

Dear Larry,

12/24/72

Please excuse the bad ribbon that rides and blinds me from correcting what you know is terrible typing I should have written you earlier but forgot while doing other things, until bed-time. I wrote you inadequately after reading Squires' story, too hastily. Other things important to us have been much on my mind. What will follow will not be organized.

There is but one precondition: if Rooney checks any of this out I know the results, including why negative, in return for which I commit to tell no other paper. I can then chew over what he comes up with and if any of it fits with anything I have, feed it back.

If everything can be innocent, there is much too much that doesn't seem just right, does seem unnatural or inconsistent, Even bearing in mind that Hunt is a storybook spook, not a James Bond so he lives it; and his late wife's long life with a spook and perhaps herself in the spookery.

I am quite sorry there seems to have been no travel-agency check on the ticket or, if there was, I've not been told. I used to know a number of people in that field when I farmed. Some gave my stuff for Xmas presents, some were regular customers, one remains a good friend. Aside from what this can tell of the past, such as was he in Miami when the stuff stolen from O'Brien was processed? He was about then. His trip to Chicago seems odd in some ways, including someone giving the Washington Post the wrong day. This permitted more time in what was in the minds of those in Washington who read the story. It had him not leaving for Chicago until Saturday and returning that night. However, according to the Chicago papers, he went there and returned Friday afternoon-night. Washington time the crash was barely more than an hour before dark. If he was home it took him an hour if he fold at first word and was listening to the radio to get to any airport, more to get on a flight, a few minutes to get permission from the court, not less than two hours flying time each way, some time to do whatever he did in Chicago, some time to get back to whatever airport (in bad weather--and I've taken two hours there on a Friday night), and then to get on a plane right away? All this is a bit much, if not impossible. What is impossible is that he spent much time doing anything while he was there, not exactly the behavior one would expect of a grieving husband all busted up.

I'd guess that Carlstead of wife, whoever was meeting (and if Carlstead ~~in~~ on a work day, I'd discount his story he did not know she was carrying cash, that it was just a social visit long planned), knew of the crash before it was aired and phoned the Hunt home. So, this being the case, Hunt was not needed for immediate identification of the body. (I'm still a bit puzzled how a positive identification could be made without scientific stuff, like dentist's charts, if she was burned as badly as you said.) Yet this is the reason given and the only one.

So he flew to Chicago only to turn around immediately and fly back and had the best of good luck so he could find a waiting plane both ways. But why? What was his rush?

The immediate though is that he felt his kids needed more than someone, they needed their dad. Maybe. He seems not to have felt that way when the heat was on him and his wife

was in Spain, to which I'll return.

Even steel-nerved spooks can and do act illogically, even irrationally, at times of great personal stress or crisis. So if what he did seems irrational, it does not mean he did not do it. It may justify questions and investigation.

There was no need for him to go to Chicago just to identify the body. The Carlsteads could do that as well. Now he may have had other and good reasons, but of those I can think of only one permits a quickie trip. A mourning husband seems to require a longer stay with his dear departed, asking questions, looking for personal property (and did he ever have some to look for and after!), commiserating with relatives, and maybe just a few words with Carlstead about the deal. So, I think he has to have made a real effort to latch onto that \$10,585 and the checkbook. I think he may have made an effort to get her bag or bags. Even if only on an overnighter, a woman carries some luggage. If he did try to get her luggage, I do not think he was anxious to retrieve a precious perfume. There would be a reasonable presumption ~~is~~ held more than a change of pantyhose and toilet goods. I have not heard of any check on either of both of these things and I do not accept without question the reason given for holding his money. Not as late as the 12th, anyway.

What I am suggesting is that he may have gone to Chicago for other reasons and that I can't imagine him once there restricting himself to what has been reported, identifying the body that the Carlsteads could have and might have before he was on the plane. That also would be good to know, as would the time, and the police records should indicate who ~~made~~ made identification and when and how. If he did not, then we are certain somebody lied and we have reason to be asking why and looking for a good reason.

