

Mr. Alan Fitzgibbon  
P.O. Box 34071  
Bethesda, Md. 20817

12/11/85

Dear Alan,

I'd hoped you'd have heard of the hearing I got before Judge J.L. Smith and would be there yesterday so that we might have met. (It went as well as I could have hoped and we'll see what happens.)

You say you are looking for a better place to live, preferably a country house. Where? In many ways this is a fine area and it is about an hour from downtown D.C. except at rush hour, when it takes only slightly longer usually. If you want to explore this area I have a friend who is new in real estate, with a large local firm and is honest. Something to bear in mind is that on occasion the tenant house of a farm may be sold or rented separately. At the same time, it may be that the tenant house may require work to meet decent standards.

With regard to Ernst, I'd forgotten Salisbury's article, which I'd read. I think he hit the essence of what I knew. If I remember correctly, Ernst was one of the leading red baiters inside the ACLU who also red baited ACLU people. I think it more or less coincided with the period of his Hoover relationship. But that part of his past was public.

All I remember of what the disclosed records I have indicate is that there came a time when Hoover just cut him off.

Country house is a bit ambiguous. Jerry McKnight, history prof at local Hood, moved up here from Greenbelt and wouldn't think of moving again. Nor would his wife, who travels 30 miles daily to work. They got an old house near us in suburban Frederick. We're a little northwest of the city limits. It is not unusual to find homes with 2-5 acres, more often 1 or so, in this area. We're above the summertime air contamination for the most part and another advantage of a little elevation is the quality of reception on a wide variety of public radio and TV stations. And the additional stations that can be picked up well. The Hood library is not large but it is good enough for Sam Adams to have worked there on his TV special about Vietnam.

I was not close enough to the Ernst situation to know much and have reason to remember it. However, I remember two of the lawyers who suffered from it. They were rather nice guys, labor lawyers, partners in a New Jersey firm. One, Abe Isserman, was disbarred. The other is Sol Kapelsohn. If you can locate one of them he might be helpful but either would be rather old. Abe was keeping company with a woman I think was an actress named Madison, perhaps Joan. She lived in NYU. A New York lawyer, a friend from Senate Civil Liberties Committee days, may have some knowledge or may be able to refer you around. He is Sol Rabkin, 75 Henry Street, Brooklyn 11201. Abe's disbarment was political.

Real estate is not cheap around here largely because so many have come to prefer it to Washington and Baltimore and commute.

Hope your visit with the family is pleasant.

Best wishes,

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December 6, 1985  
P. O. Box 34071  
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Mr. Harold Weisberg  
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Dear Harold:

I'll pass on your information about Lonnie Hudkins to my Houston correspondent if I hear from him in the New Year and he seems more serious than he has recently. His last letter seemed unusually confused; my FBI team chief told me recently that early last month he had bewildered her by cancelling several of his ill-stated requests and submitting several equally ill-formulated new ones; and two days ago I called the Secret Service to see if he had asked for information about the two Dominican-Americans and the alleged 1961 plot against JFK, as he said he intended to do, but found that he had not. I therefore requested those materials myself.

I quite agree that costs and the public and institutional good resulting from disclosures are two urgent research matters. At the moment I am only toying with the idea of an FOIA book, but if I become serious about it next year I'll of course draw up a protocol for the necessary research and send you a copy for comment before I start. The agonizingly long Galindez project must take precedence.

Your mention of Morris Ernst made me hungry for whatever information you can give me about him because he figured so prominently in the Galindez case. Harrison Salisbury seems to have covered the Ernst-Hoover relationship, though with little emphasis on the ACLU, in his long piece in the Nation a year ago; if you didn't see it and would like a copy, let me know and I'll send you one. I was astonished by the number of Salisbury's inaccuracies, however. He telephoned me out of the blue at the start of last year and later called three more times for information about Ernst's role in the Galindez case, with excursions into Ernst's dealings with the CIA and FBI, and I gave him what he wanted. In the fall a Nation editor phoned to read me what Salisbury's manuscript said about the Galindez and I corrected a large number of errors of both fact and interpretation. Later the editor called again to say that Salisbury had rejected all the corrections except those directly pertaining to my study of the case, and when I read his article in print I found that many of the errors I had discussed with the editor still stood. I mentioned this curious episode to William Reuben, the Hiss researcher, in a conversation a few months ago and he said he had caught several other errors in the same article. And when I happened to read Salisbury's Without Fear or Favor about the New York Times, I found that that book contained many small errors too. One of the more annoying was Salisbury's consistent misspelling of the name of Castro's early minister Raul Roa as "Rao." In short, I've developed a certain disesteem for Salisbury's accuracy.

But to get back to the subject: If you have any information about the Ernst-Hoover relationship other than that in the Salisbury article, any corrections of information therein other than about the Galindez case, or any information about Ernst's activities or character aside from his relationship with Hoover, I would certainly welcome it. I've a copy of all the Galindez papers he deposited in the National Archives (around 8,000 pages) and will undoubtedly visit the University of Texas Library to study his non-Galindez papers there, but I am eager for leads to other information.

I'm off to visit family in the West from the 17th to the 7th. After returning I hope it won't take too long to finish up the remainder of the documentary phase of the Galindez research, after which I can find a more permanent place to live (preferably a country house), retrieve my temporarily stored belongings including my main and massive Galindez files, word-process all my hundreds of pages of notes, and then begin the interviewing phase of the research. I can see already that merely locating all the people I must talk to will be a major headache: people don't answer letters, women change their names through marriage, personnel and membership office clerks are zombies and refuse to give out addresses, and heaven knows what else. Any ideas on tracking techniques?

With all good wishes for the holiday season,

Best regards,



Alan L. Fitzgibbon