

Lardner

Dear George,

9/16/78

As I listened to Hart's (to me) impressive and more than merely credible (if with the committee's mandate largely irrelevant) testimony I grew more and more interested in what he had to say about "Mr. X." Most of all this is because for some time I know him as "Mr. Martin," I think.

I suppose that in his commentary Joe Volz expressed the common belief, that Mr. X is Stone is Golytsin.

If I am correct then I have reason to believe that the CIA's paranoids had him look me up. If so this interests me much. So I'm interested in any description of the character I can get, especially a picture.

Not long after the appearance of Whitewash IV, which includes the Warren Commission's 1/27/64 executive session transcript, I began to get phone calls from a man with a heavy Russian accent. He talked about coming here and never did. He talked about Nosenko constantly. I do not recall any more constant expression of hatred. I did not raise the Nosenko matter with him. He did with me, clearly to influence my thinking. Without mentioning any criticism of John Barron he was bitter about what Barron wrote about Nosenko. I found it all strange because there appeared to be no reason for his calling me and trying to influence me. I still have no idea how he knew of my interest at that time or that I would be going this way in my writing and inquiries. He was not familiar with my writing or my books, which added ~~extra~~ mystery. I perceived and he disclosed no way he had of knowing of me.

On one of his calls, when he again mentioned coming here and I believed he would not I suggested that we might meet in Rockville on a day I had to be there. I think he had earlier indicated that he lived in the Wacaton area. He liked the idea and kept the appointment. We met in Hechinger's, with Whitewash IV serving to identify me. We did some shopping together - he got ~~some~~ vegetable seeds, saying he had a small backyard garden, and I got a great buy in a dumping trailer suitable for use with a riding mower. (Half price or less, last of a line being cleared out.) This was in February 1975. My recollections are clear. Including of him. I am sure I could recognize a photo if there is one I can see.

We had lunch in a joint adjoining Hechinger's and that, too, was all seasoned with his venom about Nosenko. The man is hung up like not even a Garrison gets hung up and it is all Nosenko.

I respected his wishes and did not do what would have been simple, get his tag number as he drove off. Now I'm sorry because a more perfect description of my recollection and impression of this man than Hart gave I can't conceive.

Aside from his emotional makeup he is about my height and then was plump and round-faced, full-faced. Perhaps a bit heavier than I then was, about 200, although this may be more impression than fact. Good command of English and well out in on where what defectors/exiles were working. He mentioned one who was an NIH translator. Well dressed, with a modish cloth hat, something like a tweed pattern and a small feather.

I think it is not impossible that he was used by the CIA for one of the early Oswald/KGB exploits. There is a long, irrational political distaste of early date among the papers given to the Rockefeller Commission. When I read that I thought of my "Mr. Martin" immediately. (Isn't Golytsyn's middle initial "M"?)

In all of yesterday's fascinating, I think on the part of the CIA really brilliant performance, what the committee wanted to lose got lost. This is what hung Mr. Martin up most of all. Nosenko told the FBI the KGB suspect Oswald was intended to be a US

sleeper agent. (They really did Angleton in, with the special Orhid for Mother of not mentioning his name. Glad you did for those not fully aware.) In Whitewash IV I have what Dulles blurted out, that if Oswald served any US agency in the USSR it was not the FBI but the CIA. Mr. Martin's main effort was to persuade me that Oswald was KGB. (My view remains that he was Orwellian.)

I have two Nosenko FOIA requests all not complied with by a number of agencies. Nosenko is at the center of one of my cases now before the court of appeals in a very interesting if not important context. One is more than three years old, the other dates to just prior to the appearance of Legend and was repeated with more detail after publication. Total stonewalling, no pun intended.

Once the staff report was made public I asked Jim to phone the CIA and the committee to ask for copies. The CIA refused to act without a written FOIA request, believe it or not with a public record, and Jim never got through to Blakey, who runs the committee because Stokes would not act, referring Jim to Blakey. I doubt either will want me to have this report so if you can when you are up there again will you please get one for me? My present interest is limit to FOIA uses because there is no possibility of any present writing.

This need will exist with whatever the committee puts out about Mexico City on Monday. I have old FOIA requests on that going back to 1975 also, again with a number of non-complying agencies.

Last night a friend told me of taking in a Stokes-Preyer appearance, she thought on the Today show just before these hearings began. Her recollection is that Preyer made it explicit that the committee's central purpose was to end rumors that there were any legitimate questions about either assassination. He offered the opinion that they had already succeeded. (Q.E.D.)

I did not recall these copies of clippings I made for you when you were on vacation until I thought of writing you to see if you can help on Mr. Martin. Don't know if they do you any good now.

Thanks,