Also, especially because he is and was a spook, I would regard it as quite unusual for him not to have made a real effort to learn all about the crash right away.

These things and others I may have forgotten and may remember lead to the quite legitimate speculation about the insurance, of which there were conflicting accounts that are in basic agreement. However, they are more limited than I think may be justified. They are restricted to that written on an automatic machine. Mutual of Omaha has booths all over that airport and she seems to have done enough travelling to justify an annual policy with on-the-ground provisions.

She was in Spain at the time of the arrests. There are contradictory stories about her return and the reason for it. The earliest is too late to be normal. It was 6/20. Another is six ~~days~~ later, 6/26. The earliest is not for four days. Does that make sense? She can't have been in total ignorance of what he was doing because he was in constant touch with people and he could not have hidden all of it if they lived together. In the same direction, he knew what he was into, knew that the whole thing had blown sky high, may have depended on his pals to keep mum, but had no way of knowing that Baldwin would, that the entire setup at the Howard Johnson would not be detected immediately--and the first checkout, as he knew, would be the red flag for which the police were looking - or what every spook knows is possible, especially in a prominent place or places, that he was not recognized.

Whether or not my conjecture about the wife's knowledge is correct is imaterial to consideration of his action. If he is to be deemed the loving and worried father who would not dream of leaving those poor kiddies to worry in time of sweat, how could he not get his wife on the first plane in the situation in which he was? One version has her returning after he skipped to avoid "harrassment". So he'd abandon the kids when as he puts it there was this great hue and cry and he was so much and so unfavorably in the news but not when any friend or neighbor could have sufficed for a few extra hours at the time of the crash?

Dorothy's story of the FBI investigation at that earlier date parallels Carlsteads reported 12/12: they were investigating her. I would with some confidence postulate that any investigation of her necessary after being married so long to a real spook was made much earlier and I would be willing to believe that whether or not Carlstead did, she lied. There was every good reason for the FBI to ask her questions about Hunt, his friends, his phone calls, his work, all the usual things of the usual investigation. And all she had to say was no spik-fifth. It just doesn't stack no matter how you look at it. She lied. Why? Most people don't lie for nothing and a spook's wife knows the danger in it.

If she needed extra investigation, that also is strange, because with all the travelling he did, there were all those earlier occasions. I sent you his record and a tabulation. Which reminds. Early reporting of the business arrangements allegedly in the work, on WBBM or a Washington news station, quoted a man whose name I think I sent you and described as a former ambassador to Uruguay as partner or having it discussed with him. Hunt was in Uruguay with a State cover for the CIA. And in Mexico-you know, that laundromat?

The money is said to have had a good-luck note and the initials of Frank Fiorini. I think it is Fiorini (Sturgis) in whose possession when arrested <sup>as Edward Hamilton</sup> Hunt's phoney passport was found. I may be wrong, but I think that is a criminal act with which Hunt was not charged. If it was his Agency passport and he had not turned it in-or they had not taken it- this is basis for suspecting the connection never ended.

By the way, Hunt had to know his prints were all over everything in the Watergate and across the street at the Howard Johnson's, so more reason for getting wife back pronto.

The indictment is a conspicuously inadequate one, but this bit about the passport was published immediately. If it is criminal, then leaving it out says much.

He is represented by a very expensive firm, a very large one as I told you, and I am pretty sure they are known to have or have had CIA connections. They are also very expensive, as was Hunt's life style and home. But with all these lawyer's bills, six months of unemployment, and God known what future lawyer's bills and expenses, he was looking for a long-time investment? And with cash, and \$100 bills yet? Makes no sense. Not really acceptable even if someone else was footing the legal bills.

A reported friend reminds me that even if there are airplane crashes to which nothing sinister need be laid, there are some that are rather like this. One that killed others and almost killed Teddy Kennedy. Remember the Reuther one (bad altimeter-even parts

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in wrong way. And right after he took stand against Cambodian invasion?

