

Dear Jim,

5/31/73

Before going to bed last night I read the three Sirhan appeal affidavits. All are persuasive. That of Dr. Eduard Simson leaves me uneasy, the reason for this note. I'd have to go over it with more care than the time I feel it is worth at this juncture is worth to be more explicit, but I'll give you a couple of samples. He spends 22 pages criticizing the various shrinks, for the most part I think quite legitimately, but in all these words, in which he draws heavily upon his own experiences with Sirhan as part of his job at Q, he fails to note the reason he can't really compare the Sirhan pre-trial and the man at Q. They are not, emotionally, psychologically or environmentally the same man and they can't be compared as he does. Postulate that Sirhan did have some emotional problems involving say, for one of many possibilities, security. In jail he has that. He would have this problem at least moderated. I don't buy his belief that Sirhan was without mental-health problems at all. The legitimacy in his complaint that just about all the shrinks were Jews is, I think, not to be derived from the fact of their origin as much as from Sirhan's attitude toward Jews. (I have a progressive Arab friend with whom I get along very well. He was up here over the weekend and it is he who phoned to tell me Bud would be on the Jerry Williams Show last night.) I don't think Simson can be as glib as he is about this. Those people had professional responsibilities requiring them to take any patient in need. The fault lies with those selecting them, the point Simson ignores. And when Simson slips into the classic error of describing Jews as a "race", his word, he characterizes himself. In short, be careful about this guy. I'd be apprehensive of putting him on the stand. At the same time, much of his criticism is persuasive. There is one fact in it I find fascinating, and at this juncture I'd prefer that you not spread it around, for there is time in which more can be learned and the nuts need no inspiration. It is on p. 15, where he says Sirhan "manufactured a hypno-disk" and practised self-hypnotism. He did not need a manufactured object. He could have used anything, say a quarter. That he went for a device of any kind is in accord with the concept in The Parallax View, the novel I loaned to someone who hasn't returned it. If he had been hypnotized with an object that would trigger, would you not find this fascinating? And why did he not use something readily available? Also, I have trouble believing that all the notebooks were manufactured.