

11/24/70

Dear Gary,

Glad to get your 11/17. I reply while awaiting a call from a southern contact who has interviewed Bringuier on tape for me. He is in DC and is checking bus schedules on getting here today, so I can hear and dub the tape. You have copies of some of my correspondence with him as "Jim".

Before I get into responding, you might also tell Crosby, if he is interested, that behind the firing of the OEO Washington lawyers lurk some of the same strange characters in whom we are interested in both K assassinations, some of your Hargis pals, like Brin. and others, who were honored by the Nixon-Agnew people for their help in the campaign (at a meeting at International House), and who were active in the campaign of the guy who brought it off, Toledano. I have written a N.O. lawyer involved, and I can't remember the name of the witness, but he happens to be, I think, the lawyer a guy who saw the Oswald bust asked to help Oswald if he needed it. I'd have to go thru the entire lit file to get his name.

Nichols: I gather, though you do not say so, that what is pending is decision on the government's motion to dismiss. I do not think a decision in favor of John would end the possibilities of stalling. Although I have deep fears for John's approach, I would welcome such a hearing if I could get a transcript of it. I fear he is doomed to failure, which I regret. You know the work I went to to salvage his first case.

Other things not directly related to it convince me of Fisher's importance and I believe he and Eardley pulled what you know of. Of course, if I get my panel suit into court (and the chief reason the attempt hasn't been made is Bud), this can be inquired into, and I plan that. I intend Fisher to be my chief ~~witness~~ witness, almost all my witnesses to be a legal mindblower, unfriendlies.

I don't think you ever gave me those memos on Crafard, and I'd like very much to have them. In fact, you also never sent me that woman's second Crafard treatise. I did get the first one.

You should by now have gotten a check and a letter of thanks on the Jacobs sketch. A good, clear copy was received.

Paul: you should have gotten my letter in which I also express concern about some of my approach to Paul. I frankly do not know what is right. I do not consider his "selling out" a likelihood, and I have to accept his assurances that he is not under A's pressure and hasn't been. So, the most logical explanation is yours, that he is ill. Under these circumstances, and sharp as he is, I fear that if I am out of character it would be wrong. I have been seeking to get him to do what nobody seems to have done, defend his work, not criticize and evade the criticism of it. I took up the Tague hit, I took up his incredible position on 399, I confronted him before he did his paper with consulting with Bernabei, I told him before he did anything on paper that he should know of the recent discoveries in Z., all these and other things. So, I think, aside from trying to alert him to what he is doing to himself, I think, perhaps wrongly, that the best approach is to make him face his own work as he has that of the Commission, to do what he has not done, begin at the beginning and prove, step by step, that it is valid. If this confronts him with a crisis he cannot handle, then I have done wrong. If he faces it and finds it does not hold up, then I have done right. If he evades, I do not know what it means. I do not think the question is as you put it that he intends publication. I think this involves A's intentions and whether or not Paul can influence them. How he could be so inconsistent with his own work and character still baffles me, for I have never seen anything as unlikely as Paul's having had anything to do with this, from the outset, for that is work that would disgrace an intelligent teenager. You evade when you say you are concerned that his thinking be clear and straight, for we have the evidence that it isn't when he knows better. We are past that. We know he has done these things that is neither clear nor straight. Thus I have undertaken to bring him face to face with that. I do not think that whatever problems he may have would have made him this sloppy, this unscientific. He'd be out of school if that were the case. You refer to his replies and the time they take. I note that he has not really replied to any of my criticisms.

He did little more than defend himself (evasively but with technical accuracy) ~~him~~ against my crack about his concern for my ulcer and deny A's influence. He has not even sent me copies of what he sent others, except the one thing to you. I did not read past the first page of his revision, but in soeaking to Howard Sunday I learned one thing in it ~~that~~ that does give me concern. He has been holding things back on me even when they relate to my earlier discoveries, shared with him. I gave him the Harper stuff in 1966. He knows or should ~~we~~ remember ~~that~~ they told me this was all, and all the time when he went further he had their reporting that is contrary to what they told me, that they had the pix and they are withheld. They also denied to Howard that they had them. This, too, is unlike PH. I'll have to try and find time to read the rest of that. And I'll write him and ask for copies of the correspondence and permission to use. You know also that he know that I used this in PM and was silent.

If you think my approach is wrong, please tell me how. The others of you can keep after him on points of the evidence. I want him to justify the entire thing, beginning with whether or not it could be a valid comparison, a valid stidy, whether any ~~concl~~ conclusions can be drawn from it. Here also I note that although others seem to have missed it, he lied on the first page of the revision. He did have contrary results right off the bat and he did fish around to circumvent them/

I think you are wrong in believing he had done no theorizing. I think it would be more accurate to say he has not committed any theorizing to paper. He is, as you say, an inordinately efficient worker.

