

6/26/72

Dear Js,

The past few days have been rather disagreeable, today in particular, as what I sent earlier may indicate. I sought to get these rotten things out of mind by looking at the evening TV news but found I was really paying no attention to it, that it did not grab the mind. Then I read some of the things that had come in the mail, so many of which mean more and wasted work, like the affidavit Stoner prepared for Jerry Ray to sign, an affidavit that is in error and in error in such a way that it cannot be missed if it is used. And James sent it to his lawyers who, for all their work and intelligence, are unable to detect the error and its potential -blowing the whole damned thing all over again....Increasingly I wonder is Stoner on sick in the head...But futilities, wastes of time, in each case confrontation with decision, should each be done? So it has been a bit depressing. It was kind of hard on the nerves, too. I have dipped into what I cannot afford to replace and have conserved, a half-gallon of Scotch. I guess I've had more than 10 drinks since late lunch and don't feel them. I sipped, and I guess it helped relax a bit. And so I read the few stories I listed earlier. One in particular is fascinating. Without being probative evidence, it persuades me that my almost-instant analysis is correct, that this bugging bit is not merely Cuban, nor Cuban "epublican. It is Bay of Pigs. It is Cuban and it is Republican, but it is also Bay of Pigs. The reporting has been insensitive, really poor. What has come out has not been dug but repeated, fed and regurgitated. I suspect the Star's "better" reporting is from its better relations with the FBI, which has nothing to lose, not expecting there is much chances of its own deficiencies of the past figuring in this at all and being in control of the investigation.

That has one really (to me) fascinating aspect.

Right or wrong, as I think I've said earlier, I think Hunt is really Frank Bender, designer of the fiasco. I think Barker is "Bernie". These, according to Haynes Johnson and contemporaneous reporting, were the top two.

Now it could not be hidden that there was this Bay of Pigs connection, nor could it be hidden that there was CIA connection. So, what I believe to be false aliases were leaked, that Hunt was "Eduardo" and Barker "Macho". There was no Eduardo I can recall. There was a Macho - one of three priests, not CIA. Eduardo fits nicely with the E in Howard Hunt's name (I think it is Evertte).

The fascinating think is in the fake names each of these guys gave when he was arrested. Each can be traced to Hunt's earlier novels, a particularly intriguing one dating to publication in ~~1949~~ 1954, "I came to Kill", about the assassination of a fictional President of Panama, Castro. All fake names come from different novels, and he boiled his pot hard. These cats are not the literary kind, not even his kind of literary output. What I am suggesting is that the Frank Bender who made so an unequalled mess of the Bay of Pigs, a design that could not succeed except in its intent, to cause US overt involvement, is a special White House consultant on what? Narcotics. Nonsense. And this caper has to have been his caper.

I got the clinching clue, as I remember, from Sulcz's story of the 21, which Bob Gruenberg gave me in DC. I phoned him and asked him to ask up or down, is Hunt Bender. I have heard nothing, not even his head falling. With the ~~xxx~~ tentative identification of "Bernie" the day the story broke, I've been expecting Bender somewhere, and I'm not now certain when I suspected Hunt, but I do know that the story of the 21st clinched it. Everyone has been edging around it. I think they are now scared, those who know enough not to make on it is really Keystone Cops.

All these guys are far right. Hunt's writing is sick and far-right, had sex, bad dime novels of "adventure", bad politics. You can be sure that with no experience in narcotics, that is not why the fixer Colston hired him...And there is another strange thing the papers didn't pick up. Supposedly it was McCord's company that was hired. The records show otherwise in quoting his "take home" pay. There are deducks only for individuals, not companies or corporations. He has a company, but he, personally, was working for the committee or committees. Otherwise, no deducks.

I think it likely that the critical comments on the character of some of the equipment is justified, But there is a point all stories and comments ignore: the power of what was used. This, generally, requires more powerful and larger equipment than the tiniest that is available. I suspect even more so from inside steel buildings. Therefore, the larger Xmitter and larger batteries make sense. This hurried note before bed. Best,