

5/9/69

Dear Steve,

My sole purpose in going to see you today was to try and repay some of your many kindnesses in the one way possible, with stories. One has to do with what may be a factor in the current campus disturbances and, to the best of my knowledge, has never been in print, and the other is of a sensational trial entirely unreported except on a regional wire. In the first case, if you were interested, I could have referred you to the man who might have been able to give you whatever you might have wanted. In the second case, I have done the work that can be until there is an end to the trial. Further, there was something I believe you might want to know.

As you know, I phoned you first. You were busy. You said you'd be back ~~at~~ about 1:30.

I took no liberties in your office. I did not sit down without asking if I might and where. I did not use the phone without getting permission. There is a man doing some copying work for me. I phoned him this morning. He asked me to phone him after lunch. When I did he told me that on the occasion of my earlier call an retired admiral was with him. When he mentioned me and my work the admiral told him of knowing of ostentatious counterfeiting of Oswald in New Orleans before the JFK assassination. When I returned the call the admiral was again there, on another phone, and going to speak to me in a matter of a few moments. When I heard this I asked your secretary if you were still in a position to tape. I had not been in your office since you moved it, as you may recall, but I did know you had the three-inch reel machine. She said you were and she could do it. She did. While I was speaking she left. Not until after the conversation ended, when I went into the office, did I know you had a cassette machine. It is the one she used. I turned it off and removed the cassette. That was my first time in that office since Ryder used it.

Obviously, I did not want anything to happen that could hurt or inconvenience you. Had I imagined or had any reason to conceive that your girl might have done something of this sort I would not have asked her if she could tape the call. But I did not go barging in, did not connect anything up, put any cassette in the machine or anything like that. I didn't touch or even see the thing until I went in to turn it off. Had I been up to anything sneaky, would I have called it to your attention by asking if I should replace the cassette?

I hope you can preserve what is recorded. You might want to hear it. The part about the man at the airport loudly identifying himself as Oswald and asking about bringing a rifle in from Mexico I had heard of before. In itself it is of some interest. What is said about Johnson is new and I am inclined to doubt it. You may or may not believe what is said of the bugging, but this is not the first time I have heard that the President's conversations are less than private. In this respect I suppose I might be his peer. If you want to preserve what you had on that cassette, I would like to bring my own machine in and dub that conversation.

I am sorry you were having a bad day and that, even inadvertently, I was connected with any worsening of it. But I assure you it was not by intent or by touching your machine or putting a used cassette in it or anything of that sort, for I did not.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg