

5/25/79

Dear Ian,

As I am sure you know, I never believed the official version of why Hunt was hired by the White House or for what. I have always believed he was hired for exactly that which he did. As of today I am not willing to accept the official account that Liddy was the boss. Despite everything that has been said, I still believe Hunt was the operational chieftain.

You may remember I told you, when you were kind enough to invite me to attend the Colson luncheon with you, that I had a question I would like asked. It was a two-part question to which I would not like to add a third that I think just might make a story. As of now, despite the time difference, I think I can assure you a "break" if you and Fred like it, even if you have to file before the luncheon.

I would have liked to have asked, "Why, given the limitless resources of the White House, when the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs works full-time on all aspects of the drug problem, in which it is the nation's expert; and why, with the skills of the FBI, CIA and other agencies and their considerable manpower to be used in tracing "leaks", do you recommend the hiring of E. Howard Hunt to work part time for the White House, dividing that time between each of these projects - especially when he is a man who recommends political assassinations?"

He did recommend the assassination of Castro. It was his first recommendation when he joined the Bay of Pigs project. He said this on the Buckley TV show, which promptly edited the tape to eliminate his words. Several of us taped the broadcast. A friend checked the Buckley printed transcript with what was aired and found the transcript was not faithful, aside from being incomplete.

You have met Jim Lesar. He played a seemingly-paranoid hunch and it paid off. The effecient Buckley staff did not alter the cassette of the show they sell for \$5.00. It has Hunt unedited. He just played it to me over the phone. When Hunt said he had a list of the four initial recommendations he made, he actually said, "The first is" that "Castro be assassinated " to coincide with the planned invasion.

Imagine the man saying that! Especialy because he did recommend it. Imagine this escaping an FBI security check, L. Pat and all that. Imagine further that such a man is even considered for White House employment. You don't have to imagine that he actually carried a pistol into his office. It was found there.

Jim is going to dub the tape and then order more of them, while they are not known to be as hot as they are. He is going to leave the one he bought from them, properly identified with their label, for me, with you, if it is at all possible. Otherwise I will pick it up Thursday and have it. If Colson or anyone else doubts that Hunt did so heinous (he would say patriotic) a thing, the tape will be left at that point for instant playback. ~~This~~ ^{this} is not the same as instant analysis or plugola, is it?

If what has been discussed on my phone doesn't change things, what would follow might be interesting, if not newsworthy. Should Colson deny, there will be Hunt's words and his one words. And on the "official" Buckley cassette.

So, if this interests you and/or Fred, what we can do is get the cassette to you in time for you to file a story on what Hunt said before the luncheon if that runs after your closing time. I have the transcript and a comparison between it and the air tape made by a reporter friend. Jim has the unedited tape. And I have no pride of authorship. I'd be quite happy for another to ask the question, if necessary, briefing the moderator.

I do hope we have not yet reached the point where it is not newsworthy when the White House hires a man official government records show urged the assassination of the leader of another land.

Jim has to be out of town on a Ray legal matter Friday. As of our conversation today his schedule was not set. I think it would be better if he could be there to care

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lawyer, is the person who personally bought the Buckley cassette, and because he could play it on his tape recorder while I tape merrily away on mine.

I would like to think that this could make one of the more interesting and newsworthy Press Club luncheons.

Colson surely deserves something to remember of his White House days, something besides what he appears to expect to be entered into ledger books.

I can speak for myself and I'm reasonably certain that I can for Jim in this. We neither seek personal attention and if you or Fred would like to do this on your own and have a better story, fine, if it appeals to you.

I do have the tape ~~e~~ made of the Buckley show as WETA-TV aired it and I can bring that. It shows that at this point, Hunt's words were blanked out. How stupid all these Buckley people were, especially when they toyed with the printed transcript, to be so careless with the sound tape they sell!

Sincerely,