Dear Peter Irons, 3/18/75

Before getting to your letter of the 10th, thanks for your Sullivan interview. It is a very good piece, the kind of information people need. But what you may not realize, Sullivan has told you little if anything not already known. Coming from such a source in itself makes it a legitimate and newsworthy story. But what all these guys now talking and leaking are doing is holding back on the worst and focusing on Hoover. In a way this tends to exculpate them for their not inconsiderable sins against society.

DeLoach appears to have doing the same, with the major media.

If you can still get in touch with Sullivan, there is something you can do for me that can also be helpful to others because I am going to make an effort to do something and if I succeed it also will help others. There was a fairly effective effort against me and my assassination work. It did include some FBI effort. It should be known to Sullivan and I'd like to know what was done and how it is filed. They have to have files on me from my "past" and from his account they were under Sullivan's control. They appear to have been able to get a copy of my second book before the printer had it and when only four others did. There were numerous mail interferences, domestic and with foreign mail both ways. There was interception of the manuscript of Oswald in New Orleans twice. None of this is to say that the FBI did these things or that it alone did. However, that is possible and IId like to know. There were reports or agents going around behind me and defemaing me. Discouraging people from talking to me. I have copies of other surveillance on me a nd it would be exceptional if copies were not touted to the FBI. (They sometimes apply special definitions to "surveillance.") In short, anything he'll tell you. If you have Wall's address, I believe it possible some if not all of this was under the WFO when he was in it and on this kind of work. He has to have come accross me in some of the work he did because I was in contact with some of those people for reasons not usual in their normal activities. It is impossible that I was not picked up on some of the taps I know they had. There are reasons for believing that from time to time I was tapped. And because the major focus of my work is really on the FBI's work, with their sensitivity toward criticism it is not probable that they were not interested in me. Boggs' son does not respond to inquiries about whether I am one of the seven on whom Hoover gave his father files.

With me the sole question is interference with first-amendment rights, not activism or communism or any other pretext. Despite the fact that there files on me go back to not later than 1939, again not criminal or in any real sense "subversive." (They tried to frame me then for Martin Dies but I broke up their frame and got the Dies agent indicted and convicted, a valuable if strenuous part of my early education.)

It is not generally recognized but my work is pretty severe criticism of the FBI, not just Hoover. It is specific in its proofs and irrefutable. I believe they regard is as tough on them.

I too have serious time pressures. A reporter is coming this morning. He will take a big but necessary hunk out of the day and I still have packages from yesterday's mail to make and take to the post office, aside from today's work. I haven't been able to get back to writing since September. So in order to mail this later when I take my wife to work I'll probably not have time to correct the typos. My apologies for this. I'd rather write you a little more on the chance it can be helpful because I think puzzling out which keys I should have hit will not be that difficult. There may be more errors because my own machine is being repiared and this is a strange one.

By and large I agree with all you say and believe you are pointed in the right directions.

One of the problems with FOI cases is what Weinstein's case illustrates. I would put it other than you did. He did win his case but it meant nothing because he did not get the frutis of his victory. I think that in part it is the nature of his suit. You are, in my view, by focusing on specific files, taking a better way.

You can win a case, as Weinstein did, and in effect lose. And you can lose as a matter of court record, as I did in CA2569-70, when I was pro se, and win because for them to have the appearance of a victory they had to give me what I wanted, which led to dismissal.

The FBI is pulling anew one on me now. Perhaps they may try it on you so I'll fill you in. They have promised to give what they resisted all the way to the Supreme Court not to give me under the old law. I filed the first suit under the amended law. They stalled until I filed then they invited me in. But instead of lletter me go through the files and pick out what I want they insist they'll copy all of it for me but won't let me look at it. I've agreed, but not to accept what they give me as all or in any kind of waiver. Now one effect of this is to enable them to not copy certain files or some papers. Another is to drain me because I'm broke. However, as at least the initial step I'm going their way. I think I can analyze what they are up to and I expect to be able to cope with it and I do think that if they wind up withholding they'll have made me a better case. I've gone that road before, only not with the Bureau, with the Department. And wound up with what they detest, a summary judgement.

The microfilm and the typewriter are excellent approaches. However, be aware that they can no longer hold with test results out. This is one of the benefits of the one suit I "lost" and the influence it had on Congress and particularly on what is so important and foten ignored, the legislative history. The conference reports could not be more specific on this point and my way, meaning yours, too. (Everyone's of course.)

Don't simplify this too much. I agree that the film could have been faked. In fact, when I was more or less nailed down to the farm I happened to find an old role of microfilm of the same kind, Microfile. I had used it infrequently in investigative reporting. There was nothing practical I could do myself so I tried to interest a friend in getting it to Hiss' lawyers, without success. But they could have done the same thing on their own. It is as you say with lawyers. The exceptions are rare.

However, this is quite separate from whether or not Chambers had a source of actual documents and I'm sure he did. Also sure that it was not Hiss but not one who was a stranger to Hiss. I can't go further for reasons that perhaps in time I'll be able to tell you. Please accept my assurances that I can't now.

Countless people other than Hiss had access to those some documents. The State Department kept records on who did, which still falls short of telling to whom those who checked those files out give have given access. I recall none of this from accounts of the defense or cross-examination.

In general, wluld you agree that this case is part of the origins of what came to be called the cold war? If so then without disagreement with your opinions about who were driving forces - and I do agree- it is possible to postulate that they had influential allies, people with more heft than Nixon.

I'd have to know and remember more to be able to help with the dates on the documents, 1938 instead of 1937. But I'd wonder if the content could provide an answer.Hotter, more inflamatory with the jury or the Neanderthals, etc.

None of your guess on what I can tell you is close. I have no reason to believe that Hiss was ever CP, either. He had been in innocent association through employment only with some. But I have no reason to believe he knew their associations.

Why not take the Dulles quote in that transcript as double entendre and think it through the way not more obvious. Begin with the rug. I think that while Dulles has in mind the way you take it it can work the other way and in this case did.

Bishop may be your only means but watch him and don't trust his interpretations. He has a sick ego and is not very bright, besides having his own prejudices. I once tore him up on a TV show on which he was overly arrogant and uninformed, which did not keep him from spouting off.

Sorry I've run out of time. Dawn and the time to awaken my wife have come.

Good luck,