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Copy to Lardner
Not sent
may have a few things in which
you may be interested
5/30/91

Dear Moo,

Hal was embarrassed not to recognize your voice but I enjoyed and appreciate your call very much. Oliver Stone's interview with the N.O. paper is vintage Garrison. They are one-of-a-kind personalities. Each in his own way reminds me of the ancient maxim, "penis erectus sciam non habet."

It is no longer like your crack, "Hal can do 20 memos before breakfast" but I did get up a little earlier, your call was on my mind and got me to thinking, and while I'll not mail this right away- may not finish it before I leave for my morning walking - I was reminded of what I regard as one of Jim's failures, you were part of it, so I'm asking you about it. You should remember it because I expected you to jump me because of the vigor with which I went after him for breaking his word to me.

And don't again pretend you do not remember. If you don't want to talk about it, that is OK but you have not forgotten the night you met Dione at Barbara Reid's, early the week after Martin Luther King was killed. How easy is it to forget a skinny woman who has hidden inside her scanty clothing on so slight a frame both a stiletto and a derringer and suddenly brings ^{both} them forth? at one time?

Earlier the office had gotten a tip, meaning on one of my earlier trips, that there was to be a hit on me. When Joisel picked me up at the airport to take me to the "Bleau he told me about it and that they were arranging for connecting rooms. Until they were ready we sat in the coffee shop and talked and drank. He checked one of us in as "Anthony Durf," both under phony names, and we were both so well known that when the operator called me she did not use the phony name. Louis Ivon and the others asked me to agree to their bugging the room, I did, they put a spike mike in the door frame, and George, the so-called wire man, I've forgotten his last name, insisted that an FM mike be under the chair. I protested that I'd not be able to turn it on without being obvious but he would not hear of it *in my pocket.*

Anyway, with the room wired it suggested that I could interview Barbara Reid on all the stories she had without fearing that she would act up or exaggerate for the tape recorder, so I didn't tape her. (I'd gotten Morris Brownlee, Dave Ferrie's godson, to buy-sit her pretty daughter, Kelly.)

Later, when we listened to the tape, nothing was comprehensible. The boys, having tested it and found that it worked, paid no attention to it and were enjoying the telecast of I think a football game. With an abundance of refreshments. They were embarrassed and I'm sure you didn't forget that!

One of Barbara's stories was about this girl, a gifted, accomplished and uninhibited liar. But much of her story, all that + did check out, stacked. One of the things that

she told me about that did interest me was about Philip Geraci III. (That then kid is in Marrs' "Crossfire," the book Stone contracted to amplify Garrison's book, as having electrocuted. That was the father. So much for Stone's quest for dependable information.)

Philip had ignored three office subpoenas. He'd been returned from Vietnam because his father had electrocuted himself while moonlighting. He was an electrician at Michoud.

I knew he was gay from Dione, I wanted to protect him and at the same time learn what he might know, so I made a deal with Jim, he forgets calling Phillip before the grand jury, I interview him and I give Jim what I get from him.

Before I returned to do this you and Louis had called in another kid of that group, I've forgotten his name but he was from Central America, to have him destroy Dione's dependability as a source. I do not for a minute believe that this was your idea or Louis' but I did resent it and one night at the New Orleans Athletic Club I was really chewing Jim out, you were the only other person there, and the angrier he got the more you looked like you were about to demonstrate the kind of boxer you'd been. I really did expect you to attack me!

Judge Louis Trent was the family's lawyer. I spoke to him about interviewing Philip in his presence (I'd already interviewed the mother and the father), and he told me to speak to his wife, who practised law under her maiden name, Lillian Cohen. She arranged for the interview to be at their home midday on a Saturday, before they took a sail on their boat. They were impressed that I was trying to protect the kid, they did not know he was gay or anything else, and was Lillian surprised at what came out.

You may or may not remember that he'd been the subject of a juvenile investigation in Jeff Parish. I had the report on it, by a sergeant Bourne.

