

Mr. Les. Whitten
1401 16 St., NW
Washington, D.C. 20036

9/5/76

Dear Les,

No, it was not abuse Mrs. Sylvia Duran. It was a cat named Ugarte. This is for openers. I don't know if my disgust will let me do much more with all I can and must do, especially right now in a decade-long effort to deter these disinformation operations of which I have warned you repeatedly you are letting yourselves be part.

Ugarte is, as I recall, "D" in the Schweiker report, which you plug without the slightest idea of its real significance. If you want the poop on all the other non-secret names he masked, be my guest.

It has come to the point where the real choices in evaluating what you(pl.) do is between incompetence and sycophancy, if either is sired out of Cowardice bred to Timidity.

But if you had to warm the Langley and FBI hearts, why could you not be accurate? I spent about two hours talking to Mark Smolonsky when he called. I do take the time even if what comes out is never other than cruddy, really yellow journalism in the non-Hearstian sense. How many times do you (pl.) get fed stories you find out are old and not learn how you are being used or ask yourselves why?

About the same time Bob Woodward phones. He's on a peripheral story, too. But he has to be all mystery, like I'm the Times and I'm gonna steal his roller-skates. What he tells me, as I tell him, can fit countless cases. Can he be more specific. No, he can't, but he'll appreciate any help I can give him. So, difficult as it now is for me to get into my files, I go through them and retrieve what I think he may have in mind. He asks me to call him back. I spread all this stuff all over my own work, which I've laid aside, and he's not there. Later I get him, read it to him, refile it and get back to my own work. Then I get a call from the Post's source, who knows nothing at all about any of this but is hopeful of selling them a story. It is not what I took all that time for the secretive Woodward for. (For all the world as though I don't know about the bad-mouthing behind my back.)

All this in other than service to errant officialdom comes together. Meanwhile, you are all pawns to these officials.

Back in 1939 I wanted to sell a couple of Sunday things to the Post. One was my work on the King assassination to then, another a still-unexposed CIA domestic operation. Patterson sent me word they'd be interested if I were a staff but they never use pieces by other. Like I haven't read the Post since the early 30s. Only from the Fowlkeses(phon), the guy who called. Or Grile, with what really brought joy to the CIA heart with than AMLASH job. (Don't you people ever analyze anything? People plural.)

You are all being fed by a bunch of sick crooks who as investigators couldn't find women in a bordello. They are working with Abby Mann, who can't be completely innocent. He's doing a special for TV for next April 4. Their most recent exploits were stealing the work Les Payne of Newsday carried forward magnificently when I established the basic fact and turned it over to him. I've done all the basic work on the King assassination, all these guys know it, their sick egos won't let them behave like men, so they are nibbling around the edges. If you want all the names of that motley crew, with Lane and I presume but don't know Fensterwald and their CCI, which always promotes Lane (this is his second) are Don Freed, Jeff Cohen and Chris Hagan that I remember. They almost conned Siegenthaler into a doozer several months ago. Hagan tried to get in to see Jimmy Ray and failed. So Freed started laying court to him by mail. Meanwhile, NBC is offering him \$10,000 plus for an interview and Rather is in the competition with other goodies and all this is any kind of journalism?

Do you have to know more than that Mann is working on this "news" special and has been, I've written the only book not in support of the official mythology on the King assassination and he hasn't been in touch with me? You and the Post deal with these kinds of people and except for use as a checker I'm a pariah? Do I have to remind you of our conversation of what your column did to me on that book - ruined the chances of promos by telling the publisher you wanted certain material exclusively and running my ass off on it and then killing a really legitimate story - exclusive yet? The same book like all of mine unfot for the Post reviews or even mentions? If I do it it is instant non-news. But what is news? What these self-promoting ripoff artists do. If Lane cons the ACLU, which was too cowardly to touch either FOIA or the JFK assassination in 1966, 1967, 1970, 1971 and 1974, into filing a suit for him. For what? For what was never withheld, the Kby-FBI reports. Then he holds a press conference and then there is a Post story on the forced disclosure of the supposedly big secret!

