

Dear Mr. Sheoharis,

1/6/83

Please excuse the typographical errors that will abound unless my wife has time to read and correct this, but today is one of my short days and there is ~~much~~ much I must do.

Last night I finished "Beyond the ~~Hiss~~ Case" and today I have your letter of the 3rd. I'm delighted that you plan to update the excellent essay and plan a definitive biography of Hoover! I think I can help you with both projects and to this end will send copies of this letter to my FOIA lawyer, Jim Cesar, who also represents other FOIA requesters, and to Prof. David Wrone, Univ Wisconsin Stevens Point, who will have all my records and already (I hope!) has some you can use - early Hoover.

If any portions relating to Marcantonio are ever updated, my wife and I should be spoken to. (I think there is an error in referring to him as the only Member of the Congress who voted against Korea. Didn't Taft?) I'll be quite surprised if my wife and I are not in the FBI's records about him. If you are in touch with Waltzer we'd like to know and would, I am sure, like to read that long (170pp?) FBI summary report.

Marc lived with me for some time and later my wife handled matters pertaining to his district in his Washington office. During those days he was connected with the International Labor Defense, I think as its head after or before Anna Damon, and a former novelist, Louis L'Amey (Colman, had its Washington office. Those records should include an exceptionally valuable volume of clippings and other materials about Hoover and the FBI. I have no idea where Colman is or if he is still alive, but he would be a good source and might know where those files may be if they still exist. A woman named Sascha Small also was in the New York office and she might know.

There is also a criminalist named Mike Foner you should be able to locate and can be informative. He was fired by Hoover in about 1935-6 for trying to organize an employees union. He had an unrelated associate with my name.

Al Bernstein was Max Lowenthal's research assistant for his book. Al is Carl's father. When I last knew him he lived on River Road in Washington. (My wife worked with Al, Max - and Alger.)

You are, of course, welcome to anything I have. I've made several subject files of FOIA records that might interest you. One is of Hoover's notations, and I'll try to remember to include a gem, and the other is labelled merely "Control" and indicates how his FBI controlled the cases in which I am interested.

I have and have read most of at least a third of a million pages of FBI records. I've worked a little with them (the ^{Marion} County, Ky, 1937 conspiracy case) and rather much against them, FOIA and as James Earl Ray's investigator.

My own belief is that in his later years the FBI's bureaucrats manipulated him rather much and knew how to con him, vis is incredible ego. A few amusing illustrations are available. How they rewrote his Warren Commission testimony to make it comprehensible and persuaded him that the court reporter was incompetent and how they proved he was right when he was wrong (involving a left turn, yet, if you are familiar with Schott's book) and I published a picture to prove he was wrong. He was asked why Oswald did not shoot JFK as the motorcade was approaching the building and he said it was because there were trees in the way. That was the only street without trees. But after the motorcade turned left off of that street there were trees, so, as always, the Director was right. I think I have a file of this title, too. And a file on his sending a Portuguese ^{azi} Xmas cards. (In his early days he built his political base with our native Nazis and I think Wrone has what I then had and filed.)

Some of my early files were dictated by the one fink in the Hollywood Ten. Charles Kramer brought Edward Daytryk to my home because Charles knew that before

WORLD WAR II I HAD RESEARCHED A BOOK ON THE DIES COMMITTEE. I LET THEM TAKE ANYTHING THEY WANTED AND I NEVER SAW EITHER - OR A SINGLE ONE OF MY BOXES OF PAGES - AGAIN. I'D KNOWN ~~ERIK~~ KRAMER WHEN WE WERE BOTH ON THE SENATE CIVIL LIBERTIES COMMITTEE BUT WE WERE NOT CLOSE. (AND, OF COURSE, JOHN ABT, AGAIN NOT CLOSELY.)

I BECAME FRIENDS WITH THE JAMES McINERNEY WHO LATER HEADED BOTH LANDS AND CRIMINAL DIVISIONS WHEN HE WAS AN FBI AGENT ON THE HARLAN CASE. HE WOUND UP IN PRIVATE PRACTISE AND WAS THEN ONE OF THE FEW LAWYERS WHO WOULD REPRESENT SECURITY-CASE VICTIMS. HE WAS A GOOD AGENT AND A GOOD HUMAN BEING. THIS REMINDS ME OF A HOOVER STORY OF THAT DAY AND IN TURN I AM PROMPTED TO SUGGEST THAT IF YOU ARE EVER NEAR HERE IT MIGHT BE GOOD IF WE COULD TAKE AND YOU COULD, IF YOU'D LIKE, TAPE. YOU CAN USE MY EQUIPMENT.

I DID NOT READ YOUR FINE BOOK UNDER THE BEST CONDITIONS. I SPEND ABOUT THREE HOURS EACH MORNING IN WALKING THERAPY AT A LOCAL MALL, WHERE I CAN SIT WHEN IT IS FREQUENTLY NECESSARY. WHEN I SIT AND RAISE MY BAD LEG I READ. MAKING NOTES ALSO WAS NOT CONVENIENT BUT I DID MAKE A FEW ON THE BOOKMARK.

