

Dear Betty and Allen,

12/28/72

Glad to get your card. It could not have come at a better time if I were to answer your inquiry, for I stay too busy. However, Lil and I seem to have picked up a bug at a Christmas party. With the ache-all-over feeling I don't trust myself to do work that requires a clear mind. Flattery, eh?

We are as we were, only a little deeper in debt and a little older. For the past year I've had to lay aside most of my JFK work for other things. One is the investigation for a habeas corpus petition filed on behalf of James Earl Ray (innocent). Another is trying to get a lawyer to prepare our long-delayed suit against the government for the ruin of our ~~farm~~ ^{farm} by helicopters (we won the first suit and established a precedent), plus collecting what he needs.

Recently the old days we shared have come back more often, usually triggered by events. I saw a piece on Chinese medicine Charlie Flato did from Hongkong, after a visit to China. Except when we've seen the Clifts infrequently we have been out of contact with The Flatch. Heard his marriage didn't succeed and nothing else from the time he gave up his p.r. business on H St., nw until seeing his byline. If you have his address, I'd like to have it. He should be able to lead me to expert witnesses for the medical aspects of our suit. We had a card from the Clifts and they keep talking of coming up, but they haven't been here in years. My going to Washington is more infrequent and I try to leave there before rushhour, so I don't often stop off. Too many times when nobody was home. We've been talking of doing it when I have stay down longer. Last time Charlie looked like the bout of some kind of illness he'd passed through. Kitty looked great.

I've seen Bob Wohlforth only a couple of times since he left the DJ. He now, or until recently, ran Farrar, Strauss & Giroud. I tried to interest him in my first book. He wouldn't touch it. A salesman got a copy from a bookstore manager who told him it had to go. I didn't know what the salesman would do with it (his is the letter reporting rejection and predicting it would make a best-seller on the inside back cover of WHITEWASH). So, Bob turned it down twice. He told me they do not do anything but the arts! It was a best-seller, and with a commercial imprint on the hardback, which was instead the first "underground" book, I can only imagine what it would have done. With no more attention than I was able to get for it with no budget for advertising and public relations and no promos by Dell when they reprinted, they did an initial printing of a quarter of a million and reprinted twice in the first month. They gyped me out of most of what the book earned. I also had a first-rate informant inside the "inutemen, a network director. He gave me all their hot stuff. One of their things was a sort of blacklist of the farright. My source told me that those names marked in a certain way were to be the victims of violence. Bob's son Tim was one. Naturally, I phoned him. He wasn't in. I left a message with his secretary. He never phoned back. Last time I saw him he was so smug I couldn't resist asking him is he hair was still so black naturally! It did anger him. But that is the kind of guy he now seems like. This was probably 1967. His thing then was birth control. Always was the gutsy crusader.

This Dell thing reminds me, I need a good lawyer in New York. Any of the old gang there, or do you know one? Sol is kind of schizo, the same very decent man on the inside but Establishmentarian as hell. It is almost impossible to converse with him. He is always interrupting like a cross-examining prosecutor reading from the text. So, I don't even think of asking him. He left the ADL and is clerk or something to a State Supreme Court judge. At the ADL he did brilliant legal work, most of the early significant cases in civil rights, against restrictive covenants, etc. He's still a great guy.

You are probably more in touch with some of the fellows than I. I never hear from any. Last time I saw Al Sachs he had just left the American Jewish Conference for some watch company. Sam Rhinestein suddenly got ambitious when he met a young chick the sight of whom rejuvenated him. So, he divorced Ruth, got married and has become rich practising law in Chicago. Last time I was there doing radio and TV shows, I went to dinner with Sam and his new wife before a show and met with Ruth and her new husband afterward for drinks into the a.m. Both new mates rather nice, real humans. Ruth is teaching school in a tough ghetto neighborhood. Was then, anyway.

Charlie Kramer came to mind several times recently with references to the Hollywood Ten. When they were in their travail he knocked on my door one night and asked me for help

in helping them fight back. Emytryk, who later turned out to be a fink, was with him. I had researched a book on the Dies committee, as you may remember. They left with the essence of it, literally boxes or research and investigation. I never saw any of it again, never heard from Charlie or any of the Ten again. A CIO lawyer who needed help with the defense of an accused organizer did the same with a chapter. Thus went that book. Later I heard that Charlie was growing bulbs in the State of Washington.