Bradlee actually wrote me (confidential) that when Lane said one thing and I said another he didn't know what to do so well! he'd just throw up his hands and do nothing. He doesn't really do nothing. He does worse and doesn't want to learn or find out or I suppose really care.

Which is about the best I can say for today's column: you don't care.

You all have a right not to care. I happen to care, including about what real journalism ought to be. I don't think it includes being bush-beaters either for pimps or whores or crooks or officials with which to hide. Or failing to meet obligations to the country when the only problem in doing it is not journalistic but does involve the heart and soul.

Besides alerting you still another time I'm also offering you and Jack and if he wants it Bradlee a chance to learn what the realities and the facts are. I don't think anyone wants this but my part of the obligation is to offer it. I'll probably be in Washington the week of the 13th for a status call in one of my FOIA cases. The date is uncertain because Jim Lesar had an emergency appendectomy in Singapore and hasn't returned. The judge wants it soon and the clerk has agreed to make it for the first item on whatever day's calendar in case Jim remains weak. So from the end of that hearing until my bus at 2:10 I'll take time. Or I'll arrange for later auto transportation if I know in time.

With the good work of which you (and the Post) are capable and have done so regularly I really hate to see you used - and inviting yourself to be used - by special interests.

Sorry about the typos. The sun is up, I'm going for the walk the medical condition of which you know requires and then return to the work I told you I want to continue to escape the attention of all of those who have pasts with which they have to live.

Best,

7/5/76

Mr. Les Payne
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Dear Les,

Your Abby Mann info was wrong in one respect: his special is for NBC News. I'm pretty sure.

Friday evening I got a call from a guy who used to be a friend at NBC News. Mann had been together with Fauntroy, from whom they'd taped a statement. He wanted to get some names straight, like Holloman, and didn't this all come from my book? I updated him on the police-fink-FBI angle, with which they had gone. Also an unclear bit on the pressures on the judge. My Herb Brubaker also told me they were airing a piece on NBC net radio last night and that Anderson was going with a column this morning. It was set to support getting the Downing resolution out of the Rules committee pronto. I know that Lane et al had sold Anderson's people on this from calls from them a week ago having to do with some old CIA stuff he had fed them.

I keep a pillow speaker plugged into a radio tuned to an all-news station. I want to sleep more and I find that if ~~something~~ other than my work grabs my mind it is easier to go back to sleep. So last night I tuned it to the NBC Baltimore outlet, WBAL-FM. When I awakened about 5:20 it was toward the end of the item, Fauntroy's voice just going off with an FBI mention. Then the announcer said Fauntroy got his information from Abby Mann, who is producing a special for NBC News. Beginning with Fauntroy the above is approximately a direct quote. When I heard NBC it blocked the rest. It said either on Dr. King or the assassination, I'm not sure.

Another friend you do not know sent me Mann's address. I wrote him about a week ago. He may have been in Memphis and not know about it.

Friday night I wondered how NBC would be plugging an ABC special. This cleared that up.

Brubaker, a good professional, had a hard time with NBC. I suppose he is sweating out his retirement. I knew he when he was the net TV news assignment editor. He knew my work, not from me and I don't know how. I ~~first~~ first met him, as I now recall, with Frame-Up. He wanted them to go for the book, hard. He introduced me to the Bureau manager, Jordan. He assigned the book to Carl Stern. He tried to get their house counsel to handle an FOIA case for me. It wound up with me telling that lawyer, Manderer, about FOIA instead. I gave him the official poop on how it works. (I also told Stern about it. He is a lawyer but had no interest until he filed the first Counselpro suit with ACLU and then didn't know what to do or how he was conned by the FBI.) But all the indications of NBC interest were then so great I bought books to give them when asked for still more copies. Many trips there. Came to naught. I could not even get fairness-doctrine time on their local outlet to balance this. Next time I saw Herb was at the press conference when I released some of what I'd gotten from the FBI through the new suit, to cut CBS' FBI propaganda off at the knees, which I did do. Manderer and a crew came over to Conyers' office and taped us both. Herb's attitude then was not what it had been so, knowing what had happened to him, going from a good TV slot to radio reporter, I did not push. It would hold the possibility of harm for him if I ask him for a dub of the tape of the whole thing of which that Fauntroy broadcast is part.

