover I'm not really surprised to see but must tell you is a unique formulation from the hundred of his notes I've read and have. I don't think you have any idea of the amount of time and money - and risk - more than one government component has gone to to protect Ford on the Commission. As in my suits on the executive session transcripts.

However, it was a first-rate job, a good story. I hope there is more tomorrow. I must confess a certain bias in telling you that the Post's treatment has been the only really responsible approach to what otherwise is a media event and can be disinformation. Was.

In the summer of 1965 Mac Mathias went down to the Post to interest Friendly after reading the manuscript of the first Whitewash. (And I then did not expect to do another.) Friendly went through the motions only. Nothing came of it. Then when I got the first of the kind of records that are now hailed as new and unprecedented I went in~~ix~~ with a xerox and gave it to Bradley. This led to Dick Harwood's story, only not as fast as I'm telling it.

You can read the pertinent excerpts in the addition to Whitewash. Hoover accounted for the crime without mentioning a known shot, the one that missed, and a known wound, in JFK's anterior neck.

Perhaps this figures in what is thought of me at the Post.

Remember the title, "whitewash?" And the subtitle of the second book, "cover-up?"

— To me, except for added detail, what you are now reporting is not only not new - it is the basic line of all my work.

It took 12 years but the Post is now back looking at what I tried without success to get it to look at and see in 1966, through Mac, whose idea it was, the year before. I did not know Mac had spoken to anyone until he told me to go see Friendly.

Naturally I'm pleased at the focus of the stories. And I believe it is the one aspect that today can be addressed with some certainty of satisfying the national dissatisfaction with the investigations.

Sincerely,

# Documents Show Ford Promised FBI Data—Secretly—About Warren Probe

By George Lardner Jr.  
Washington Post Staff Writer

Gerald R. Ford promised to keep the FBI secretly informed of the activities of the Warren Commission almost immediately after it was organized to investigate the assassination of President Kennedy, FBI files show.

Then the House minority leader and one of the commission's seven members, Ford made the offer in a Dec. 12, 1963, conversation with FBI Assistant Director Cartha D. DeLoach which Ford requested be kept "in the strictest of confidence."

Headed by Chief Justice Earl Warren, the commission had held its first meeting only a week earlier, on Dec. 5, but it was already embroiled in internal bickering, according to a two-page memo DeLoach submitted to his superiors after the meeting in Ford's office on Capitol Hill. Ford, for one, was critical of Warren, and the House GOP leader reported similar complaints by House Democratic leader Hale Boggs (D-La.) and former Central Intelligence Agency Director Allen Dulles.

Made public this week along with more than 58,000 other pages about the Kennedy assassination from FBI files, the memo by DeLoach continued:

"Ford indicated he would keep me thoroughly advised as to the activities of the commission. He stated this would have to be on a confidential ba-

sis, however, he thought it should be done."

DeLoach said Ford, then a Republican congressman from Michigan, "also asked if he could call me from time to time and straighten out questions in his mind concerning our investigation. I told him by all means he should do this. He reiterated that our relationship would, of course, remain confidential."

"Wellhandled," FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover jotted down on the report, that additionally assured him that the bureau's relations with Ford over the years had been "excellent" and that the congressman had even been given "an autographed copy of the director's book, 'A Study of Communism.'"

A spokeswoman for Ford said he would have no immediate comment.

The Warren Commission, by contrast, appears to have had no comparable insights into the workings of the FBI. In fact, when Ford told DeLoach of "startling information" about the Oswald case that he had just received from CIA then-Director John McCone, Hoover harrumphed in another notation:

"This shows how garrulous McCone is."

The report concerned an alleged exchange of money in Mexico City between Oswald and "an unknown Cuban Negro," which, DeLoach assured Ford on the spot, had already been largely discredited.

The early dissatisfaction with Warren, according to DeLoach's memo, in-

Despite such attention to detail, it is sometimes difficult to figure out the FBI's investigative priorities. In a Jan. 17, 1964, memo Hoover, for example, told a top aide to Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy that the FBI did not investigate Oswald's alleged killing of Dallas policeman J. D. Tippit "because it was strictly a local crime."

"Our investigation," the memo said, "only touched on those aspects of the crime which related directly to our interest in Oswald and the assassination of President John F. Kennedy."

Contributing to this article were Washington Post Staff writers John Jacobs and Ron Kessler and researcher Dennis Rini.

involved what Ford called the Chief Justice's attempts "to establish a 'one-man commission'" by naming one of his proteges, Warren Olney, as chief counsel.

The proposal was headed off, according to a subsequent DeLoach memo, only after "a number of sources" worked "to confidentially brief members of the presidential commission, other than Warren, as to Olney's background," which the bureau evidently found objectionable.

As Ford related the outcome to DeLoach, former CIA Director Dulles "protested quite violently" when Warren proposed Olney's appointment at the first commission meeting. By the second session, Ford and Boggs stated their opposition. Boggs was quoted as warning flatly "that he [Boggs] would not work on the commission with Olney."

Former Solicitor General Lee Rankin was named instead, as a compromise choice. He, in turn, was apparently dissuaded by the FBI and others from pressing for his own investigative staff. By Feb. 17, 1964, the FBI files show, Hoover was telling publisher William Randolph Hearst Jr. that not only was Hoover "convinced that Oswald killed the President" but he was also confident "that the commission will ultimately reach that finding."

Another document indicates that testimony before the commission was on occasion carefully coordinated. On May 13, 1964, FBI Assistant Director William C. Sullivan reported that he had just been contacted by James Angleton, the CIA's chief of counterintelligence, about McCone's scheduled appearance before the commission the next day.

"Angleton said it occurred to him that it would be well for both McCone and Mr. Hoover to be aware that the commission might ask the same questions wondering whether they would get different replies from the heads of the two agencies. Angleton wanted us to know some of the things which he believes McCone will be asked and the replies which will be given.

"One question," the memo continued, "will be 'Was Lee Harvey Oswald ever an agent of CIA?' The answer will be no."