The E. Howard Hunt of The Watergate Caper crossed my path, to my disadvantage, back in 1965. So, I've had more than casual interest in that rotten thing and in the crash in which his wife was killed. A friend reminded me of what I'd forgotten, if I'd ever known, that the altimeter of the plane in which Reuther died had been tinkered with. This, in turn, reminded me of Ralph Winstead. I guess you know he died under the ice of Lake Erie or Lake Michigan. Clift said he thought no dirty-work involved. I have no personal knowledge. The Auto Workers seem to have done nothing about the Reuther death. Wouldn't have been that way if they hadn't lost Ralph earlier.

There was an incident with Ralph I remembered this morning sitting and sipping coffee and looking at your card. It got me to thinking of many things, including one area in which Ralph was so different. Maybe it was the lingering Wobbly in him. I have come to learn that one of the greater curses is to be right. Instead of earning you respect, you get knives.

You'll remember back in the summer of 1936, when you were in Detroit investigating spies in the unions I was in Cleveland investigating, among other things, Corporations Auxiliary. I fed you a bum steer on locating a spy. I've often wondered how, because it was a rare case of the fink being identified in their books I guess that by the time I could get to write it down without being seen I remembered a number in his address incorrectly. Well, I'd spotted Ralph kind, the Labor Board regional director as a stoolie and so informed Wohlforth. He wouldn't believe. Somehow I got sent to Akron to look into Goodyear before I finished with CAC. While there, on my own, I decided we should open up the fake citizens' committees, that one calling itself the Greater Akron Association. I was able to do it without subpenas, too, no mean accomplishment. I got enough before someone in Washington was uptight and yanked me. I was escorted back, in seeming disgrace, by another later self-exposed fink, the Rubber Workers' general counsel, Patterson. If it hadn't been for old Huber Blankenhorn I'd have been canned on the spot. Blank alone had faith, I presume because he had earlier had his own suspicions. He drew me aside and listened to my reasons. Meanwhile, Sam and the other boys with whom I then lived had moved, I got in on a weekend and didn't know where the hell I lived or where my clothes were, so I stayed in the office all weekend and worked. Bob gave me the job of writing the brief for the first hearing. You may remember it was Railway Audit and Inspection, the outfit that tore up all its files and we retrieved their waste and Scotch-taped the papers back together again. By the time my hearing was over I was pooped, sitting at my desk straightening out the exhibits, when Ralph came charging in. Had I seen W.H. Gray? I hadn't since the hearing. It turned out that Ralph needed him for a witness the next day and, as happened, La Follette didn't ask before doing and had excused Gray from his subpoena. Ralph was more upset than I had to then seen him. (It was worse the next day!) Would I help Ralph find him? There was no time to get a new subpoena. As you know, the Senator didn't believe in hard work except by his employees, so he wasn't around. Before charging out as Ralph did, I sat back and thought for a few moments, asking myself what I'd do if I were Gray. An hour later, typical fascist brute that I am, I yanked him out of the toilet on an Atlanta train just as it was pulling out of the station. There was, of course, no legal sanction for this, but Gray made only one protest, that he wasn't Gray, and that didn't overcome my grip. He didn't even have time to grab his bags. They went with Eugene Ivey, unless Ivey came back with them. And after all of this - and was I proud! - the Senator ended the hearing Ralph had prepared without calling Gray to the stand! In this long tale I have a point. Ralph appreciated what I'd done, wasn't at all resentful that he hadn't thought of it. On the other hand, Wohlforth, even when he learned from what I got from Greater Akron, was resentful and always held it against me. You may remember that lead us into the National Association of Manufacturers Sokolsky and other paid propagandists, Hill & Knowlton, that whole schmear. In the long pull, I think that was one of the more significant aspects of our work, but immediately Bob was only uptight and later resentful because he didn't think of it.

It might interest you to know how I got the stuff from Greater Akron. I'd gone out and served the subpoena on Paul Litchfield in person. He asked for time to consult his lawyer and of course this was not only his right but something I could do nothing about.