IN CONNECTION WITH REVISING YOUR ESSAY I THINK YOU SHOULD MAKE IT CLEAR THAT WHAT IS NOT RECORDED IN ONE FILE IS RECORDED IN ANOTHER AND THAT THIS PERTAINS TO FBIHQ RECORDS ONLY. IN THIS REGARD, I SUGGEST TREATING AND EXPLAINING THE "SEE" CARDS, WHICH I BELIEVE ARE THE MAJOR PART OF THE INDICES. IT IS FROM THE NOTATIONS OF NRS THAT I PICKED UP MOST OF THE 94 DeLoach FILES I FINALLY BEGAN TO RECORD.

WALTZER'S PIECE ON MARCANTONIO IS EXCELLENT BUT WITH REGARD TO THE PERSON A BIT FLAT AND MISLEADING. IF IT IS EVER REVISED I HOPE HE SPEAKS TO ME. HE WAS NOT A COMMUNIST AND HE REMAINED AGAINST US INVOLVEMENT IN THE EUROPEAN WAR AFTER THE NAZI ATTACK ON THE USSR. THE DAILY WORKER DENOUNCED HIM. HIS RELATIONSHIPS WERE NOT ONLY WITH COMMUNISTS AND MOST COULD NOT HAVE BEEN COMMUNISTS. (VIVIAN CADDEN WORKED FOR HIM FOR A WHILE BUT WAS NOT MUCH HELP.)

ON 282 AND ELSEWHERE YOU REFER TO STATE RECORDS AND ACCESS TO THEM. ON 247 YOU GIVE FIVE QUESTIONS, THE FIFTH QUITE IMPORTANT, AMBIGUOUS, AND NOT ADDRESSED LATER, "HAD CHAMBERS RECEIVED TYPED STATE DEPARTMENT DOCUMENTS FROM HISS..." THE TWO ARE RELATED. DID CHAMBERS GET ANY STATE RECORDS FROM ANYONE ELSE? VERY LIKELY, BUT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE HIS LAWYERS NEVER PURSUED THIS, NOT EVEN TO RAISE QUESTIONS OF REASONABLE DOUBT. IN THOSE DAYS AT LEAST THE CENTRAL RECORDS PEOPLE AT STATE, WHERE I WAS FOR A WHILE IN THE TRANSFERRED PART OF OSS (UNDER MAURICE HALPERIN FOR PART OF THE TIME) THERE WAS A CAREFUL RECORD OF EACH DOCUMENT SENT OUT. SO IT WAS POSSIBLE TO IDENTIFY EACH WHO HAD ANY DOCUMENT. THE CONGRESS ALSO HAD ACCESS.

ON (I THINK 285 AND ELSEWHERE) THE QUESTION OF WHEN THE FBI RECEIVED ANY DOCUMENTS-OR ANYTHING ELSE: PRACTISE IS TO FILL OUT AN EVIDENCE ENVELOPE, WHICH IS WHAT IT IS CALLED, AN FD 340, WHICH DOES NOT ONLY DATE BUT BECOMES THE BASIS FOR TESTIFYING TO THE CHAIN OF POSSESSION BY HAVING NOTATIONS OF CIRCULATION AND RETURN. IN WASHINGTON THAT FIELD OFFICE WOULD HAVE THE FD340s, NOT FBIHQ.

IN YOUR CHAPTER 7, FOOTNOTE 25 (P. 304): "I HAVE UNSUCCESSFULLY REQUESTED THE RELEASE OF ALL FBI DOCUMENTS PERTAINING TO CRONIN, AND HAVE BEEN ADVISED THAT THE BUREAU HAS NO INDEX LISTING SUCH REPORTS." TYPICAL FBI GOALS: PROOF OF REQUESTERS BY MAKING THE KNOWINGLY WRONG SEARCH. IT DOES NOT INDEX BY SUBJECT. TO BE ABLE TO MAKE AN HONEST RESPONSE IT MUST USE THE ONLY RELEVANT INDEX, ITS "SEE" CARDS, WHICH WILL HAVE ALL INDEXED REFERENCES TO CRONIN. IT APPEARS NOT TO HAVE DONE THIS AND TO HAVE REPORTED A PHONY SEARCH TO YOU. (MARTIN WOOD IS QUITE EXPERIENCED IN SWEARING TO KNOWINGLY PHONY SEARCHES AND I'VE CAUGHT HIM AND OTHERS OFTEN ENOUGH.) MOREOVER, THE FIELD OFFICE MAY BE THE ONLY PLACE TO SEARCH AND THE FBI NEVER DOES THIS VOLUNTARILY. AND WHEN IT IS COMPELLED TO IT NOT INFREQUENTLY LIES. IF IT WANTS TO HIDE.