One of the things he said, confirmed by the mother, is that the very night that Ferrie died he'd been taken into custody in New Orleans, where he then worked, and to an uncle's home in Jeff Parish (out of Jim's jurisdiction, note) and told that they wanted to interview him for Jim. "They" are Bourne and Frederick O'Sullivan, whose Warren Commission testimony was censored by the Commission to eliminate references to the sex charges against Ferrie. The mother confirmed all of this. And Louis did not want me to talk to O'Sullivan, who as I recall had recruited Oswald into the CAP.

I thought about this more during the two hours I spend walking and resting. I would like to know what Jim had in mind when he had you and Louis call that boy in to destroy my source's credibility rather than to see assassination-related information.

I realize you do not want to go public but - hope you will help me make a better record for history if only anonymously. Just talk into a tape that I can listen to or make notes from. It would help make a clear and fuller record. In this I am also making such a record of some of the things that came back this morning.

I'll be writing this in odds and ends of time, will forget much, perhaps return to

some out of logical order, etc. There is one thing I do not want to forget. ^fFor the moment at least it is for you and Jim Alcock if he is interested as things develop as I see possible. By this I mean that Stone is over-reacting and I think despite the cleverness of the interview you read parts of to me is desparate. He now knows that he'll not be likely ever again to get millions for any controversial movie ~~and then~~ on his word and can expect to be checked out thoroughly. This is to say that with the stories I'll hold this to be able to include after I get copies I think are in the mail he has interested some of the major media and I think the story of his and Jim's commercialization/dishonesty is not going to die.

What I did not want to forget is that when Boxley died he left files and that Bud Fensterwald's outfit has those files. I've not looked at them but I know they include Boxley's references to Garrison's deprecations of his staff. I do not know that Boxley used any names and I do believe he indicates that Jim was talking about the entire staff. ^{see} This slurs were at least ^{about} to staff competence. On that I had a chance to observe rather much. I believe that with the exception of two investigators, he had a competent or better than competent staff and a loyal and very hard-working staff. I had questions about Captain Soule personally and about him as a captain being assigned to Garrison as an investigator. A captain as a flatfoot? Something wrong. I've forgotten the name of the other investigator about whom I had questions.

In addition, there was a lieutenant who was involved in the bag job done on Ferrie. Maybe his name will come to mind. I have FBI records on this. He took what they got to the FBI and there was panic in the FBI when the office needed it because the FBI had given it to Louis le Coeur, the U S Attorney for the Marcello case. They got it back to him and there was no stink. *I think his name was Cornstock.*

The hours alone you people put in make an ingrate of Jim. The night you came to Barbara Reid's to meet Dione it was about midnight. That was, by the way, the week after King was killed and that night Matt Herron tracked me down. He asked me to get to a clear phone and call him in Memphis. I took my tape recorder and Dione's boyfriend, Jack Werking and went to the bar at Decatur and St. Phillip and taped what Matt told me while Jack's body hid the fact that I was taping. Matt was in Memphis for Black Star and had taped some interviews with blacks that were not consistent with the official story put out by the police. I used some of this in Frame-Up.

You should remember the Wednesday of that week because that night all the assistant DAs were on patrol duty, armed, the city anticipating riots. I rode with you and before long we were in a neighborhood bar where you got me the best crayfish I ever tasted.

As I try to recall what came to mind when I was walking, one is that despite the Garrison/Stone portrayal of Jim as the great investigator he was really the ablest of ³Link Panthers, without the slightest idea what to investigate or how. To my observation

the crazy things he had the investigators do intimidated them and undermined their self-confidence, ^{if not also they said report.} He had them spinning their wheels and lost in his nuttiness.

To get back to Geraci, I was interested in him because of my interest in Oswald, what I spent most of my time in N.O. on. That Inspector Piffle you worked for should have been interested, as I was, in Liebeler ~~and his nothing~~ trying to shush him when he seemed to be trying to say he'd been to Bringuier's more than once. Why would Liebeler want not to have that on the record?

