

Last summer Peter Kihss said it was a terrible job. I have no way of knowing hence no independent opinion. But his first did so well for Marzeni and I suspect Kihss may be right....I enjoy another luxury. Had to get a decent radio to pick up the stations that phone me so I know how to feed in. Got one with FM, so when I'm writing letters I can listen to music. Surprisingly good tone for a small set. Feels good to be getting close to daylight, both ways....I find a subtle change in press attitude, not really reflected in the papers but in personal contact...Goodluck in your surgery, and a speedy recovery.

Wednesday afternoon

Dear Harold:

We decided to call in Bill Turner for sleuthing out l'affaire Harry Dean. The upshot of the whole thing is that we didn't really get any information that was productive of new leads. At least that was the feeling both Bill and I got when we left Dean's place last Thursday night a four hour session.

Let me recapitulate the sequence of events. He called me, that is Dean, a week ago last Thursday morning at 7:00 a.m. and woke me out of a sound sleep. It took me a couple of seconds before I realized to whom I was talking. I muttered some excuse about getting on my bathrobe and taking the call on another phone. Actually, I used the time to set up my tape recorder that operates off the telephone jack. I then proceeded to tape a lengthy conversation in which he expounded on his relations with the Fair Play For Cuba Committee. Ray, Lillian and Maggie heard the tape and, like me, were of mixed feelings about his reliability and honesty. With the recent rash of "leads"(sic) that have turned out to be duds, we decided to proceed with caution. So we called in Bill Turner of Ramparts with his former FBI connections to check the matter out. Bill flew down on Thursday afternoon, listened to the tape at the airport and that evening we called Dean from Maggie's and went on to Rosemead where Dean resides. It's about an hour's drive from west Los Angeles and we didn't arrive much before ten p.m. A new name: Guy Gabaldon popped up in conversation (I will make a tape copy for your inspection if you like) when I spoke with Dean on the phone and so we pursued this at the outset. Never once did Turner get asked as to what his credentials were. I introduced him as a magazine journalist with credits for Pageant, SATEVEPOST etc., and apparently Dean never batted an eye. Bill told him he thought he'd try and do an article of sorts, but the end result was that there was nothing to hang an article on. He did give us something just short of physical descriptions and political profiles of Howard and Hall (Loran Eugene) and Bill has these in his contemporaneous notes which he began taking after we'd been there about an hour. His initial effort was to ascertain whether Dean was still under cover for the FBI or was a "plant" to lead us on. His conclusion: Dean was a petty informer who had no longer any use to them and therefore had been dropped. Having been named in the Eastland Hearings as a member of the Fair Play For Cuba Committee even though he was primarily there to inform on his colleagues gave the Bureau a chance to potentially blackmail him. Something that struck me early on was the physical resemblance of Dean to the man in the CIA Mexico photograph! On closer perusal I was probably proven wrong, although I insisted it be examined in the Esquire magazine version by Dean while we were there. He gave a bemused smile as he looked at it and made no comment. I was most intrigued and it was the one point in the evening that I felt, perhaps uncomprehendingly, we were witnessing a kind of "dramatic recognition scene" akin to the ancient Attic dramas. Dean is still schizophrenic on the matter of the Bureau and the Birch Society. He really responds emotionally to the appeal they seem to make to him in the abstract. But deep down he realizes that Kennedy's murder has been the result of a conspiracy of the Right Wing and that the organs of government are engaged in a cover-up. This because of the identity of interests he and a man like Oswald probably had in common. All in all it was a rather pathetic effort on his part to lift his experience to a level of reality (or fantasy) that it never achieved in fact.

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Maggie's panoplys are finally to be published possibly by Random House! She has a couple of offers.

I will enter hospital on the 19th for surgery on my back. A spinal fusion of the 4th + 5th vertebrae (lumbar). The various opinions are not all in, but it looks so clear cut a case from the X-Rays as if the operation were designed with me in mind.

Best wishes to you + Lil.

Bill

P. S. I have, as usual, one of my tape recorders in the shop for repairs. So you'll have to wait another week for the Lane-Leibler debate.