

Cbs/Hunt leads: meeting with Martin Plissner, #916, 1601 18 St., NW, DC,

Plissner has called me evening 2/15 in response to my last letter to Schorr after his b'cast on Bennett-CIA connections. When we talked Plissner had told me of their interest in following some of these leads. I had told him of my reservations and experiences, which made me now reluctant to give away some of the evidence I had gathered. After our conversation, and because he had told me he had an interest in tracing a Hunt bank account at what he had described as the New York Avenue branch of the Riggs bank, I phoned him back to tell him of the Hunt check I have and to offer it alone for this kind of checking. Because I was going into town yesterday, I offered to leave it at CBS for him because I would be driving almost past there. He suggested I phone his apartment and he gave me the number. I did and he invited Lesar and me over.

It turned out that he was not interested in checking further on Hunt but on a report that the White House had an account at that bank. I think he meant the Penna. Ave branch, just to the west of NY Ave. That particular bank used to advertise that every president since Lincoln had used it, so the news is not apparent to me and I did not go into this with Plissner. I did give him a copy of the check with no restrictions on using it and refusing to tell him more unless he would agree to certain terms. These were that whatever else I told him would not be used without my permission but could be used for further investigation if I agreed to the manner of that investigation. When he said he could not understand this I said I had seen no competent investigation of any kind, that all that had come out, including the story that led to my letter to Schorr were leaks only, and that I did not want promising investigations to which I would eventually get foreclosed by fumblers. He had said that he could not accept conditions that kept him from investigating. I had said he was perfectly welcome to go ahead but I was as welcome not to give him my work without conditions satisfactory to me.

We discussed this in a friendly way. I finally said that he lost nothing by agreeing to my conditions because he knew nothing to begin with and if I were satisfied that whatever they would do would not be incompetent I would be anxious for them to investigate and use but that there were two areas in particular when I believed the leads of which that check is part could lead to something of interest. In one I told him that what I already had was more than enough for a story and I did propose to use it in my own writing, that it was already complete enough for that. To my surprise he didn't even try to learn what these two areas are (Buckley and Vesco). I did tell him the reason for the check and explained that one of the obvious results is the memory-holing of the identifications of the \$100 bills. This he could see, but apparently not what it could have meant. In an effort to entice him to agree to the simple terms, I told him I knew where a list of these bills still exists. (As he should have known, Chicago coroner's office, and at least one paper, CDN)

During conversation he said that the Bennett-CIA leak did not come from WH. I had understood him to say night before it had. He had or gave no info of value.

Plissner may work in news but he is no newsman.

When we discussed the story, which was briefly, I repeated what I had told him, that the detectable minor detail error in it told me that it had come from the Senate or from the Senate's sources. He agreed to the latter formulation before we left. But he added nothing to what was b'cast, promised to get me the transcripts of what had been, and all he knew was the Singapore man.

HW 2/17/74