

9/10/68

Dear Matt,

You sent me to Richard Sobol, so anything I say to him that he might not like I therefore should communicate to you. Here it is, with a copy of the letter I wrote Alan Helseth at the same time. Had he not strung me along, although I do not know where I'd have looked, I would have tried, knowing this Bringuier deal was in the works from Canyon (also "progressives"!).

You will learn that on this subject the "good people" are neither "good" nor "people". The only ones who ever help ever have helped - are the ordinary human beings. As I long back over a long history, I cannot think of a single professional person who ever extended any meaningful help, aside from an occasional meal, things like that. Can you imagine that on this subject not a single lawyer has given any of us any help of which I know?

At this point I don't give a damn how either of them feels. There is a kind of status in being for the blacks, even for the radicals. On this subject it is just tough, and principles get lost in excuses, particularly by those who have their worthwhile services to other unpopulars to solve themselves with.

I wish you had responded to my inquiry about the other King material for just today I sent the last copy of the COUP D'ÉTAT manuscript to a former close associate of JFK, who says he'll read it. It would have been good to have had that part written and in. Please do, as soon as you can. If it is on tape or in any other way your only copy, please register or insure.

My female enigma has been silent lately. To a degree I have fostered this by some rather tough letters. However, there have been two surprises. Last night I saw the rabbi here and showed him her Hebraic script. He, to my surprise, told me it was an unusual one, going back to biblical days, is not the script used and taught today. So, she learned it from such a person or has her script added by one of that training. I am inclined to think the writing hers. Also, she once told me that Oswald used to hang out in a poolroom in the 1000 block of Decatur St. Now it was not generally known that he frequented poolhalls. I think I did have a mention of his pool-shooting in the "Marines in Oswald in New Orleans, which she may have read and invented the rest. But I am fascinated, not having checked that out when I was there, to see in the papers that came today of a raid on a pool hall in just that block, a shrewd operation that for some time foiled the ruzz as a cover for gambling.

She did not come up, as she said she was going to, and I did not really expect her. Therefore, among other things, I do not have the copy of what she said she had for me. I do not anticipate initiating further correspondence at this moment. If you get a chance, why not call her and tell her I had once mentioned to her that Oswald had shot pool or hung out there and how in the world did she ever know such a thing? You might begin by inquiring about her college registration. She said she was going to enter LSU and had listed my wife and me as her to-be-notifieds. She may tell you what kind of a shark she is, as she did me, but the day we went to see Godfrey Kirkpatrick at Jackson I held a cue stick for the first time since way before she was born (and I never was very good at it), and beat her.

I have no schedule for leaving here any time soon. However, I will be going to California and may, because it costs no more, be stopping off there, if I can, for a little more work. A phone call from George the other night told me that Godfrey is confined at the command of the Secret Service and for the protection of the (unofficial) President, which fits other things very well. Haven't heard from her since. Best to you all, and don't forget the picture you were going to send me. If you have a few simple Christmas cards, please. If Betsy is back, ask her if she can do a few simple

1212 Pine Street
New Orleans, Louisiana 70118
September 29, 1968

Dear Harold:

Your many letters came at the time Jeannie and I were in Florida moving our wonderful new dimension (the yacht "Atria") between the Miami River and Lake Ponchartrain. Atria is 32 feet long, sleeps four comfortably (or as many as you want in varying stages of discomfort) has a galley, a head, and a 45 hp gasoline auxiliary. But this hardly says anything about her. She's eight tons of steel and surprisingly fast for her weight, solid and unmovable in the several storms we encountered at sea, and so reliable I wouldn't hesitate to go anywhere in her—ocean crossings included.

After two and a half weeks sailing her home, and several weekends to make the last few legs, I feel healthier and more vital than I've felt in years. Jeannie too. Setting sail is a real escape, and one we've needed for a long time.

In addition to me moving the boat we've moved ourselves. See new address above. The new place is much larger & I have an entire basement for my darkroom office complex. Come stay with us. Getting settled has been a real hassle, however. The darkroom is still in shambles and I've just gotten my office going (this is literally the first letter I've written since putting typewriter, files, etc together).

I'll try to respond to some of the matters of business in your letters.

About Sobel, there's not much I can say except—that's the way the ball bounces, Baby. Sobel's no longer in N.O. He lives in Washington, gets here occasionally for cases. Also it looks like ACLU here may be breaking up. A lot of the lawyers including Smith and Sobel have resigned. I know how you feel about Ben, but notwithstanding, he's one of the few guys that has kept ACLU radical—or at least kept it from being completely New Orleans fuddy duddy—and not ~~is~~ it may degenerate completely into a kind of uptown social club.

As for photographs. My darkroom is not in order, but I'll be glad to undertake that special work you mentioned. I can use the darkroom of a friend. Unless reprints of the Spruder material are of highest priority, I'd like to put that off until I can get my scene straightened out.