I have seen no reporting of any explanation of the pilot's action. There was something about a private jet taking off. But that would make the liner pilot try to climb up-or into rather than away from the other plane? No side-to-side motion, either side? Was not the easiest thing to continue on a house-top course, which required no surge of power of which even I know jets are not capable under such circumstances? From a map of where the plane crash<sup>ed</sup>, the tower should have know<sup>n</sup> he could not maneuver whereas the powered-up taking off and presumably smaller plane had the capability or a better chance. I am suggesting that it is not impossible that something happened to the 747 that caused it to loose power and the pilot was making a desperate effort to recover it. I recognize he may have over-reacted in responding to instructions in a real crunch, but I also think an experienced pilot knew there was no chance in what he is suggested to have been doing and some chance almost any other way.

Once I was in real soup in a plane with a poorer weight-to-power ration, a stretch 727. They landed us, miraculously, through invisible mountains at a Marine base with what had to be the world's longest runways. I know that planes can fly much, much longer than they usually do in touching down and when they are about to, for that one did. I have a very clear recollection of it. Not knowing the length of the runway, I was also worried about it. I saw us skimming it. Thus I theorize that with everything mechanical normal that 747 could have maintained its elevation even if that close to landing. So, I'd like to know more about that end, and if officials don't want to talk, unless a controller was involved, with their endless complaints about unsafe conditions, some controller might. Some of these guys are compulsive talkers about unsafe conditions, they are that worried. And their union has been screaming for years and has about other crashes not far from Chicago. Unless they are under wraps, some of them might know something. I don't think a faulty altimeter explains the crash with a 500-foot ceiling and a mile visibility. The plane was under the soup and had less than a mile to touchdown, from the Times' map.

I am taking a long time to write instead of using the phone because about the time I started talking to Woodward and Bernstein something that may be innocent but I'm not assuming is happened to my phone. People dialed me and nothing happened and my phone was not out of order. It lasted only a short while-just after the end of the normal working day. We are on an automated exchange out in the country. I went to see the area manager, who has been friendly, twice. He was not in either time and neither time called me to find out why I was there. Instead, for the first time, I got form questionnaires from the state office asking me why. When I didn't respond, they sent new ones. May mean nothing, but why take a chance? I don't think tapping is as widespread as most who believe it is practised simply because it bogs everything down with much work. But I also don't think it is not common when those in a position to arrange it have the interest.

It may seem almost ghoulish to suggest that this was not the world's best marriage after so tragic a death, but I think parts of her behavior when he was in real serious trouble and there was possible trauma to the kids as well as some of his on her death do not persuade there is no basis for suspicion. This is inherent in the questions about the insurance. I wonder if it is customary not to announce the beneficiaries? In other cases the FBI has rushed to do it. If he is not the or a beneficiary, it gets hairier.

Ryewitness account can never be depended upon by themselves. There was one or more that said there was fire on this plane before it crashed, right before. I think at least one young man.

I also found it interesting that Squires said the Chicago U.S. Attorney's office was part of the Watergate investigation. Error is always a possibility, but if it is not, then what was it doing in the case at all? Was there presumption of violation of a federal law in this crash?

If I am wrong in believing it seems that Hunt is having his legal costs taken care of then the likelihood of an investment, with or without Fiorini's good wishes, is much less. If his legal expenses are being taken care of, I'd think that would be a story, with the self-starter justification. If the GOPs or the Creeps or the CIA ~~is~~ footing the bill, that should be quite a story.

If the entire affair <sup>maybe</sup> ~~is~~ innocent except for the WG part, is there any part that really seems innocent?

