

Dear Larry,

1/26/73

Before leaving for Washington this a.m. I picked up the mail that had by then been sorted. It included your letter of 1/14 with numerous clips, etc. enclosed. I'm back with a few minutes before having to leave for Lil. Without having had a chance to look at the clips, a few comments on your letter.

Rife: I've sent you copies of everything I've sent him involving you so you know I have not contributed to the building of false hopes. I realize you encapsulate, but don't overlook these of Rife's claims: that the Illinois statute had run before they tried to do anything and there was, because of this, no legal basis for touching him on the State charge; that he did not commit the crime and has a sworn confession from the man who did, if I remember that affidavit correctly; that he did not saw his way out of jail but was walked by a jailer.

Newsweek newshen: If Newsweek does not use and if she is satisfied they are not going to use, do you think she would not regard it as an effort to steal her work from her to ask her about the 'Chicago laundry'? By now you have a memo from me suggesting it was to hide indirect payments to some of the victims, so I'd theorized this could have been the case and could have involved Carlstead. I'd observe any restriction, my chief and at the present only interest is knowledge, based on which I can think further.

Hope you got assigned to the second crash hearing. On the cyanide, despite the earlier official FAA holding that there was no such hazard possible with the plastics approved for the planes, I have no trouble believing they lied. They do all the time. So, I can buy it that some of those who died might have escaped otherwise and were poisoned by the gas. My interest was limited to the positions of the gas victims. If they were all in one spot, I'd be less inclined to go for the plastics theory and more inclined to go for localized release. I still have no reason to believe this was anything other than a real accident. But that doesn't mean I'm not aware of contrary indications. To illustrate my approach in such matters? When I got a duplicate of the so-called Oswald rifle, one of the more costly experiments I conducted was designed to see if what the FBI did not try to establish was possible, that the dents in the cartridges found at the scene could have been deformed in normal usage. I couldn't duplicate it. A friend who is a first-rate amateur expert could not duplicate. I got a professional expert, he figured out the exceptional way in which it could have been done and they did it. So, I established for the FBI what it failed to establish, that the damage to those empty shells could have been legit.

Brener, the girl, your reporter friend, and he's a miser: I've checked on many a miser, like Oswald. I find no case where the finances check out. With Oswald, where it was only marginally possible that the money attributed to him could have met all the spending of which we knew, I have found expenditures not accounted for. This tells me that is only relatively slight, he had to have had another source of funds, and he wasn't putting Marina out. With Brener, one of the more solid things is that the money he is known to have spent, without doubt, exceeds the money that at maximum can be attributed to him. That he was a miser thus becomes irrelevant. And he wasn't, anyway. Not staying at the Waldorf and going to a "massage" parlor. In this area, cheaper motels than those he used were convenient to him.

Crazy Sherman is that, crazy. Mitchell's "pipeline scandal" is all public. Gilding the lily leaves it a lily still. It involved a ~~firm~~ law-firm client, Tennessee. Jack Anderson alone did much with it. Mitchell may have been involved in much that was dirty, but the least likely material of value is what was known. How blackmail with that? As you by now know, Jennifer White wondered what besides the money he could have been seeking.

What is new to me on Wash is interesting: that he has no partners and after his DJ experience still handled Mafia cases. This means they trusted him, not typical behavior. Makes it less likely that of all Chicago lawyers he was used for this for no special reason.

If you get to cover the MSB midway hearing, see if you can find out if the altimeter was ok, if the plane was on course only too low (and why), if in form you can't print, and what was on Mrs. Hunt's other luggage...I'll write again after going over clips. Thanks,

Jan. 24, 1973

Harold.

A bunch of stuff that has been collecting.

I have been working the hearings on the O'Hare crash and haven't had time to check further into the Midway matter. The National Transportation safety board is scheduled to be back in Chicago in Feb. for the Midway thing. I will request to cover that one too, which may be useful to our purposes. Some cyanide was also indicated in the O'Hare crash.

A friend of mine works for newsweek here and is now leaving for Boston Bureau. I took her out for a few goodbye drinks and she talked. Said that they had proof that the money in the crash had been laundered, didn't say how or when or when her magazine will use the info.

She also spent a week or so on the Bremer thing up north and is convinced he was alone. She said she could find no indication he was tied to anyone. (I'm not arguing that, just ~~repeating~~ repeating.) She said that he was a loner and a miser until he met that girl. When she dumped him he started to go to pieces. She talked to the girl for sometime. She didn't say too much because she's a fine reporter, but also a friend.

I've gotten two packages from Rife filled with papers etc. The case keeps sounding better although he does make mistakes on things like the FBI arrest report which is really an Illinois report, although they get most of the info from FBI. I haven't approached the bosses about the story in detail yet. I mentioned it to city editor and he said come back and talk in detail. He likes the idea of a guy getting 20 to 50 yrs for a few bucks of scrap metal. With all the nice touches to it I should be able to interest.

Don't mention to Rife, I don't want to get his hopes up. The only thing that really bothers me is that long record. Maybe I can work the trying to go straight and they won't let him angle?

Trib had long piece on Janus , I'll try to look up.

RE: What was Hunt looking for if not money? Crazy sherman said it was secret papers dealing with a pipeline scandal involving Mitchell.

The attorney who picked up the money for Hunt here is a former Asst. U.S. Attorney, handled some local Mafia cases and a tiny bit of action on Chicago 7 case. No law partners.

f.