Dione knew him well and for all her many lies everything single thing she told me about him and his family was 100% true. Even the right time to phone them and ask them to see me. They spoke to me openly and gave me proofs. I taped them on something and then played the tape back to see if they were satisfied with what they'd said.

For one thing, Bringuier lied and his lying could not have been accidental when he swore to his explanation for assaulting Oswald and dating it in August, right after the raid on the McLaney plane off Pontchartrain Blvd in St. Tammany Parish.

(For all Jim's talk about the alleged importance of those Cuban "camps" the office did not even have the correct address. I found it, took a picture and interviewed the man who reported it to the police. Those nutty Cubans had brought all that stuff that could explode in on a U-Haul trailer, so the neighbors saw it. They they raked up the trash and burned it, setting the grass on fire. The neighbors were afraid they blow the whole area up, that's why they called the police.)

The time that Philip and Vance Blalock saw Oswald at Bringuier's was not in August. It was in May. The mother had a clear recollection of this because she drove them into N.O. as soon as school was out, having a dental appointment there. The boys were looking for what they could use as CAP uniform.

Another lead your God's gift to investigation overlooked in pouring over all that published Commission evidence looking for codes that did not exist and he said he found in postal box numbers was that Geraci had a receipt from Bringuier for selling those 50¢ Cuban bonds Bringuier was selling dated in June. So that Bringuier lied was public, in this Secret Service report.

I've forgotten how many receipts the kid had that + have but they started not long after Oswald was back in New Orleans.

Philip hated his father and ran a campaign against him. Such things as refusing to touch a doorknob the father had touched without using a handkerchief. He ran away from home when in high school, was in Miss. for a while, phoned Dione when he wanted to return, she met him at the bus station, they went to Bringuier's and Bringuier sent him to the Silver Dollar flophouse. There he was the victim of a gangbang. Same stellar character that Bringuier, sending him there and not home, not phoning the parents!

The reason Philip's receipts from Bringuier stopped well before August is because Oswald reported Bringuier for selling those bonds without a license. I do not recall my source on this.

At about the time the boys saw Oswald at Bringuier's Oswald was doing other interesting ~~like~~ things, like picketing the carrier Wasp at the Doumaine St. wharf. A Harbor Patrol office picked up one of the leaflets Oswald supposedly had printed by Douglas Jones. Later the FBI fingerprinted it. They did lift prints - NOT Oswald's. And ~~Stone's~~⁴⁰ Stone's demon investigator never bothered to learn whose they were, who besides Oswald was involved in that picketing?

If I remember correctly, and I'm not taking time to check, there was another reason for being interested in the Wasp.

What I am getting at is Jim's utter incompetence and stupidity in his "investigating" that Stone is honoring.

You were with us the Saturday^a morning when Jim had had me return from Dallas instead of going home from there so he could show me his most important "find." It was the poor print of WDSU's remaining footage. You should recall that because he got it as a result of something I asked of you: to ask Johann Rush's parents, Johann having gone to the San Francisco area, if in the things he left at their home was a set of ~~prints~~ 17 stills he had ~~pointed~~^{PS} from this footage and given the Secret Service. They said he had that with him and Jim asked that other demon investigator, Bill Turner, to find Johann and get them.

Turner spent all his time with Rush boasting about his FBI career and got only the poor-quality dub of the WDSU footage. It happens that on that trip Ed Planer had let me have a clear copy made at Panamerican Films, with the stipulation I not give them to Jim. So, when looking at the less clear film I offered them a view of my better copy.

Jim had Charles Hall Steele II there that morning. He was a Marine lieutenant and was home. He was with Oswald when Oswald picketed the old Trade Mart building.

