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Dear Jim, Assassins committee Hall hearing 6/7/77

Well, what the committee has thought and said of me in the past is nothing to what I can expect now.

When you left me off I went directly to the committee's hearing room, one of fairly large capacity, close to completely full. I got to sit next to Scott, behind Butz, who had Dick Billings with him and Kathy.

It was late but the hearing had not started. I was as far away from the witness table as possible in the room save for one seat. While I was talking to Scott, very soon after I sat there, Hall has come over to me. Of all the people in the room. His voice carries. After a few words he said he wanted to get together with me when the session was over. I waited and he did, with his lawyer, accompanied by a recent law graduate. We left together, with Gardner, who I thought might find the experience interesting so Hall invited him.

I did not leave the seat until we left. You know the trip on the crowded bus was a bit much. (I'm glad the FBI agents didn't mind my walking around like a college professor but that did help. I also think that went about as well as we could expect.)

We all went to the Sheraton. When the first cab had people in it George and I awaited the next. They had gone to their rooms and were back in the lobby when we got there. We all went to the Ark Pub and stayed there until the lawyer came here for some records I thought he should have. We drank, extensively, and it was all very friendly.

Hall began by giving me these credentials to George and his lawyer: I don't agree with all they write but the only two honest writers I have ever had any dealing with are Hal and Art Kevin. They are both always honest.

What surprised me, because I have always thought he may not know what is truthful and what some of his soldier-of-fortune dreams, is that he was completely faithful to my recollection of our long interviews in 2/68. (His lawyer learned a lot Hall had not told him, too, as he told me later.)

There were stories I had not heard before and I'm sure there are others.

Because it was understood - I saw to it - that unless otherwise agree it was all off the record, I made no notes and I'm not going to now. This was to protect Hall against a big spread in the Post. (And won't the committee have another conviction when they learn Gardner was with us!) George made a few notes afterward.

The committee part was strange. They were late starting and they ran a few minutes only. Hall gave his name and city only and then took the fifth only. They then asked him only if he was in Dallas 11/22/63 and he again took the fifth. Preyer then said there seemed to be no point in proceeding and Thone said he thought they should agree to keep the subpoena in full force and effect and Preyer asked if he would agree to return and testify on September 21 and Hall said less, that he'd be back. That was it and I think it signifies something they are cooking up. Three months ahead is a bit unusual, too.

It turns out that this was virtually rehearsed. They told Hall and his lawyer, also his Kansas cousin, Bryson Mills, exactly what would happen.

They also told them as I told Art that they have Weberman's tape of his phone conversation with Hall. And what was supposedly destroyed, something that was stolen from Hall's home for me. Not that I knew anything about it until after the fact, when Billings sent Acoca out for it and Acoca reported he had not gotten it and my source told me his associate has gotten scared and destroyed all. Weird.

Lawyer is Bryson Mills. His associate is "Arthy whose last name I never got. Seemingly bright and pleasant young woman who is becoming a clerk to a federal district judge. You may hear. I urged use of PA vs all agencies now that they have three months and I told him about several decisions.

I did not look around the room. I spoke briefly to Bud and Kathy and Billings, "Ark and Scott, and at the end was talking to Kevin when "all came up for us to leave.

You can't get much farther to the right than Hall but in his way he is a pleasant fellow who wants to be friendly. He offered to meet me at the airport, put me up and even lend me a car when I'm out there end of next week. I think he meant it. He is under no illusions about my beliefs.

Because I did not move around I missed what even if I discount for exaggeration must have been a thoroughly professional cussing out of Lane. I suppose Lane started making one of his speeches or something. Hemming also was there but I did not see him. If he was well inside or went out the other door I'd not have seen him or he me.

If I'm going to have meeting and drink I prefer the Sheraton over the Carlton. You remember I drank all the "rish the "Carlton had with Walter. Well, that didn't happen at the Sheraton after twice as much- and the Post picked up the tab all around.

If I had seen Rawls there I'd have asked him along with "all's okay, and, I think on my recommendation he would have agreed. I saw others I did not suggest. I don't know what if anything will influence the major media but if there is anything it is openness and accuracy. Relative to the immediate, Gardner at least knows how open Hall would have been if not abused and endangered. This does address the assassins committee. George and I were not with them for about a half hour because of the different cabs. It happens that all my backgroubding was accurate, after so long a time. On Odio, for example, Hall said he just does not know, that he could have, if not the way she says, or he might not have. This is on the question of being there. This is what I recalled and had told George. The FBI has the two other versions. Yes and "No.

