

6/17/68

Dear Helen,

You sent me two copies of the first page of CD 86, one of which I return. I have the feeling of having read that file perhaps two years ago, and again I realize how much I can no longer remember. Generally, I think it now best for you to check with Paul before you buy documents. The groups out there is active and brilliant. I am no longer working in this part of the files, indeed, in any of them on a systematic basis for months, for there is other work that to me and now is of higher priority, work that I can do and others cannot or will not- in any event, do not.

The extent and organization of my files (or you might think, in looking at them disorganization, makes it impossible for me to go over them and send you such first pages. I have all the available indexes, as Hoch now does. He is doing something with them. Again, ask him, for it would take me at least a day, to merely copy them. Perhaps he has some in form in which he can provide copies. I do not know whether he has to do his own Xeroxing, but it costs him only 10¢ a page, half of Archives charge.

Thornley may have pretended to you that he had never seen the 26 volumes, but I think it unlikely, for his friend and present defender Dave Lifton has them. For the future, could you write me a separate memo on your offer to him and how little interest he had, whether or not he said he had seen them before, what, if anything, he seemed interested in? He has been writing as though he knew what he was talking about. I began with the feeling with which you end that paragraph, and "looked up his "agent" to send him that message. I have changed my opinion. He is a not nice man, a bad one, with intentions as unpleasant as what in another would be called "beliefs". Steffen was right. He should have been unhappy about what he (with Lifton's help, tried to do to Heindell. The polite word is "frame". If you have time to give me the citation, I'd appreciate any indication that Jenner may have felt Thornley had CIA connections. I do not consider it unlikely or impossible. He served that and alone, regardless of intent.

I know about the sick and sickening Capote. I was spared the agony by out habits, which almost eliminate TV save for the news and a scare getting scarcer number of "cultural" programs. There were not three assassinations alone-the others are forgotten. I agree they all have the same end in mind. I've said so from the first, even predicted Bobby's in a January letter to a friend of his.

Gotta run. Excuse typos;

Sincerely,

4666 - 27th Ave. No.  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33713  
15 June 1968

Dear Harold:

How thoughtful of you to take the time to write with encouragement. I will admit to a few feelings of the 'what's the use' type, but this was momentary. Please don't entertain the thought I will give up. One thing I have plenty of and that is determination. I did come to a near standstill for about a week because it seemed important to listen to everything that was being said, so far as one person could cover it.

Turning on the newscasts has become like living on the floor below a centipede who has dropped three shoes on the floor and you know he has all those shoes still pending. All one can do is hope the exterminators arrive in time to stop it from removing any more. Perhaps I should say 'pest control' rather than 'exterminator'.

A while back when I mentioned acquiring material from the Archives, you suggested asking you first in case you have some of the items we wanted. It seems that the best way to tell whether a Commission Document merits attention is by looking at the first page and the index to the document, so this is what we decided to order first.

Enclosed is a copy of a copy of the first page of CD 86 as an example of the form used. If you have any of these first pages that are not included in the 26 and could send a copy of each, then we could order others you don't have and send you copies in return. The same goes for the index pages. The good thing about the index pages is that it is possible to learn the exact number of pages in each document.

Haven't heard a peep from Thornley. Bob Ruark suggested I phone him and offer the opportunity to examine the 26 volumes since he had said he spent only one evening leafing through them and he certainly could not learn much in that length of time. This came about when I told Bob that, from what I had read, it would appear that Thornley was not telling all he knew and that perhaps he was not aware of this; that if he had a chance to read some of the testimony he might find he did know something of importance that he had not considered before; that he could be telling the truth so far as he knew it but, to someone with more knowledge of the facts, he would appear to be lying deliberately.

Steffen chides me at times for tending to give everyone the benefit of the doubt but I suppose this was a built-in trait that I just cannot stop. I do recall that when Thornley was on Bob's program, he felt to blame for any trouble caused Heindell since he was under the impression he was the only one who had mentioned the man's name. When I told him he was only one of many, he seemed relieved. But then you have listened to that tape and know he is ignorant of almost everything except his own testimony. He also made some remark to the effect that Jim Garrison even suspected him of being a CIA agent or something of the sort. If I remember correctly, I think even Jenner seemed to have some reservations on that point. At least, that was my impression.

Probably if you did not hear Truman Capote on the Johnny Carson show Thursday night someone has already told you what he said. He made some very good points and then ruined the whole thing by assuming Oswald guilty and by his misunderstanding of the rights guaranteed everybody, whether educated or not, by the very Constitution he seems to believe is being subverted by the Supreme Court. Of course, I am judging by the old yellowed copy of the Constitution I have.

My copy says the accused cannot be made to testify against himself - so does the Supreme Court - and, certainly, having a confession extorted from him would be testifying against himself, especially if the confession is false. My copy says the accused shall be afforded counsel - so does the Supreme Court - and it does not limit services of counsel to the court room. There is something else about being judged by a jury of his peers. Now, I ask you, how many poor slobs from the ghettos have faced juries of their peers? Most of them face a judge only and I don't think anyone's imagination would stretch far enough to consider a judge the peer of a rioter or a looter. The judge himself would probably sue anyone who suggested equality of that kind.

We don't have too much time left between now and November and such a pitifully short time till the conventions. I am afraid the way is being prepared for this to be the last election as we regard elections for a very long time and I believe this is the intention. Capote's theory that the three assassinations were to pave the way for a take-over agreed with one I had already formulated but only up to a point. My impression from what he said is he is looking for salvation from those very forces that I consider will most benefit from the unhappy events. And if we are given a choice between a Reagan and a Wallace, I fear it will be the last choice many of us will ever have. Can't you just see Yorty as Attorney General?

It is just such possibilities as this that will prevent my becoming discouraged so long as they are just possibilities and not fact.

One thing is for sure: If things do happen to turn out alright, it will not be the fault of the press. Even if they have not themselves been brain-washed, they will have to bear the guilt of having tried, with too much success, to brain-wash the public.

Can you imagine any greater irony than this: While our government is using all its resources to free one people it is leaving itself open to being taken over by another totalitarian administration?

The postman is almost here so I have to stop. Please don't worry; I am not about to give up.

My best.

*Helen*