

10/24/70

Dear, Silas Matt,

The immediate cause of this new futility of ~~wit~~ writing you again is a xerox of a xerox of an article in New Orleans Magazine for an unidentified ~~W~~"January", by Eugene A. Sheehan. It is illuminated with a picture of Oswald credited to you, not Black Star. Indistinct as this picture is through the several stages of xeroxing, it seems pretty clearly to have been taken in Dallas. Several things are of potential interest and value, so I'm asking for prints of each of the pictures you may have taken, uncropped and, if it is not asking too much of you, a second print of each that I can distribute for others to study.

There are some interesting things in this story. It is obvious Butler inspired it and that Sheehan is unquestioning and uncritical, repeating whatever pap he was fed. If you know ~~Min~~ and can energize yourself ~~en~~ enough to ask him what got him started and interested and whether Butler was his source on all of it, that might help. The percentage of error in the story is rather much above average, and some of the errors are in themselves interesting and may be significant.

Without making a conscious search for it, since seeing you I have learned much about Butler, and some of it should interest you and your friends, who have been among his victims. From a friend of yours I learned that he appears to have been a fink for your State ~~Un~~American Committee and at a time he pretended to have civil-rights interests. Typically, our mutual friend seems to have been incapable of two-plus-two arithmetic, something I have come to feel is a common New Orleans trait.

At some point I fear many decent people are going to be embarrassed by their assorted abdications. I have come to accept and expect this of others than those who to me are decent, but with those I like I'm troubled, not entirely because they have not done what they could have with little cost or trouble ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ more because I fear their consciences may worry them in the future, if not already.

On other things, I have a book in the hands of a new, small publisher. It will not be out until next year. Everyone who has been connected with it, down to the copy editor, is impressed and optimistic. I think it is a good book and, with the kinds of breaks one is foolish to anticipate with the prevailing attitudes and the limited resources of this publisher, might do what we have failed to do so far and can go far toward restoring the credibility destroyed by the well-intentioned self-seekers, the paranoids and marginal paranoids, and the assorted kinds of commercializers who have done no good and have not helped at all.

I have filed three suits against the government for the suppressed evidence. The first I've won, and they are still climbing walls. The second is just responded to by the government and their response answered by us. Their time for response to the third suit expired Monday. I've drafted several others. The only reason they haven't been filed is because I have found someone who will go over them and he is kept busy with other matters, which means delays. However, in order to get what has been unavailable, an independent appraisal, I am content with the delays. If a few ~~of~~ those who have or have pretended an interest in the assassinations and their consequences and who have the requisite technical skills in some cases and the resources in some case had put a little of either where their mouths have been, we might have accomplished much. We may still, and ~~we~~ do expect to. In fact, I think that without this help, I have already. What I have gotten by litigation is significant, as is what I've already gotten with no more than the intent to sue. I expect more.

= One of the keener disappointments remains New Orleans. I am convinced that at least some of the vital JFK clues remain hidden there and I am no less certain that the operative missing link in King's may be there. If there is anyone in N.O. doing anything or willing to, it is without my knowledge and beyond my ability to locate. I have tried, as you know.

Of the many disappointments, one of the more unpleasant is Jim. While he was lavishing money on self-destruction and I was exhausting my own limited resources in an effort to protect him, it was bad enough. And when they said they'd like me to continue trying to help but didn't know when, if ever, they could repay me, that, too was bad enough, because they did then have the money but preferred to use it for such things as Steve Jaffe's vacation in Europe and other such vital purposes. But when he got that large settlement in the binding case and still did nothing, well—

One of us, close to him, was here several months ago and insisted that I write him, reminding him, I did. There has been the usual silence. To say that this is unconscionable is to understate.

While I've been concentrating on other things that N.O., I continue to be alert to all aspects, and I've gotten some very good N.O. stuff, including confirmation of what I'd believed in a number of instances. Where it was possible for Jim's office to be helpful and without cost or the expenditure of more energy than required by a phone call or sending an investigator to another city office, they took much coaxing before they agreed to do it and then they fell totally silent. The real lemmings cannot compare with him or them, believe me. This is especially true in one limited area. I tell you so you'll know, not because I expect you to try and use your influence with Jim. Among the things withheld from the Warren Commission by the FBI (which now seems to be Jim's ally in seeking blacks he seeks for the commission of verbal crimes) was the pre-assassination NOPD Intelligence Unit files on both Ferrie and Oswald. I have incontrovertible proof of their existence, plus that of a vice-squad file on Ferrie, about which O'Sullivan perjured himself before the Warren Commission. This is a serious crime, one a cop would not knowingly commit with what to him is the most compelling reason. Louis, to my surprise, is all hung up on O'Sullivan and refused to face anything. And Hubie Badeaux, that great civil-libertarian and pillar of decency, chose O'Sullivan for the vice squad when he had the pick of the NOPD - Bannister's boy Badeaux - and O'Sullivan was more than just known to Ferrie in the CAP and more than just an ordinary member of it. Ferrie, also, was the subject of an FBI investigation for at least the two weeks before the assassination...When the next suit I'm filing is for the suppressed Ferrie evidence, I think you can see the relevance of this and why I refer to Jim and his boys as lemmings. Can I consider them more? My book on N.O., remember, was written before I went there for the first time....

Sorry I do not expect to be able to get there in the foreseeable future. I'll be doing no more travelling except as a paid speaker. I've signed with a new lecture bureau, one just started by a nice guy who used to do a talk show that I did as part of 17 straight, ad lib hours on that station. Dick Gregory had earlier arranged for an established agency to handle me. Mark queered that fast, for he ~~was~~ was under contract to them. The one honest thing the agency did was make this specific. As you have heard me say, Mark figures he owns this. (But not Shaw, handled by the same agency)...We have such friends we have no need of enemies. The best help we are now getting is from our official enemies....

I do hope you'll find time to send the pix. Best regards to you all.

Sincerely,