

Dear George,

2/9/78

About 5:30 t is morning I heard the UOI item you mentioned last night, about the House assassins. Fortunately I had already struggled into my appliances and was making coffee while shaving and listening to WRC. It was still radio short but it made me think.

You mentioned asking again for the payments to consultants. I recall that you had been turned down. Not you alone. I know another reporter who did not get them and was given no response when he asked by what legal authority they were being withheld.

There is a different situation now than there was when you asked. Now the committee is asking for \$2,500,000. And there will be opposition. You can get more than the consultant records and I think you should.

Let me begin with a reminiscence and an apology because I'll not be able to read and correct this.

Some years ago, when I was writing a book on the Dies committee, I had some experiences that were an important part of my education.

You may have come across FBI records that say I was fired by the committee for which I worked for leaking the confidential and to the Daily Worker. In all aspects false. I had no confidential information to leak. I was custodian of the public record. I was the editor who got it printed. My sin was with another now dead lobbying through an appropriation for the committee's continued life so it could investigate the migratory farm situation in California. FDR didn't want this and LaFollette, hardly his father's son, didn't want it. So they, not FDR but LaFollette and some finks he had brought in to end that committee because it had become a liability for him. Too much corporate pressure.

My associate was the late Gardner "Pat" Jackson, an amiable liberal alcoholic and an effective lobbyist, which he was for John Lewis. He was a trustee of the Marshall Foundation and it had an ACLU-type project on the Dies committee. Pat had me as the investigator and I was going to do a book.

The committee ~~tried~~^{tried} to set me up and save for my caution would have succeeded. Well, not alone caution. That kept me from having done anything wrong.

Suddenly there were these subpoenas. And the most defamatory releases to a receptive and unquestioning press, all false. Next another tough effort. The law Weicher cited when he said how he threw Colson out of his office was passed to get Pat Jackson and me.

Next a grand jury. That was the rough one because the appointment of the USA, a decent type named Dave Pine who you probably knew as chief federal district judge, was held up by the Texas gang to force him to seek an indictment of us. That part is a long story I'll abbreviate: I took the grand jury away from his second assistant (first also later a chief judge, Ed Gurrin), Ed Fihelly and forced an indictment of the Dies agent. You'll find the case as U.S. v ~~Mayne~~ Mayne.

Now, how could I, a brash kid, all alone save for this alcoholic friend of so many connections none of which would work for him in his hour of need, do this--save us both and I suppose for the only time get the committee's agent indicted?

I go into this because I think you can do a public service and get a much more important story than you visualize by duplicating what I did. You can do it easier. You won't have to borrow money you could never pay back for years to hire three typists. Today there are xerox machines.

I took those three women and typewriters into the office of the Clerk of the House and copied all the expenditures of the Dies committee. Sure enough I found the guy who tried to entrap me on their payroll under the guise of being a witness.

(Later, when the Hollywood 10 were before the same committee, one of them, the one who turned out to be the informer but a total stranger to me, came to me for help, asking to borrow some of my records. I let him have what he wanted and never saw him or my records again. They didn't know how to fight so they went to jail.)

I have given all the records I could still find to the University of Wisconsin. They may still include all the Dies expenditures and if they do there is a fine doctoral thesis in them. They do include extensive but incomplete clippings.

You will get a story from the consultants from those of whom I know. But you'll get a much better story from all the expenditures, and would I love to deposit copies of them with all my other records, for the future! I would not want to look at them unless you

want help or if you can get a researcher put on it. I would help the researcher. I do believe the Post would come up with a major story.

You can get the records today because of what you did not tell me and because you can get help from Bauman and other members like him. You will also find a different staff situation than in the past. Those people have been leaking their heads off for their own reasons only not to the major media. I rather suspect your silence and pulling back after Lane's accusations (they have not stopped) makes the staff afraid of you.

I picked Donovan for you to speak to for more than one reason. I'll not go into all. One is that he impressed me more than the others I've met, who are few in number. Another is because he was present the entire morning I spent with Richard A. Sprague in October or November 1976, I think, when they were just starting. He spent much of the afternoon with me, as some others did.

When they got into trouble he was decent enough to call me up and say man if anyone ever saw the future and gave all the warnings you did. I had in fact told the arrogant, egomaniacal Sprague that there was only one way he had any chance of not failing and offered to help him with that.

Only now is the committee giving any sign of beginning to take that way. With the help of my books, for which I did not get paid until a few days ago despite a number of dunning letters, they still do not understand how to do it. But they are representing to the Congress, if I understand the brief UPI item, that now they are.

What the hell kind of an investigation was it if only now they are seeking to establish the basic facts of the JFK assassination? (Nothing in the item about their ending.)

And how, according to this item? By having analyzed the pictures, which was Richard E. Sprague, and now going into the direction of the shots. Direction, if important, also is not the beginning.

Much of the staff, which hardly understand how to establish whether or not there was one, is pissed off because of the no-conspiracy conclusion.

This gets to why I asked Policoff to call you and why I suggested that the Post consider getting Scott Malone to do a Sunday piece. The better if he and Policoff collaborated. When I suggested Scott I had not spoken to either for some time. I did not know that he and Policoff had already worked together. Each has sources you'll never tap.

If the Post does that one it will be easier to get the expense records because there will be more Congressional support for it.

Hoober hated me because I defeated his attempt to frame me for Dies, with whom he was ~~close~~ not for personal but for political reasons. I did not leak, it was not to the Daily Worker in any event. I gave galley proofs of a hearing to the late Henry Zon, who was with a labor press service. His partner, Henry Flesscher, can tell you how "red" Henry was. And as of today the FBI is not releasing any of those records. I've been after them for years. I'll probably sue for them before long, when Jim and I can find a moment for that.

Now, on the other story, I am still without any regular income and I do have all those xeroxes to pay for, so I've tried with the National Enquirer, which does pay. If they do not go for it I'll give it to you. It is a story that could be enough to force a real investigation but has the hazard of helping this apprentice Keystone Kops. I rather like the idea of a Member again saying why spend all that money when I can read the scandal sheets and learn more.

I don't think the Post wants to but if it does it can do what the assassins committee has not done, with the work I've already done and can still lead it to.

If you talk to Shales and think he is interested please tell him that his excellent review of Ruby and Oswald is flawed by kindness - that it is not in fact based on sworn testimony about the details.

Aside from merely being told the numbers of the sections in which the FBI has records on the critics my interest in the Ford and executive session records is for a case now at the appeals level, No. 77-1831. Jim says those things are relevant. Please ask your researchers who may recall or may have made notes. Sincerely,