

Dear Dave,

2/6/79

While this is about Oliver Patterson first I want to let you know that Les Payne spoke to me last night for the first time this year. Because he finally got to take his vacation and decided, with the paper's approval, to stretch it to two months to be with his family more and do a draft of his South Africa book. One of the curses of unique competence like his is the time away from home. He said he'd received the copy of the book from you and has high regard for it, from appearance to content. If you'd like he'd probably give you a letter. I did not think to suggest it.

Oliver phoned on Sunday when I was in the middle of trying to rearrange our stock of my books, with a friend whose time is limited and who actually did most of the work. I was a bit winded by the time I got upstairs and on the phone and may not have gotten some of it straight. Part I'm sure of.

I think he said that after his TV appearances with Popkin he had a party, possibly just a few days ago, and that (both) were among those present. I think he said that he and Guth got along well, something like that.

He'd had some prior contact with Guth.

He knows about the project from me and possibly more from Guth. Oliver has this in mind: taking his vacation this summer by driving up to Stevens Point with all his videotapes, including a number of Kane and Stoner and Jerry in some kind of Hambone act, etc., where copies of any desired can be made.

I'm not in a position to evaluate what he has in terms of your historical concepts. I would guess that where you think the cost of videotaping is not justified sound can be preserved. My hunch is that if possible all the tapes may be of future value. (Les thinks he may be disbarred. I told Les I've stayed out but would, as in the past, respond to inquiries.)

If he is in touch with you I suggest you ask that he also bring his sound tapes and if I have not given you copies, the HSCA's transcripts involving him and those sound tapes. I'll be quite surprised if he does not have a large number of them. My guess is that he has all of his committee stuff taped, Beetz being the kind of dope the FBI isn't.

There can be in this a case study of an FBI plus informer because you'll have all I've received from the FBI. He has the HQ copies now and at my suggestion taped our conversation about them. I've not yet looked at the St. L. field office copies. I loaned them Saturday to the St. Louis Post-Dispatch. They may do a story.

For whatever it is worth to you and Guth I've never found Oliver in a lie or to date even exaggeration. He has his own beliefs and is his own kind of person. I imagine that if he set himself to it he could be a good con man but I've seen no evidence of this other than the informer role. On the other hand, he let himself get gypped by HSCA, which is a bit strange and may indicate what there is little point in conjecturing over. He has done me some favors and I do appreciate them. Like that fantastic buy on TDK cassettes.

I had the -D get his okay before letting them have the records. Best,