

1/6/73

Dear Larry,

What now seems so long ago, beginning in 1965, when I almost lived driving to and from New York trying to get my first book published, and later, when I spent so many hours driving to and from the archives, I used to regard my driving time as my thinking time. Now that I don't and can't do all this driving, and not being an insomniac, my thinking time is my walking time. Between the bug and bad weather, I've not been able to walk until just now. I've just returned, a little short of the full daily distance because our wind-chill temperature is about what the real temperature was last night in Chicago (I listened to WBBM's account of the big fire while shaving and making coffee early this a.m.) The cold helped me get off the immediate needs. Sort of a little daydreaming while freezing. My mind got onto what I yearn to do, return to the JFK writing.

This included the mechanics. Unlike the talk about me, if any of it reached you, I always have my work read by those I consider responsible and of enough knowledge to check it. This means carbons and carbons mean extra work in transferring corrections. I'll want at least two carbons of the draft of the rest of AGENT OSWALD. I've written about 5 chapters and they have been retyped and read by others. In my mind, I plan to try to do this by the end of tax season, when for the first time my wife will have so time for retyping. Because of the curse on the subject and on me, I think a commercial book coming form me, and this could be one, has little prospect, so she'll probably retype it single-spaced in the format permitting offset, also highly improbable but making xeroxing easier and cheaper.

By the way, these chapters have been read at a major house, got an editorial recommendation, and the topic itself was rejected. The policy determination still prevails and I think will.

Thus my mind turned to you and those left-over carbon-sets you are sending. I will not now use them so that carbons of letters and memos will be clearer. I'll save them for the draft of this ms, so that corrections will be made on the carbons automatically. This means that some of the things I send will still be not as clear as everyone would like. I guess I should explain that to you. It is not what it sometimes is, carelessness when I get wound up and forget to discard overused carbons. It is that I can't buy new carbon paper. I use the sheets left over from my copying machine because they are lighter than bond and save buying the thin second sheets, which I also can't afford. Generally, if what I send is something I think the recipient will want to keep, I don't use these pink sheets, which permit easy smearing. Otherwise, when I have them, I use them up, to postponing spending \$2.50 for the second-sheet package. As I've isolated myself more and more from the publicity-seeker and nutty and irresponsible critics, I use less of this paper, but still large quantities. Until you get as broke as we are and with as heavy an irreducible overhead, and I hope that doesn't happen, I don't think our situation can be understood. It is that bad. Thus, unless there is a real crunch or need, I generally don't mail things until the envelope holds as much as the stamp will carry. That is why there are so many snippets in what I send and why some are relatively old. This is but some of the reality of our lives.

The major interference with writing now is what I'll have to do with helping prepare an old case against the government for the ruin of our poultry farm. The lawyer finally got steamed up when I pressed him a bit, but he now seems to have cooled again, and I'll have to address that soon. Plus having to take Lil ~~xxx~~ to and from work daily until mid-April. That really breaks a day up for me. When I get to writing, I generally have what I want to say well in mind and it just pours out, as I suppose it shows, and I hate to interrupt the flow. I write too fast, but that way I get it done and can keep some organization. The material with which I deal is of incredible detail and volume and once I get in in mind I want very much to get it out. It may not be possible for me to complete this immediate writing within the time I plan. I then want to get onto another book, also already researched.

In more than one way, Hunt can figure in AGENT OSWALD, the most obvious being his and Oswald's Cuban connections. Plus the roles of some of his associates in the Oswald case. Whether he figured directly in this is questionable. I have no knowledge. In my present view, it is likely he did kill the 1965 arrangements for WHITEWASH. And that book did say that Oswald was intelligence. It was the first to make any kind of real case. In fact, that was the first thing I ever wrote on the assassination, and it cost me my agent. I sent her a lead and summary that as I now remember began "Lee Harvey Oswald could not have been persona non grata to the FBI". This was as soon as it happened.

This is only one of the reasons I hope you can find time to send me copies of the things you have not that appeared in the Chicago papers. I may find something in them. There are others.

Before we knew of the WC, long before that story broke, I had copies of CIA surveillance on me and filed an FPI request with the CIA for copies of all surveillance of me. It has never been answered. Here I think they are outside even their interpretation of the law, although I can think of some of the things they may contrive. I have no immediate intention of filing this suit now and under no circumstances would want to before the court of appeals rules on a precedent case I have before it now.

However, according to Lesar and Bud's partner Bill, I already have enough to file an action against the CIA for damages, enough to get to the point of discovery. This I would be inclined to do whenever I can get a lawyer. I would not let Bud touch it, if he wanted to, and I think he is turned off so much on me he would not want to. So, it means finding a lawyer who is politically attuned to such anti-democratic things and willing to take such a case on a contingent basis. Not easy to find. Too many of them have been nauseated by the excesses of the Buds, Spragues and other "critics" and by Garrison and his sycophants.

I think the ACLU will remain turned off for this and another reason: they twice refused to take FPI cases for me before anyone used the law and now they are getting into it, one case being very dubious. But they are seeking publicity on it and getting it. My experience tells me that the cardinal sin is to be a) a pioneer and b) ~~absolutely~~ right. The mental defense mechanism have other people casting you in some kind of villainous role under these circumstances, so I just stay away from that kind of situation and save time. Perhaps this sometimes leads to mistakes, but there have been so many examples it has become my general practise.

If I have no immediate hope of getting a lawyer, it is always possible. There are several I do have in mind in the DC area if I can get time when they are free.

For this reason, I'd like to stay as up to date as possible on the entire "unt" thing.

Another is that I do background others, and this can include politicians. My Senator, also a friend, may be on such an investigation. I wrote him about this and other matters just yesterday. He is not hung up on the assassinations, was the only politician who tried to help me, that as far back as 1965, but also has to live in and with the political realities. And although the chances are not good for several reasons, I know Williams and he may call on me. He told me he might. He is chief counsel for the Democrats.

Let me burden you a tiny bit more. I think I've asked you to make a fast morgue check on Bittman, who was a U.S. Attorney out there. He seems to be in control of the defense and his firm has done CIA work. Remember my telling you how large it was when I checked the phone book? Offhand, despite the seeming detachment of the CIA from this case, I think no lawyer has yet represented any of the defendants where such links to the CIA can't be found. This is not to say they have to have meaning, but I'd like not to ignore any. So, my chief interest is in seeing if there is anything relevant to this in Bittman's record.

Meanwhile, as I have been, I'll send you copies of any memos I make that might be of interest to you or indicate leads. Now that I have been able to replenish my supply of paper for my copying machine, I'll send you copies of anything that seems worth it. I'll do a memo on today's story, which I've already copied for you. It goes into a 90-minute hearing, so it can't be complete. If you have any other details, even if seemingly slight, in your papers there, I'd appreciate them.

Don't draw any wrong conclusions from the fact that this story was not written by Woodward or Bernstein. Mann has also been on the story, regularly covers courts, and has covered other courtroom stories on WC. I can remember but one Woodward by-line and none by Bernstein in a very long time, so I believe they are still on this story. Real reporting from now on, in is tougher and they have their own machismo, which makes it even tougher. I hope they'll be coming up with more, and I know they were following Chicago (late) reporting of the crash. That's the last time I spoke to Woodward. He had spoken to Rooney (and got nix not published and not all of that or didn't reflect what you'd told me from the papers).

Thanks and best,