

Paul, Gary, Low, Mitt, Sylvia

March 12, 1969

Mr. John W. Mitchell  
Attorney General of the United States  
Department of Justice  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Mitchell,

C It has been ten days since I wrote you, months since the promised word from the previous Deputy Attorney General has not arrived. A strange kind of answer has been reported to me.

O I have been informed that teams of FBI agents are going around telling people, some of whom I have never met, that I am a dangerous person, in some unspecified way under "Communist" influence. This same alleged "Communist" influence I am alleged to have exerted on New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison, and it is further alleged that without it he would not have engaged in his prosecution of Clay Shaw.

P All of this, of course, is quite false. I await your assurance that I have been misinformed, that your FBI agents are engaged in nothing as entirely improper as this.

P The coincidence between this report and some of my critical writing about the FBI is so remarkable I cannot ignore it.

Y If you do not and cannot assure me that the FBI has not done this, is not going around slandering me, then I certainly do want an explanation of why, for what proper purpose, with what legal authority. There once was a First Amendment to the Constitution. It should prohibit any federal interference with the rights and obligations of writers.

Or is it that your department is investigating Garrison and I am incidental to that? Should this be the case, then I am no less interested in explanation of its purpose, its legal authority.

May I add that the recent trial in New Orleans confronts you with a challenge to your integrity and that of your department? In it, Dean Adams Andrews swore that he had perjured himself before the Warren Commission. I submit that if your department tolerates this, with all the observers you had at the trial to take note of it, you have failed in your obligations and have begun a policy that will end with a record you will, at best, find uncomfortable, difficult to live with and at worst will be an intolerable self-defamation.

Sincerely yours,

Harold Weisberg