

Dear Jim,

1/28/78

There really is a Stoner conspiracy.

It is to keep me from sleeping, though, not to defame the FBI.

As you know, I got up to early yesterday (again today), I decided to go to bed about and with and with what I have to go through to get to bed now had just put the light out when the phone rang. It was Stoner - seeking advice and information.

He had received a phone call from someone representing himself as an AP reporter named Joe Smith. The name at first made him suspicious but finally Stone decided it sounded like a reporter.

The House assassins have subpoenaed Stoner and Fields. The thing that they want to know is how long he has known the Ray family.

He wanted to know if I knew anything about it and then the powers of the committee, etc. He will go to court to oppose it. If his mind were not fixed as it is he could do something in court. It is improper to seek any information about his clients from a lawyer and Stoner has represented all the Ray men. Maybe not Carol.

I told him they were on a fishing expedition but did not elaborate. The committee, if its purposes were legit., would have sent representatives to see him and ask such questions. If then not satisfied it would hold a hearing. Failure to follow normal procedure indicates a media event and perhaps the beginning of some Ray deal of an unsavory aroma.

They'll have a time with Fields. Stoner will give them speeches about the FBI. I think he'll be able to specify enough to embarrass the FBI. If this happens then you may want to recall that I tipped the DJ off in 1969.

We had a long conversation. We got into FOIA. He had told Les Payne that he would be asking advice from me but he hadn't. He got it last night. He had not even bothered to look up FOIA or PA. He will now. I also told him how to get the committee's resolution.

When I told him that he had to write each field office separately he said that is too much trouble. When I told him we had written to 59 of them he seemed to realize it is less than impossible. He must be as lazy as Jerry told me.

I told him and through him Jerry, who later took the phone, that the UPI story is a phoney and that I had broken those records loose. He asked about him and I told him about those on him and in general how the NSRP figures in the files, justifying the FBI on that parts, as I think he saw. I explained how the phoney conspiracy record was contrived and he asked for a copy I'll send when Lil has the machine going. But remember, you told me to write him about this and I did. He did not respond. I forgot to ask him if he got that letter.

Jerry's present interests, by tape and by phone, seem to be limited to McMillan, with Ark having him all steamed up about getting rich over it - he's thinking of getting a new Cadillac when he gets that cash, about \$200,000 he figures - and what it means to be a champion chicken raiser. He keeps coming back to both.

I would encourage you to keep in mind that the committee is not going about this the right way and to take this as an indication not that it does not know better but that it is up to a spectacular. Like with Trafficante and Hall - meaningless except for headlines.

Best,

1/3/78

Dear J.B. Stoner,

This will not go out in today's mail because I'll have to leave home before my wife can do any copying. I'll dig out the records you asked for when you phoned last night and will include copies. I think there are two. I know I saw two.

There is something I did not think of last night. That is that the committee's way with you is not the regular way. This means they have some purpose. My guess would be that it is to use you and Dr. Fields as they used Santos Trafficante, to get headlines and to force witnesses to be uncooperative.

The regular way would have been to send an investigator or lawyer to see you, after phoning or writing you and arranging it, and asking for the information they seek. If they have no ulterior purpose, if all they want to know is the relations between you and the Rays, if this did not transgress against a lawyer-client relationship you could have provided that and all similar information in an affidavit.

Departure from normal procedure is a signal. So is releasing the information in advance. I believe this is a violation of the committee's supposed procedures. You are within your rights in asking for copies of this. They may give it to you with the subpoena.

It generally is a good idea to have counsel before committee/s because there is almost no limit on what they can do or try to do. If you remember the televised Watergate hearings there is no single lawyer who was a witness who did not have counsel at his side.

My belief is that they intend to use you as a media event.

On the FOIA requests of field offices you can xerox a single letter and send it to all of them.

If I do not have a copy of the second record I recall it was a directive to Savannah for you and I think Baltimore for me and these included not to interview us because of the kind of bad people we are. The more likely explanation is that the FBI wanted false records of its own creation to be able to flash in secret. It did not want any report in which either of us told an unwitting agent the truth or in which he had a chance to say exactly what we said.

Aside from the purpose of my going there, falsely represented as my asking to be interviewed, what I did do is exactly what you said. I told them that FBI informers, according to what you had told me, were engaged in improper activities. This was before we knew the details of what they called Cointelpro. I don't think I told them your source. You'll see that they had to twist this to offset an advance record of their Cointelpro activities - in 1969.

They should have a record of that St. Louis TV broadcast. My reason for saying this is that I did see a record in their Bevel files in which they were following him. They reported he was to be on that show. You may remember he had agreed to be and then didn't show. So they'll have covered all of us then, and this means that the St. Louis office will have a record of this at least on you.

I'm sorry Jerry and Jimmy would not listen to me about the committee. I knew what I was talking about. They were motivated by wishful thinking. I fear it will all be clear enough soon enough and that you may be the beginning of that. There also is no telling what Jimmy did say or what they'll interpret his way of expressing himself as meaning. There are published quotations, especially attributed to Mark Lane, that do contradict what he said earlier. At best this is not helpful. But Jerry continues to believe that anything that gets printed is good. It isn't, as he should have seen from that massive scrapbook the State had at the evidentiary hearing and with which they confronted Jimmy - successfully. The new lied detector test to which Lane agreed is not going to help Jimmy. He should never take one because of the way his mind works. He is sure to be misread. Sincerely, Harold Weisberg