Regarding the King material. While I have absolutely no objection to your using any of it in your book I feel strong obligations to protect the identities (and maybe even the lives) of some of my informants, especially the man who reported on the meeting. If I can get his permission for

publication and you can sufficiently disguise the event (I'm a little doubtful that this can be done) then I say full steam ahead. The material should certainly be published in a coherent form, not in the bits and pieces that have already appeared. As you are of course aware, the material I have does not really do more than throw a suspicious light on right wing participation, although I strongly suspect it is there. The police and the city are more thoroughly implicated. I haven't read the Esquire piece on King's assassination yet. Do they do anything with this material? And what in hell happened to the Ray trial?

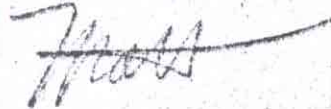
O.K. Where do we go from here? Perhaps it would be easiest if you gave me a draft of what you want to use in the book. I'll go over it, make any necessary amendments and then get in touch with the people in Memphis.

I talked with Vince last night. It is a great comfort to know he is only as far away at the other end of a phone. When I get confused or downhearted (as I have been lately) talking to him helps a great deal to straighten things out. Vince is working on a history, going back before Sacco and Vanzetti to trace the development of this thing. He feels there is not much in the way of overt ACTION that can be undertaken now. We must watch, wait and learn, the time will come when there will be something to do. He even feels current events have outstripped the Assassination as a politically relevant activity. I must admit I tend to agree with him.

Odd though it seems, this understanding seems to have freed me from the grips of despair and inaction. I am going back to work to see what I can do to upset applecarts in my chosen field.

Let me hear from you, Harold, but please don't be upset if my communications are not as frequent as yours. The art of letters is not my forte.

Cordially,



9/5/68

Dear Matt,

I have listened to your tape again. I played it for someone I trust, with a Senate committee, and he was fascinated. I wish you would let me have the rest of the material to add to the manuscript of "COUP D'ETAT". If you have doubts about the book, please ask Vance about it. He read most of it. I added material, important things after he was here. I will then send you what I write so you can be certain there is no disclosure of your sources, nothing that would jeopardize them, for that I want to do no more than you do.

Can you please check with them to learn whether that legislator has or has had any connections with the so-called National States Rights Party? This can be very important. Or with the Klan, or that one of the Klans headed by Jack H. Brown, of Chattanooga, or his son, whose name I believe is Gerald. Jack died in 1955. He was in on the Birmingham church bombing, was the guy in charge. I really have quite a story in this book, and that would help it materially, I think. I am having an experience like yours with the blacks. I think it important to have as much as there is in the one source, and this is the one thus far. It is heavy on the NSRP. I have and use the entire text of the Miami tape, all the relevant, misfiled reports, etc., and some truly shocking stuff about four NSRP threats to kill JFK that were ignored. I tie this all in to the Stevenson things, too. Same gang. Includes Walker, also, and is the strongest case against Hoover yet.

I have written Richard Sobol three times, without answer of any kind. He was to have let me know either way by the first of last month. I understand Bringuier has pulled some more crookedness but do not know the details, save that it was in the papers today. They will not get here until Monday, so I will not know until then. He has never served me. I have much more material on what interested Sobol. I cannot understand the secretary not taking the time to at least send me an acknowledgement of receipt. Can you please ask him to let me know whether he has any intentions and if so, what they are?

Handwritten note:
W. D. C.
W. D. C.
W. D. C.

Last night Marge Kirkpatrick phoned me to say that her husband, Godfrey's step-father, has been told by the hospital at Jackson that Godfrey is being confined by demand of the Secret Service, for the President's protection. Now to the best of anybody's knowledge, there has been no court proceeding of any kind, and his confinement is against the recommendation of his doctor. He is not allowed outside at all. He gets no exercise. I tried to get to take him for a walk but they would not allow it. However, his confinement for this reason is abundant confirmation of what I suspected and was working on, of which you know the essence. I told Marge to phone Sobol and/or Helseth. If either one is interested, and if the facts are as she says, I hope one would be, they should be in touch with me. Neither was today.

The refusal of progressive lawyers to involve themselves in this case, meaning that of the assassinations, is a tragedy. That they will regret it will do no good and will not forestall what they will be responsible for. There is no one who will help in any way, save for a few ordinary humans who can ill afford to. It is not only the "liberals" who have abdicated. This is really much worse.

Parallax (Canyon), also great "progressives", did not go through with their deal with Bringuier, which was only to save a lawyer's fee, because I told them if they did I'd sue them and publicize it. And I would have, too.

Christ, it is as lonely as it is frustrating! I cannot begin to tell you how important my new material is, and there seems no prospect of any publication at all unless I can arrange for it privately. I could do a fast book right now on Oswald as an agent with some of the most shocking stuff. What good would it do? It is getting increasingly difficult to work because of this. Best to you all, & thanks,

Handwritten signature:
+ P