The ALB had a handout in which they used my interview. I did not give it to them. Or to anyone else, although I intended it for "arrison, that being the purpose of my seeing Hal.. Rather getting him to go to N.O. I have not read it yet. This has been interrupted by several phone calls, one long and on other matters, so it may not be as comprehensible as it could be.

One call, approvingly, was from a reporter on the Rawls story. I guess that now that I'm past a proper bedtime I'll read it abed. Hastily,

Mr. Jack Huston,  
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6/8/77

Dear Corky,

By the time you can receive this I'll have started on a trip I expect to last several weeks. The purpose is to obtain evidence for a suit in which I'M engaged. I expect it to take me to L.A. If I feel up to it after that perhaps I'll stop off in Vegas on the way back. If I do it will have to be only briefly because of the need of the litigation. This is the minimum. My concern also now is for how much I'm up to.

This is the first trip of more than a day or so since I left the hospital almost two years ago. I've not been on a plane for any length of time so I don't know if that will make any difference. And my physical strength is not what it was this time last year.

If you are able to come to LA that would be much better for me. If you can you can reach me through a reporter friend, Art Kevin of KMPC. His phone there is 469-5341. His home is 761-3436.

As you probably know by now Hall took the Fifth yesterday. He came up to me just before the hearing opened and asked that we get together afterward. We spent several hours drinking with his lawyer at his hotel.

What is surprising is that I recall no variation from the story he told me 2/68. I then had thought he was exaggerating and enlarging in various dramatic ways. But in several hours of chatting - I was not grilling him or anything like that - he was entirely consistent after all these years. Either he was truthful or had really memorized, which I do not find easy to believe.

The years have not changed him. He is the same flamboyant overgrown boy.

Another surprise is that the committee told him and his lawyer what you once stole for me and then told me your partner had destroyed it has, like the notebook. I'd like to know how this is possible. The obvious explanation is that it was not destroyed, as you said.

My opinion of the committee is unchanged. They are irresponsible, dishonest and wrong-headed. My respect for them is not increased by Rep. Yvonne Burke having called me a son of a bitch to a reporter friend.

If you are cooperating with them that is your affair. I hope you do not have unpleasant experiences and feelings afterward if you are.

Hall had agreed to be a voluntary witness without subpoena until they tried to deny him the right to have a witness with him. I knew this and have from the first. I do not doubt him in this because it is exactly what my terms would have been and what his were when I persuaded him to go to New Orleans after he had defeated Garrison's subpoena in court and did not have to go.

Hope things are going well with you.

Best wishes,

Dear Gary,

6/8/77

Yesterday the House assassins committee had Loran Hall before them in a show effort that apparently ailed. I had written Jim a letter on it when he called me so I'll send you that copy. This will not be completely explanatory to you. I can add, briefly, that my experiences with them are all bad, satisfying me that they are not for real, not honest, not capable, and not likely if they can reform to have any credibility. I thus have nothing to do with them. With Hall they behaved particularly badly and without any need. They made an agreement with him through my good friend (and good reporter) Art Kevin for two of the staff to interview ~~him~~ him in Art's presence and then insisted on having no witness. While Hall would not accept that they serviced him with a subpoena executed a week earlier, which all of us took as advance indication of intent and bad faith.

I recall your interest in that matter, one of the reasons I write.

Another is the lingering Alvarez matter, about which I have been in touch with Paul.

There are some strange things about this Hall business, not all explained by the ignorance, irresponsibility and media-madness of the committee. One that troubles me is part of a story you may recall. Although I was not aware of it and had not asked for it- and would not have- a stranger from whom I've since heard off and on did a black bag job on Hall for me. His partner later became frightened and the story I was given is that what they stole was destroyed. One of the items, an addressbook of Hall's, is in the committee's possession, from what ~~xxxxxx~~ they told him and his lawyer.

Paul has been pretty informative on the Alvarez matter. We have had disagreements and have not been in touch. But after I saw the Alvarez statement on his 1975 crap that his work on it was supported by ERDA I filed an FOIA request with ERDA and asked Paul for more information. It is Paul's belief that ERDA really had no connection with that project. Maybe Nobel laureates are this way, file a "legal notice" when it is not applicable. However, I have other information, not about ERDA, that makes me unsatisfied. I can also see that this is a cause of embarrassment for Paul. So I am asking if you know anything of this of the past. Anything Paul may have told you that could shed any light on this.

I'll be gone for a while. I leave for Dallas Friday. From there I expect to go to the west coast briefly. I'll be gone about two weeks or so.

Save that my physical strength is not what it was things are as they have been, more or less peaceful, with my main concentration now on King records I'm obtaining.

Hope you had a good vacation.

Best,