On the discussion of questions: he has raised none that are capable of answer or worthy of it from his work. Anybody can dream up or contrive anything and say answer this, but he has come up with nothing not already fairly well exhausted and nothing that lends any credibility to the official version of these points. What's to discuss? Rather, you are talking about honoring him by pretending that he has raised valid questions when he hasn't. Those that had this superficial appearance have, to the best of my knowledge, all be eliminated by what he has been sent.

So, it is not simple and, I think, not as simple as you make it seem. I do not hide my perplexity. -I'm airmailing this because if you think other than I do about the vigor with which I am sometimes writing him, please explain the error, in terms of your discipline. I fear he'll wonder if I'm out of character. My question is, can this hurt him? Is it wrong to get him to defend his work (or to try to get him to) rather than to try and fend off criticism of it? I am asking the norm, no more. Can it hurt him if he does face what he has done? Is this not, in fact, the best approach, if he can help himself without professional help (which I think there is little likelihood he would seek voluntarily). As I told you, I've attempted to enlist others to just chat with him extensively and see if they can learn anything.

Gotta get to others things.

Dear Harold:

November 17, 1970

The suits sound as though they are doing OK. Thanks for keeping me informed of them. Nichols feels that the judge will rule this month on whether his suit will be heard. He feels that the government has exhausted its stalling tactics. He sent me a copy of his Memorandum Brief for Plaintiff. Would you like a copy? It was filed on Oct. 13 of this year.

I agree with the info you got in your recent interview with TK as a possible explanation for many of the pieces of misinformation in the commission's investigation. Incompetence, carelessness, and oversight are very important in this case as far as I am concerned. Prejudgment or perhaps a fear of looking in certain directions also accounts for much of it. I tend to believe in a minimum of coverup or conscious deception in the main areas of the case (as opposed, for instance, to the attempts to hide things such as the Milteer stuff in order to protect Hoover and company). The misgiving about the Clark panel does not surprise me. I would still like to know how much Fisher had to do with selling it to the Justice Dept. I tend to feel that they were taken for a sleigh ride. Perhaps when Ned sees Ramsey Clark he can get some inkling of this. If they didn't have misgivings about Liebler, then I would assume that they are more incompetent than they already look at times. By the way, I wonder how they felt about the Junior staff in general. For instance, those memos by Hubert and Griffin on several subjects (i.e. the ones outlining the conspiracy theories which I found among the documents on Larry Crafard) which are a bit irresponsible. In fact, I am glad that the critics, even at their most irresponsible (of which we are all guilty at times), have not published some of these things.

By now your publisher should definitely have the sketch of the King assassination made by John Jacobs in Memphis. I got mine at the end of last week.

On a subject I have discussed before, I think that some of the letters you have written to Paul are excessive, especially in tone. As you know, I agree that Paul's memo is full of holes or at least conveys sufficient misconceptions to be very misleading. I do not feel that there are answers to many of the questions you, I, Dick, et. al. have raised. But neither do I think, as I know you don't, that Paul has defected or sold out or anything of that sort. I do feel that he has been careless with conclusions, something incredibly untypical of Paul. Whether or not his thinking could have been influenced by Alvarez is not of concern to me, since I am only concerned that his thinking be clear and straight. In other words, if he were disagreeing with us based on new facts or a new analysis of them, then I would think it good. Whether other pressures in his life have led to a sudden drop in the quality or style of his work is totally unknown to me, but I am certain that he does not intend to publish something to which others have valid objections. By now he has been bombarded with countless lengthy attacks on his position, many of which refer him to evidence, testimony, etc. In order to reply within a reasonable time he would need to abandon all other activities. And to make matters worse, everyone is hitting him with a wide variety of criticisms at once. I suggest that we all take one issue at a time and discuss it with Paul (i.e. like the Tague hit). It is worthwhile bearing in mind that at least as far as I know Paul has generally not been involved in discussions of big events and theories, at least not with me. He has generally tended to be working in many microscopic areas. He has never wasted time (if it is a waste which is debatable) on theorizing in big issues, but rather on investigating the many small details which make up each larger question. Consequently, this is the first time I have been aware of his feelings about the bigger event--feelings which I assume he has entertained for some time. Now that he has asked questions, many of which have been asked before, perhaps it is time that we all discussed them. Paul is an old and good friend, more to you than me for sure since I haven't had 1/10 the contact with him. And yet, I value his mind, work, and opinions as I'm sure you do such that I feel that these things should be discussed if he feels differently than we do. Well, that's about all. Best. Gary