So, this left me with some free time. I don't remember if they had an ad in the papers while I was there or some rubber worker had told me of their earlier anti-labor propaganda. Anyway, I remember what I did pretty clearly, even the building. They were officed in the Akron Tower Bldg. A stuffed-shirt lawyer named E.A. Brouse ran it. I pulled in, identified myself and told him I'd like to go over his files. He harumphed his way through a long speech, ending up with this was the Russian way. I was young and brash enough. I'd not yet cast my first vote. I made a very short speech. I told him I thought the Congress had a well-established right to investigate for legislative purposes, I was employed by a Congressional committee, and we had such purposes. I said if he thought my going over his files and asking him to type copies of what I wanted for this committee was the Russian way, how would be like a little of the American way, a subpoena ordering him to transport all his files to Washington and to testify to them? In a public hearing? He didn't like it, but he got some typists in and before whoever was working behind my back could do what was done, I had enough in my possession. All the American Iron & Steel Institute stuff (that is where they got Hill & Knowlton), the other extreme, Pearl Bergoff, and other things I don't now recall.

Pearl a man's name. I think the two most bloodthirsty men we investigated had this woman's name. Remember the other, Basham, the Harlan County miner operator? He made Berghof the strikebreaker look saintly. And he looked like a Yankee storekeeper.

Those committee experiences and the four months I spent living with FBI agents in Harlan and London when they prosecuted the association, some operators and a long list of deputy thugs, were invaluable experiences in my present work. Early mornings I went walking in the mountains with a fine old gent, Thomas C. Townsend, a Charleston lawyer who was the Workers' counsel for the district. Old Tom had been Lt-governor of West Virginia until as a "epublican he came to realize that if the people of the State owned the natural gas alone they'd never have to pay taxes. That ended his political career. Old Tom and I developed a sort of father-son relationship. If you remember a soft-speaking, gray-haired man who use to be in my office when I was in Rm 103, that was Tom. He never came to Washington without coming to see me. He was older than my father would have been, but vigorous in mind and body. I'd pick him up a little before dawn in his small hotel, down the street from mine, have a glass of orange juice and a cup of coffee while he dressed, and by the time of early-summer light we'd be entering the mountains, where we walked three to almost five hours, in time for me to be back, showered and dress by 9 a.m. in case any of the DI lawyers or agents needed me. He was a wise old man. Learned much from him, including ways to do things. He never went to school in his life except, when a success, to make speeches. His was a very practical education.

The work I have done is much more extensive than anyone can realize. Nothing on the subject is now publishable, and I've got the hottest stuff yet. Documents the Warren Commission itself didn't have. I've not yet faced a witness who wouldn't talk to me and I've found those the FBI avoided. It is like nothing in our history. I've so many FBI reports I can't count them. I have at least 2,000 pages of them I've not even read, a whole file drawer jammed and with nothing else in it. Or, the most definitive study of the FBI yet as a by-product and a remarkable archive for some university. It was supposed to go to Yale, but I've changed my mind. There was a rich man who was a JFK fan and also head of a CIA foundation, Arthur Price, the Price Foundation. An ACLU type, too. He turned on when he heard me mince meat a right-wing talk-show character in New York, Long John Hebel, aided and abetted by Victor Kasky and one Kirin O'Dougherty, Bill Buckley's right-hand man and a lawyer, the titular head of Buckley's party. It was like Daniel in the lion's den, and they pooped out on me 3 hours and 40 minutes into the 5 hours we were to have done beginning midnight. It was one of those sink-or-swim situations, when I had just printed WHITEWASH, one of the two situations that made the underground book a best-seller. Price called me up and we met then and thereafter. He even supplied me with some of my special NCR paper to eliminate carbons when Lil retyped the ms. for offset masters. He was establishing an unofficial, as contrasted with the Kennedy Library, archive at Yale, his alma mater. I was then agreeable to ~~his~~ files being part of it. But as the work became more impoverishing I had to reconsider, for these files are my only asset if I am to be able to do the unlikely, get some real help in the work I've been doing without subsidy or income. We are now really deep in debt. By then I had started to get into the CIA, and it was a bit hairy for him. He has since died.

This strange ability to turn people on by radio and TV is something I had to learn to live with. It is a bit uncanny. That is how I got that "inuteman informant. To this day I've never met him. Another was spying on me for the CIA and I "subverted" him. Before quitting he supplied me with carbons of what he supplied to the CIA. He worked for a private agency they used, through a front they established for that purpose, complete with such proof as transcripts of conversations ordering the surveillance, bills rendered, checks in payment, even the envelopes in which they were mailed. This is separate from the Hunt connection, which was in a literary agency that killed a deal for the first book I had made with the Sat. Eve. Post when Hunt was with it while with the CIA officially.

Sound like a good Archive? I don't know any university that would touch it, nor any wealthy alumnus would would arrange it.

