

Dear Howard,

2/21/77

I'm about to find out about the Zebra stripes. Day after tomorrow.

I've stopped cigarettes and stopped inhaling except when infrequently I forget.

So I'm sitting here with about 10 minutes left on a cigar and I thought I'd update you.

Zebra called Les Payne to do a King book. Les went and spoke to them. He told me they would call me and would come to see me. The agent said they would not talk and their letter was anything but encouraging. Not even reasonable. I had even offered to go to New York, to show them what I have, despite my doubts about them. Now the two top people are taking me to lunch in Washington on Wednesday. They've agreed for me to take Jim.

It will be a long, hard day, with little or no preparation for that. I'll have to get up early for my ride. Jim and I will work all the rest of the day, except for when we are with them, in preparing to depose the retired FBI's beginning withrazier, which is the next day, and to try to get it done so they can't prime each other on the questions if it goes over into another day. Then I have to go out to Silver Spring to do an hour and a half on Lane, ad lib and with opposition - fairness doctrine time. And then the next morning the depositions. And that all day. I hope we can finish it in one day.

I now have in mind a greatly simplified book, beginning with a chapter on King leading into a Comintepro-invaders chapter that will set the stage with the FBI's hangups and then into the hard stuff. Except for me I'd say it would be short. Hard the stuff is as you cannot imagine. The totality is incredible even after Post Mortem. The deliberateness is as never with JFK.

If they go for it and are willing to make the effort they wasted on McDonald this will be it. Regardless of what does or does not happen to the committee.

I now plan to work the so-called task-force report in. I've already made my notes, sort of, by marking a copy up and having that copy xeroxed. The marks will show on the xerox and I'll cut it up for copy in the draft. Save time.

Just thought of the opening of the intro: Congress passed a law to make this book possible. The official corruption this book exposes was the major influence on Congress, as the debates on the law show. What do you think? It is true.

What is really fantastic is that my reconstruction and investigation were, not to coin a phrase, 1000% right. Now I have their proof, with new names or new witnesses. Their reports on the fink I enabled Les to identify after I established him. He was not only driving the King party around - I have his picture crouching over King's body! Not only this kind of detail - and on every point - I've given Les what should enable him to identify their fink in SCLA headquarters!

But what I need I do not have - help. I've been trying to locate a student at Wood who could get things for me so I won't have to unwrap myself every time I need a paper and lose my concentration. Jerry McKnight and his dean said today they do not know one they can trust.

Of course this is somewhat premature. I've a bit of hope because this happened after Les spent several hours here last week reading stuff I had for him. Then he spoke to them. It will not be too long before I know. If they'll go for it, if they'll do what publishers used to do, this can be what has not yet been.

By the way, in outlining the questionings for Jim last week I simplified them to avoid as much as possible of the technical stuff on spectro and NAAs.

Best,