Jim had not bothered to speak to his former friend and campaign assistant in his first campaign, Jesse Core, who was a close friend of Shaw's, had his office in that building, is the one who phoned the police to complain about Oswald, and who spoke to me openly and at length. If Jim had he'd have learned that there was another young man besides Steele. So, after Jim finished his so-called questioning I went into that with Steele and he confirmed it. (as does the Jim Doyle film he did nothing about.)

What interested Jim was another of his visions: he saw Shaw walking toward the camera and past his secret entrance into his own building. Only it wasn't Shaw, who had no need for any secret entrance, and if he had, could not have used that fire door, which opened from the inside only.

I found other confirmation of this information ignored by the FBI, of others with Oswald. For example, the Latino who was J.B. Vela's shop foreman. Remember Vela? He had

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a Fiat agency on Baronne, where Douglas Lethbridge had been sales manager until he cracked up. Bay-of-figs Douglas, who said he was raised on the farm next to Castro's and that as boys they'd played together. I think Alberto Fowler may have confirmed this. Vela loaned me the Foat sports sedan you may remember my using when the office Chevy II would not stay out of low gear. This ~~sales~~^{Service} manager saw that Trade Mart picketing. He told me there were several men with Oswald and they seemed to be working from an old car parked across the street.

All these indications that Oswald was not alone and they were of no interest to that great investigator who charged that Oswald was part of ^{the} conspiracy?

What was important, of course, was the devious plot to stage a bullfight in N.O. Or all the many "identifications" of the "tramps" who were not tramps or anything else. Or the secret s/m rings of the rich and famous that were somehow involved in ^{his} the JFK plot.

On this there is more and you were involved in some of it. What a tribute to Jim's sharpness, too!

When I went to interview Douglas Jones Boxley wanted to go with me. Louis wanted me to make a clandestine tap. He gave me that Samsonite attache case with a Morelco tape recorder in it that could not be activated except from inside the case. Real advanced police equipment, huh? So I turned it on before I entered his shop, while still in the car, and thus used up some of the only 30 minutes. Fortunately Jones saw me promptly and was not concerned about my having two attache cases of which I used only one with him, to get the pictures I showed him. As you know, he identified four different pictures of Kerry Thornley as the man who most resembled the man who picked those leaflets up after he ~~printed~~^{primed} printed them.

If Sherlock Garrison had not been so consumed by all those phone numbers that meant nothing at all and had not ignored in the Commission's volumes the FBI reports that left little doubt it had not been Oswald who'd gotten that spint job, he'd have been to see Douglas before I was even in New Orleans.

And if he'd had enough common sense to know what to suspect when there was ground for suspicion rather than invented ^{ing} his own suspicions he'd have been onto that early and he surely would have had questions to ask of Thornley when he was before the grand jury. Didn't Jim charge him with lying there? Or was it that Thornley did not come? How he could avoid questioning Louis only a genius like Stone can explain!

When we got back to the office I told Louis what Jones had said, that it certainly was not Oswald who picked those handbills up and that the man resembled Thornley.

What does Boxley do? He says that Jones had said no such things. So, I got the tape, gave it to Louis, he played it, and Boxley apologized for his mistake. It could not have been a mistake. And Jim did not at that point suspect Boxley?

You arranged later for us to be seen by Jones at the home of Myra Silver, who had

worked for him. I taped in the open, used the same pictures, each examining them when the other could not see them, and they made the identical identifications Jones had made earlier.

There also were no suspicions when that first tape disappeared. I kept the second tape. How he could still trust Boxley I leave to Stone not to have to explain.

Hot on the trail of the assassins he never got to the Habana Bar and Grill, where Oswald was said by the government to have staged that memorable drunk. ~~Orest~~ Orest Pena, you may recall, was friendly with me. Hard as his English was to understand, I used him as translator when I interviewed two of his employees, the fat bar girl and Evaristo Rodriguez, the night barkeep.