As I remember it, you ex-father-in-law, Bert Wheeler, did some looking into the FBI. But he never saw the kinds of things that abound in my files. Their methodology is so clear to me now that I can translate their reports into regular English at first reading!

In fact, although it has not attracted any news attention, I've sued them successfully and now have a case that will be precedent under the Freedom of Information law in the U.S. Court of Appeals.

...I guess ~~me~~ you remember A.L. (Al) Wirin, who was with the labor board and helped us in the RCA investigation, did a bit of initiative stuff as I did and got fired for it. He went to L.A. to practise law, was big in ACLU, and recently retired. I've been in L.A. a number of times working, but stayed too busy to look him up. I always figured that with the attention I was then getting, if none of the old gang called up they found the thing I was into a bit declassé. Most of the phoney liberals did and do. Those with sharper minds just didn't believe or wouldn't let themselves. You are the only one who came looking for my books. Not even The Flatch, and you may remember that when he came with the committee I gave him a place to stay for months....I've made a number of efforts to get in touch with Luke Wilson, but he never called back. The last time I saw him was when we were still farming. The time before that was when he was in your Wheaton house when you were away. So, I stopped calling him maybe four years ago....If you remember Lydia Lee, who had been with ~~Minitions~~ and then with Wheeler's railroad investigation, she married a strange type who died years ago after burning down the house on a fine farm they bought near Coolseville. She is still farming it! She is older than we. Near Horse's. ...I guess you know Al Bernstein, who was on Wheeler's committee staff and helped Max Lowenthal with his book on the FBI? He was blacklisted, had a rough time, and seems to have been effected by his suffering. Well, his son Carl is one of the Post's reporters who have done most of their Watergate reporting.. If you knew Larry Brown, also of that staff and a friend of Wohlforth's, he turned, without my knowledge, into a real rightwinger. He was to have done the writing on my first book while I did the investigating, that is, continued it. Arranged by the publisher, who I'd asked to do this. Only coincidence. He made a real mess of it and it was to have been a monster red-bait. I had to write the damned thing in one month to the day to meet the contract deadline and did, sending the chapters to New York in takes. Larry never lost his Stanley Walker-Herald Tribune ego, and it was quite a blow to him that he failed on this one. So, he went ahead and did his own book (meanwhile keeping a third of a million words of my notes to use). Even the right-wing publisher, Arling House, wouldn't publish it. They had contracted and announced it. ...Of whom else might I know anything before I end this long reminiscence?....Oh, yeah, a good word ~~kh~~ for the dead. You may remember I was somewhat of a bottleneck on the committee. I used to use it to help others. Dave ~~KYLE~~ Lloyd and that miserable Danielian were out to gut the staff of those Danielian didn't like. I'd quit every time they pulled one. I remember Flato, I think twice, Sam Rhinestein and Sol Rakbin. This made Danielian really hate me. We had a couple of real go-rounds over his arrogance directly with me. Once I shook him like a terrier does a rat. As you may remember, they finally couldn't put up with this any more and as Danny got more and more in control, they lied to the Senator and told him I had leaked secrets to the Daily Worker. I had no secrets, leaked none, and it was to Henry Zon, then with Federated Press and now with Henry Fleischer in their own, successful public relations agency. Well, I got into the hassle with Dies and they had a law passed to get Pat Jackson (also dead) and me and convoked a grand jury under the law. I took it away from the assistant U.S. Attorney handling it. He was later Tokyo war-crimes prosecutor, Ed Fihelly. He developed so much respect for me, and I think so resented the Congressional

Neanderthals' pressure on Dave Fine, then DA and appointment to be a federal judge held up, that he gave me the grand jury minutes, believe it or not. Not just showed-gave. So I'd be able to use later if necessary in my own defense, Dave Fine knew and liked me from the Ted Creech case, if you remember it. Well, Dave was a grand-jury witness. It took guts for him to tell the truth, but behind closed doors he did. I used to see him once in a while when he was with the Truman Library's Washington office, until he died. I was farming then and had a number of customers in that building. We bumped into each other the first time in the elevator. He was at first a bit embarrassed. I mean, right from the White House and I a farmer, besides what may have been in his mind. But after that first time it was always friendly.

Now, how about you updating me? And don't forget The Flatch's address if you have it.

I guess your daughter who took her first solid food in our home, a piece of one of our chickens, has her own family now. Was she called Peaches? *

Anyway, remember us to all of them.

Best regards,