

11/5/84

Dear Athan,

Thanks for your 10/30. And this requires no answer.

I'm glad your work is proceeding at the schedule you set for yourself, quite an undertaking with your teaching.

It makes no difference to me that you regard the Shaneyfelt matter about which I wrote you more of an insight into how the FBI operated, less so into Hoover's persona" and I have no special interest in having it published. In time I'll probably use it myself. But I would like to suggest that in what must be an incredible rush when you have a few moments free for thought you might want to ponder whether "how the FBI operated" is not, in fact, an insight into his persona, as regarded by those under him, at any level.

The last thing Shaneyfelt wanted was a judicial determination of fact, which meant a relatively impartial assessment of his work. My work was accurate and he knew it very well. Yet he proposed it. In the proposal he had to be certain that it would not come to pass. Yet would get Hoover's attention. And in this be his own defense if the critical comment about him and the FBI was expressed by anyone else. Like everyone else, he also knew that Hoover was horrified at the thought of the FBI getting involved in civil litigation. So, from his correct understanding of Hoover's persona, he accomplished a number of purposes by the proposal that he, personally, would reject for reasons he knew when he made the proposal.

As the first law is Cover the Bureau's Ass, the second is cover your own, and these reflect the Hoover all in the FBI understood. This was, as several former agents told me, a dominating factor in how the FBI operated. Not only that it was Hoover cloned, not only how he dominated it directly.

I've never forgotten what an SA took me aside ^{to say} one evening in Harlan town during the early days of the Harlan conspiracy case, when I had been borrowed from the Senate and was part of the DJ party. He was a nice guy, an accountant rather than a lawyer, and obviously trusted me when he told me that they all have to report on each other and he was getting out within a year. He said if anything was reported by any one that any others knew and did not report, those not reporting would be in real trouble. Hoover had to know everything. I remember his name and omit it because I do not intend this and what follows for use, just to give you an insight into the FBI of that day because of the kind of person Hoover was.

There was a DJ secretary a New York Times reporter, from the account given me, tried to rape. In the unsuccessful effort he broke her leg. (He had a large house in the town in which the trial was held.) Not an FBI agent, not any DJ lawyer, would do anything to help her that very early morning, ending the drunken party, and I was phoned to get assistance for her. I was not at that party.

There was a DJ chauffeur assigned to the party, with an armored Buick. He was a reformed alcoholic and, frightened over reports of dynamite being wired to the starters of automobiles, went ~~back~~ off the wagon and into an unending drunk. He even got whishey when confined to his hotel room and under observation. It was, I think correctly, decided that he had to be gotten out of Harlan town before those we had under indictment could get wind of it. No FBI agent would be of any help, would risk getting his name involved. The oldest and youngest DJ lawyer and I were assigned to spiriting him out of the hotel, which we believed was under surveillance by the indicted local authorities, we did, and the youngest lawyer got him back to Washington after our successful escape from the county and state.

Another secretary was drinking rather much and was suspected of nymphomania. She, too, had to be gotten safely away, from the seat of the trial. Again, no FBI agent would be involved and the chore fell to me. I took her quietly by Greyhound to

Knoxville and stayed with her during a long plane delay and delivered her safely to Washington.

Until then I would never have suspected that there was any duty any FBI SA would not assume.

Those were intelligent and brave men and by and large rather good people. I grew quite fond and respectful of the one in charge and we remained friends until his death. He, too, left the FBI and rose to fairly high positions in DJ, heading two divisions before he returned to private life.

While I have no way of knowing, I rather suspect that in any agency [?]not headed by a Hoover the men would not have feared assuming the responsibilities then not accepted, and I'm sure that reflects their understanding of the kind of person Hoover was.

So what I am suggesting that you think about is whether or not the kind of person Hoover was and was understood to be controlled how the FBI operated, what it did and did not do, would and would not do.

Best wishes,

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October 30, 1984

Dear Harold:

This is to acknowledge receipt of the packet of FBI documents you had mailed me and accompanying letters dated October 23, 1984 and September 21, 1984. I also received additional documents you had mailed to me without any accompanying, dated letter.

First, I do want to thank you again for going through the trouble to locate and xerox the FBI documents. I have found them useful, and particularly those describing how Hoover's testimony was edited and the "Director is always right" example. They provide insights into Hoover's personality and his direction of the FBI and combined with my other research findings allow us to understand his impact on the Bureau and national politics.

I did find your discussion of the Shaneyfelt matter fascinating, yet have decided against your sending me the records. The example offers insights into how the FBI operated, less so into Hoover's persona. I fear that I already have too much of the Bureau in what is intended to be a biography.

Writing proceeds apace, and I am on schedule (my own schedule). At present I feel confident that I shall meet my publication deadline. I had known, by the way, of the Welch book. I have not yet purchased a copy (owing to the press of other business) but shall be doing so this next month. I suspect that the book will prove to be of limited value, and is in the genre of Sullivan's diatribe. I hope to obtain examples of Hoover's relations with agents and his administrative rules and procedures. I doubt that Welch will tell us much about the conservative politics of the FBI and further how it was that Hoover amassed such unprecedented power. I am willing to be surprised, but am not counting on it.

I have processed your bill through the University's budget office and have asked them to send you a check directly--you should receive same for \$41.70 within the next week to ten days.

Again my thanks.

As ever,