HAVE YOU THOUGHT OF ASKING QUIN SHEA IF HE CAN HELP YOU WITH EITHER THE REVISION

and updating of the book? He may not be compromised, I think would not be, and might remember the disclosure of pertinent records to others. If you want to ask him and do not want to write him at the Department I can give you his home address. I know he knows you because he phoned me a week ago and he indicated this when I told him you'd done so fine a book. (He'd gotten records for me when the FBI swore they did not exist and I told him where to look and I've gotten records his staff, like Doug Mitchell, could not find after the FBI lied.)

I do not expect the Post to use my letter about Cleveland but I thought I'd write it anyway. The Post has its own shibboleths. But if I see anything else I'll send it along. I didn't think you see the Post, so I sent the earlier things.

If the Cleveland and Adams responses surprised you, you have not had my experiences with the FBI! They react incredibly to any suggestion of criticism and when they are caught they react most strongly. And uninhibitedly. There is absolutely nothing of which they are not capable.

While I have no way of knowing, I'm inclined to believe that much of what you have been led to believe was destroyed may still exist, in the original or if destroyed paraphrase form and is merely filed where they can pretend a search and not find it. I've caught them at this often. It is not uncommon and may be required for the field office to note the existence of information in destroyed records in other records. I have many Memphis illustrations of this in political files related to blacks. There is a printed form on which destructions are posted along with references to other records holding the destroyed information.

Then also, do not forget the abstracts I think I mentioned. I have no reason to believe any of them were destroyed. They are at FBIHQ only and, at least until 4-5 years ago when I established their existence and pertinence were for every FBIHQ record. There is an original and a copy, one filed by serial number the other chronologically.

They'll resist disclosure of any abstracts vigorously and uninhibitedly because they can lead to embarrassment and proof of lying.

As you review the Hoover records, I'd be quite interested also in any pertaining to the King assassination and its investigation. If I do not have to fight a couple of contempt citations I hope to return to that book soon. If these people were not so power-mad, irrational in their hatreds and in general just not good people I'd think there is little chance they'll ask for a contempt citation or two. I'm refusing to do as they got a fink judge to order, so they can charge me or back down, the latter vital to FOIA. My offer of settlement is that they back down and pay my costs and I will not change. They have to consider what might happen on appeal, and they are crazy to want even an airing. But with these people, who knows? (The controversy centers around discovery, their discovery of me in FOIA litigation. If they get away with this, FOIA is done with.)

Best wishes,


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January 3, 1984

Dear Mr. Weisberg,

Having been out of town these past ten days, I have only today received your letters of December 22 and 28, 1983 and the enclosed news clippings and letters to the editor. We do not get the Washington Post and thus I had no other knowledge of this "press"--and appreciate your thoughtfulness in clipping and sending this on to me. Interestingly, I opened your letter of December 28 first and read with great interest the critical letters of former FBI officials. Needless to say, my interest in the Washington Post editorial of December 16 peaked, and I had planned to write you to request that you send me a copy of this editorial. As I read through my mail--and the publicity has precipitated an avalanche of letters--I came across your earlier letter enclosing a copy of the editorial. Having read same, I find Adams's and Cleveland's responses most interesting--the Post editorial merely cites my success in obtaining the Hoover file documents and neither evaluates my work nor cites my recent publications (I would have loved either). Clearly Adams and Cleveland are so thin-skinned that even the most insignificant and innocent reference precipitates what seems to have been an automatic response from Bureau officials: castigate the motives and character of a critic (even in this case only an FOIA requestor). That is quite revealing about their mentality--although I am sure that they were not sufficiently perceptive to recognize that.

I also appreciate your kind and positive comments about my essay in Beyond the Hiss Case. I have made it a special point to attempt to decipher the FBI's filing procedures, and with some success. I continue to welcome both suggestions and examples of other such practices--and in that respect your lengthy letter was particularly welcomed and helpful. I should like at some future date to update the essay, incorporating new material and examples. I do not profess to being comprehensive--a beginning has to be made with the ultimate objective of promoting further research and discovery.

My present research, and Adams and Cleveland will be particularly discomfited by this, is to write an administrative biography of Hoover's FBI--that is a biography of Hoover and his role in the expansion of the FBI. I know that there is considerable interest in Hoover as a person--while his personality does not interest me terribly I know that one cannot understand the Bureau without first understanding Hoover. I suspect that this research project will take years for completion. I do hope to write the definitive biography. I suspect that most readers will not have the passion and intensity of interest as either Adams or yourself--I am not lumping the two of you, my only point is that our generation felt strongly about Hoover, a feeling not shared by younger Americans.

I am pleased that you have passed on the info on the microfilm project. It should be a must for any research library (personal or institutional). I shall keep in mind your own research interests and pass along any relevant information as I review these files more closely in the ensuing months.

As ever,

