

Dear Js,

CONFIDENTIAL

9/12/72

WMS. The story on tonight's TV news that the prestigious Williams law firm, a partner in which is former Democratic National Committee Counsel and formerly was important in government, missed filing court papers by a single day makes me a bit uneasy. It is the newest in a series of things that should not happen but did and another that should have happened and did not. Therefore, this limited memo to you alone.

Everybody has missed an obvious story and I think an important aspect of the case. It should have been obvious to every reporter and it cannot but have been obvious to the FBI. Long after they should have checked it out I know they did not.

It was more or less reported that Hunt was more or less fired from the Mullen agency. Je's Who's Who work shows it was not that easy, unless he lied, because he was not just the writer pretended but vice president and a director.

There has been no story saying that the agency has lost any government contract over Hunt. With Hunt having been on the White House payroll, I think the loss of any such contract unlikely, as I do for other reasons.

In earlier notes I indicated that this agency could be an excellent medium for the conduct of clandestine activity and that were it CIA, unvouchered funds could be paid to it by this means.

The clue to me was his giving a Washington Bldg address. That is also the address of the largest answering service in Washington. Rather, its main address. At that address they also have mail service and desk space. Forget about the latter, which Hunt didn't need. It then became a much better mail drop than a post office box and one more easily known with it listing in standard biographical indices.

By the most remarkable of coincidences, that service was also used by, is used by, has for years been used by, yup! the Mullen agency. For some time, I don't know how long, Mullen didn't even have its own switchboard or receptionist or secretary answering a phone. All calls to it were intercepted by the answering service, which they asked the person called if he wanted the call. Of course, this can be attributed to the relatively low number of calls received and the fact that such a service might well be cheaper than another employee. However, with a single typist or secretary, which it would seem such an agency would have, if there were a low enough volume of calls, then they would have been no burden on anyone.

They now have ordinary-type service and take their own calls.

But, they also have mail service. That is, mail addressed to them at the address of the Answering Service gets to them. It thus need not be addressed to their not cheap offices, for whatever purpose. And LONG AFTER HUNT WAS SUPPOSEDLY FIRED, HIS WAS AMONG THE MAIL SERVICED. He also had phone service, with Mullen. Both long after. Or, the connection was not broken.

X How, if I could learn this by phone and if I could figure it out, can you believe that the FBI didn't or couldn't? Or Williams? Or his investigators? Or Sheridan, that unique genius? Or any reporter? Even those to whom I hinted, not being able to break a confidence.

Nobody had checked it.

About the time Hunt's Washington Bldg. address disappeared from the listings, that answering service, an international one, opened a new downtown branch less than six blocks away but in an area in which it could better service the new buildings built in that area. This includes the one housing, among other things, Mullen. The address, as I remember it without looking up my notes, is 1835 K St., NW. The service is Answering, Inc.

WMS. Now, not filing an answer in time in federal court is not, in practise, the inevitable cause of dismissal. The government didn't in some of my cases. But it can be. The suit can then also be refiled. But this can also delay everything, including any hearing. It has been one of the causes for the delaying of depositions. A clerk in the Williams office did not make that mistake. A law clerk, on his own, would have filed a request for a few more days. If they were needed, that was not done. They could, in fact, have been filed by mail, although by slow cab that court is but 15 minutes from Williams' office.

Going along with this is an alleged confession which may be that of a man who says he was part of it. One curve in that as it has been used can be the third strike. It was fed to the Post just before the amended complaint was filed, to a suit in which a requisite response had not been. If this Post story does not appear, I have it. It is the one in yesterday's final but not repeated today in the early edition we get. I'll be writing more but not limiting it. If you consider this has no significance, let me know, because it does trouble me when I find the competent being incompetent. Best,