Evvie was sick. He had the mumps. The ~~color~~ ^{doctor} had not bothered to tell him how important it is for a man with the mumps to stay off his feet. (Turns into orchitis, which sterilized.) It was my good fortune that he and his wife, if Orest did, could not distinguish between ~~infertility~~ ^{IMPOTENCE} and sterility, so they just loved me!) Evvie was positive that drunk was not Oswald and he and the woman and Orest all said they had seen Oswald more than once with a Mexican they believed was a reporter.

When the girl in the office claimed they could not transcribe those tapes I did, and was it a job for me with Orest's accent! So, naturally, where there were Nagels in Leavenworth, why bother with the leads in hand? Why have any interest in Oswald at all? After all, he was only an alleged co-conspirator!

Naturally, when it came to investigating and Jim had professional investigators on his staff and the city paid them, none of them was competent to fly to Omaha to interview Phil Boatright, who had known Thornley well. So I was asked and I did. Remember, when you were here we went to Reston and spoke to the good-looking, nice and friendly and bright woman he'd lived with in New Orleans, and she was good enough to phone him and he had agreed to be interviewed. We became friends when I was there and he gave me the letters he had from Thornley. He made it clear, as did those letters, that Thornley was anything but a nice guy and boasted of his own violence. (The flight back was the roughest, the most frightening I ever had. Phil drove me to the airport and while we were having a drink the hostess rushed in and said we'd have to leave immediately because they had just come through a violent storm and had to leave immediately. I did expect that plane to disintegrate, it was tossed around with such enormous force. There came a time when the pilot came on and told us he'd tried to fly above it and around it and couldn't so we'll better just sit tight and hope. All of this for nothing.)

All these things relating to what was not known about Oswald, I mean in the official records, and Jim had no interest? No interest in why a member of the vice squad who'd been in the CAP with Ferrie and had recruited Oswald into it and a member of the Jeff Farish Sheriff's Department kidnapped Geraci and told him it was for Garrison? None in Boxley's lying when Jones said it wasn't Oswald who'd picked the handbills up, and all the other

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indications Oswald was not alone and he charged a conspiracy of which he said Oswald was part? And he was on the trail of the assassins? It was character assassins, identified as soon as he used a mirror. And pipe dreams.

Jim and Stone have this in common: they have trouble telling the truth even by accident.

Jim even lied about what got him interested in the JFK assassination the end of 1966.

My first source was Dean Andrews. He told me that that "November "the Giant" had come to his office, thrown a copy of Whitewash on his desk, and told him he should read it. Dean, of course, played his tricks from time to time so although I believed him, there being no apparent reason for his lying, his word alone had to have a question with it. But since then I've spoken to a reporter who spoke to Senator Long after Jim had announced that on a plane flight Senator Long had interested him. Long told the reporter the first he knew about it was from Jim, as I recall in a phone conversation *from Jim*

Jim is his own kind of tragic figure. If he'd had any self-respect at all, any feeling of decency, he 'd have let the whole thing rest on the fiasco he'd made of it. But that he could not do. He had to make a tin-plate hero of himself in a knowingly dishonest book in which I'm quite happy not to appear although I spent much of my time there, as you know, in what you correctly termed "damage control" that ^{also} was a major part of the staff effort. How phony can a man be to write so phony a book?

My first knowledge of it came from a fellow in New York named Ted Gandolfo. He was high on Jim and they spent much time together when Ted was there and when Jim was in the New York area promoting the book.

For a long period of time Ted gave me the idea that he was acting as Jim's agent. He had no such experience, however. But it might be true. He did tell me in advance who was going to publish it and when it was going to appear. He kept giving me messages from Jim that I would get one of the first 20 Jim got and that Ted would mail it. Then I got call after call of apologies for not having mailed it. Once he even said that it was packed for mailing but that his wife had forgotten it. He told me about several months he spent in N.O. at Jim's invitation and how much Jim enjoyed it when he took Jim to Kolb's, where his uncle is the maitre d'Hotel. He told me in advance of the arrangements he had made for him and Jim to appear and speak jointly and of other promotions. In short, he inundated me with phone calls (all of which he says he tapes) about the coming superbook. Maybe he arranged for its publication, maybe not. And I was so little concerned about not even receiving the copy Jim asked him to tell me I'd get - if you read the book you know Jim had no reason for me to be anxious to read it or for him to so much want me to - I did not buy one. The one I annotated was sent to me by a history professor friend who asked me to do it for him. I don't have a copy now, having returned that one.