NBC radio is now a national "news" service. Rather poor news. If you don't get it up there it is divided with news of local origin. It has NYC headquarters. So, would you please phone them and without telling them ~~xxx~~ they are crooks who stole your stuff, as it appears they have, ask them for the full tape? I think it is important for ~~xxx~~ several reasons to have this. All indications are that getting this resolution out now is a loser.

There are others, not all personal. One is the current status of the suit, which is very promising. As I told you a while back I'm close to being able to take testimony in a limited way. I want to perfect the record more before then and in the past three or more weeks have written more than 50,000 of drafts of affidavits to this end. Under pressure of filings by the government. There was to have been a status call on the 8th. I've written the clerk to postpone it for a week because Jim had emergency surgery in Singapore and his return is delayed.

From Herb's call it is clear enough that this is the report you received telling you that they were stealing your work. He mentioned those two and the big scoop that Holloman had been FBI.

If I can do nothing else I would like to have as full a record as possible on all of this. If for no other reason, my own interests. There are, of course, other reasons, like being able to do what I'm trying to do without ripoff artists blowing that, too. Once Lane made a mess out of everything on the Hill with JFK it was only natural, given his deep psychological needs, that he would switch to King. I'd heard some time ago that he was working with the black caucus on this. I recall their record clearly. King? Who's he? Boy did I go through it in early 1971. The only one who would see me is Conyers, and he did try. The chairman wouldn't even see me. Not a word from any of the others to whom, through Conyers, I sent books. I then tried hard, through friends and by phone to reach Fauntroy, then not in Congress. Not one callback. So they are all real heroes. One result is that they have no idea what fact is. None the less I don't want them to come out of this besmirched. I have enough now to get a King investigation but for these things you need more than enough and I'll get that, too, if the whores stay in beds.

The Post should be here soon, so this brief update. The government pulled some of its customary dirty tricks and dumped two sets of pleadings and six affidavits on me at just the time the AUSA knew Jim would be going to Singapore for four weeks. It is a big load but I've gone through all of it and, as befits a devil loving scripture, turned it all around. I've done this in a way that, with luck and a willing Judge, can lead to perjury charges against top DJ lawyers. It can be a very significant advance in FOIA matters in court and federal stonewalling. There are problems. One is no time for real editing. I've been able to go over these after the drafting only in haste, to be certain of accuracy because I'm swearing to them all and that puts my head on their block. I've done what I don't know a lawyer who will go for, I've tackled them on every possible relevant fact, from going through my files to analyzing their own statistics, which are cooked to begin with. Not a thing stands. However, the expression is probably bad and I'm without doubt there could be benefit from reorganization. There just is no time. This is Mil and me. She's retyped the first affidavit, about 35 legal-sized pages. She's almost through the second, which is a little longer. I've three others, one twice as long as the longest of these. I'm going to try to cut it beginning today. I don't know if Jim will be willing to file these in their present form and I do know that I'm not going to let him take all the time he has in the past to achieve literary perfection. If he won't the ideal thing, as I've written him, is to take pre-trial depositions. I do not see how we can so the alternative is a bigger risk, going into a hearing in court. He's not up to it now in any way, including time, and nobody can keep all this stuff in mind. I want to make an overwhelming record and force the issue on this federal misconduct. I'll have them ready by the time he's back and he can then decide. Now I'll see if there is anything worthy of comment in the Anderson column...Bad propaganda. I may write Whitten. If I do I'll car on you. Dash has P2 on heroin. I'll send it and rest of series. ...Post has Woodward on a phoney JFK story. He called me all mystery, then their source called me and I blew it back at him. No story. Yet. They go for the peripheral if it is phoney enough. I tend to think it may become a safe and probably self-destructive campaign. Best,