And all the foregoing is without regard to what I've already told you about Hunt's past, his probable real Bay of Pigs role and its potential, his career in domestic intelligence, which is supposed to be illegal, his other connections that also lead to both the White House and the CIA, the dissembling about him by officials and the incredible omissions in the indictment, which even pretends to give his aliases and leaves all the significant ones out as well as all his and his co-defendants connections. Then the judge decides on something omitted in the indictment, to admit all the stuff on the origins of the money (I think it could be grounds for later reversal of what should be an automatic conviction), and right after this Hunt suddenly dispatches all those \$100 bills to a man not expecting them? One frinstance: Hunt takes the stand and is asked if he has any money coming from those sources? If he does not have it, he can say he doesn't. Remember, somebody is going to have to refute Baldwin. Who but Hunt and Liddy can as his word relates to them? (Strange, with bank wrappers on the money, no bank name has appeared.) Unlike with the caper itself, nobody is leaking about this. The Post had its first story in ~~along~~ time, and it had nothing to do with Hunt. I suspect they were put onto it and this may have taken them off something else. It was on McCord's radio. If they were going to learn or seek to learn the source, it sure took them a long time to go 15 miles

Should have gone to bed an hour ago. Let me know if there is interest. Best,

When on Xmas morning I take time for a hasty reading and minimal corrections and a postscript, on the chance I'll be going into town and save a day in the mails, you have a reflection of my belief that there may be a real big story here and certainly is a series of worthwhile lesser ones. In reading I saw things that may not be clear, but I'm not rewriting Xmas morning! You may have to reread a few sentences.

Re Hunt and his not checking into the reasons for the crash, he being a spook: if he did not make at least some inquiry, I'd be more inclined to believe it would be because he knew someone besides FAA would than implicit faith in FAA. This is a farout guy and besides, a fair percentage of spooks are inclined toward ~~paran~~ paranoia or are paranoids. Another possibility makes one shudder: he didn't have to check.

My phone, p.4: our automated exchange is a) remote area; b) unmanned. Thus any employee with a key, meaning any who ever services it, could make a simple direct path and feed my phone into another, a parallel connection. Nobody would ever know without physical examination of the board itself. I know this has been done with others.

Hunch: if United has its planes insured with a commercial insurance company, seeking out one of their investigators might be worth the time if there is anything suspicious in the crash, for millions are involved and length litigation, also costly, impends. Besides the value of the plane itself, there are the properties damaged and ruined, the locals killed and hurt, the ordinary mortals on the plane and a few prominent people. Michele Clark's survivors can make a fantastic claim, given her youth and already-exceptional income and its greater promise for the future. She was less than 30, with a good 30 productive years ahead of her, and she was the first and only TV net news anchor "man". If she made only 25Gs, not counting interests or raises that is \$7,500,00 right there.

P. 5, Chicago U.S. Attorney: If they really were in the WG case, we can't know why for sure, but especially with Carlstead saying the FBI really investigated him, not Hunt, is it unreasonable to wonder if he was suspected on involvement in WG? Some of his comments sponsor interest. Like a CPA saying normal, legitimate business deals are commonly done with cash and in \$100 bills. Hear that, IRS? But is there not a Chicago story if the local U.S. Attorney was involved in the pre-crash WG case or investigation, which is normally by the FBI, not the lawyers.

Attorneys' bills paid: there are other CIA inferences in defense counsel and those who represented others not charged. Like Caddy, who was clearly a conspirator. If the CIA is paying any legal costs, that should be a story and should be illegal and should not be immune under Freedom of Information law. If there is a real investigation by your or other reporters, I know a way something bearing on this may be learned out there. But I won't say until then because it will involve people. And remember, Hunt was working for the White House at the time of his crimes, despite what Clawson said. I have it W.H. confirmed, so you can be sure his legal expenses have to be at least helped with and this suggests by whom. The reporting seems better than it was because the case is spectacular and much was leaked, I suspect through Gray, who wanted the Post on his side in a confirmation fight and in favorable comment (which it made) before nomination, making confirmation seem easier.