In the book Jim even flaunts his ignorance of what he claims to have personally investigated. Like Banister and 544 Camp Street, which he picked up from Oswald in New

Orleans. He give a detailed account of his entering the main entrance on Lafayette and taking the stairs to Bainster's office on the second floor. In fact the main entrance and those stairs were on the Camp Street side and the Lafayette entrance was to Bainster's office only. The building was long since demolished but I have my pictures and like so much he just made it up as he went.

Nothing inappropriate about that - he made up everything except that JFK was assassinated.

And now he has made himself up, too!

And Stone is improving on that.

I've come to believe that nothing means anything to Jim except Jim and his whims. Like his abuse of Alcock in particular and of Louis Ivon by insisting that on Good Friday, which is a very special day to Catholics in New Orleans, they pick Dione and me up and drive us across the lake so she could locate the Cuban camp she claimed to have been at. I knew it was a futility. They suspect it was. But Lord Jim had ordered it so it had to be done. I'd made enough effort to get her to give me a meaningful account of where it was without success to believe it was one of her many lies.

The one thing those two got of it was their surprise when we got into Alcock's office car and she exclaimed, "So you have Soandso's car!" Naming a drug dealer. "How did you get it?" When they asked her how she knew instead of answering she asked if one could still smell the dope whenever it rained. One could.

The hell with Alcock's religious beliefs. Jim had a whim. Nothing else in the world mattered at all.

When I had that Fiat, by the way, I spent some time over there and there was interesting information about the Cubans and camps but I have no reason to believe it had any relevance. I found the young woman who was Ricardo Davis' girl friend and she gave me quite an account of his picking her up to go with him when he rushed there to warn his people to scam. When I located her she was married to a parish deputy. She told me when he would be there, I returned, and he gave me an entirely new account of gun-running to Cuba from the lake, based in a state forest on the shore.

You know how big Jim was on those "camps" and all the announcements he made about them. All he had was a wrong address and his imagination. The sheriff, by the way, took and sent me pictures of the place Davis used. And then he ^{Davis} phoned me in great excitement after getting a copy of Oswald in New Orleans in the Chicago airport, with his own long story. Meaningless about the JFK assassination.

So, what I am saying is that as an investigator, the self-created hero exaggerated in his heroism and alleged accomplishments in ^{the} Oliver Stone obscently could not, as an investigator, find manure in a barnyard after falling face-down in it.

But to get back to where I began, I'd like to know what reason he gave you and Louis

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for undermining Dione who did tell me so much that checked out among all those many lies.

It was wrong because she was my source, not his. and he didn't do that with the Russos and Spiedels and the Jim Hickses (remember, 'in saw that imperfection in the picture of him from the back and created him as the chief of the assassination conspirators' communications system? What a concept of how assassinations are carried out: and what they do - and sure as hell don't- require!

I'm just curious. If you don't want to, OK, and if you don't want to say anything about the rest, OK, too. As I said at the beginning, I want to record some of that incredible history, too, before Stone finishes his film.

I am convinced that no matter how much he may change the script Stone will have done himself as much harm as he has tried to do to history. I believe that after the Time article is out he'll get more flack and that the picture itself will be greeted with outrage. It should be.

Again many thanks for reading Stone's newest explanation of his film. It was great! Only a man with no regard for truth or decency or morality could have been as eloquent in his lies.

Thinking the way Jim thought below CIA!
Can photos make more history in compa-
rison? Amateurishness?

1 copy in Lardner