

7/1/72

Mr. Edward Bennett Williams  
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Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Williams,

What follows may or may not be of interest to you on behalf of your client in the Watergate caper, but it should expand your understanding of the career of Howard Hunt. Unless you find use for it in this case, I would prefer that it be confidential, especially as it relates to a political figure.

Yesterday morning's paper reported that you have run into a hitch in your efforts at discovery. I don't know if this can provide an alternative or if it does if that would interest you. It is too early in the morning for my today's paper to have come.

Late last night I saw for the first time The Miami Herald of 6/25/72. It says of Hunt, "He lists himself in the 1969 edition of Who's Who as retiring from government service in 1965 to join the business of Littaur and Wilkinson, 500 Fifth Ave., New York City. But the New York telephone company has no listing for a Littaur and Wilkinson and it is known that Hunt did not leave the CIA until April 1970."

The flaw here is that 1972 isn't 1965. There was a Littaur and Wilkinson in that building in 1965. It was one of the better-known firms of "authors' representatives". I had dealings with them that in the light of this news account become more comprehensible. This was during the period I was trying to get my first book, WHITENASH, published.

John Appleton was the editor of the Saturday Evening Post in charge of arranging for condensations and serializations of books. He wanted to use this book. He also preferred dealing with me through an agent. I had none. I asked him to pick one of those with whom he preferred dealing. I still have his note with which he sent me to the Sterling Lord Agency. Mr. Lord would not touch the subject of the JFK assassination. I phoned Appleton and he sent me to Max Wilkinson personally. It was lunch time, but with a \$10,000 deal apparently in the bag, seeming to require only the signing of contracts, he delayed lunch and I went to his office immediately.

We talked much longer than Wilkinson had anticipated, more than an hour in his office and of the street as he went to his bank. He was interested in this book and the serializa-  
tion that seemed set, enough to assure the success of almost any book, and in the literary possibilities of the case I took to you at the suggestion of Ann Mathias. That, Wilkinson said, should certainly make a movie in addition to a successful book.

Now this book is pretty explicit in alleging that Lee Harvey Oswald had intelligence connections and making out a case. (I carried this much further in a later book, which showed his use of a Cuban Revolutionary Council address, and your characters, including Hunt, had official connections with it.)

I saw Appleton and Wilkinson in May of 1965. Wilkinson read the manuscript, like it very much, phoned me June 2 to ask that I write him authorizing him to represent me, and I so wrote him June 3. On June 17 he wrote me that "no magazine" could publish any of this



work in any form. Obviously, this was not Appleton's opinion and in fact it was false. The chapter that relates to the Cubans was reprinted without the change of a word by another magazine which paid me the highest price it had to that point ever paid for a chapter, serialization or article. It is not the only chapter that was publishable in this way.

In this letter Wilkinson also wrote, "I would like to see you try the story of moving to the country and what happened to you there," his description of the case we took to you. On July 9 he returned the manuscript of WHITEWASH saying "no American publisher will do it." The first Dell reprint was for 250,000 copies and there were three subsequent editions. And he never again expressed any interest in the book he thought would make a movie. Yet this is where the real money is.

He last wrote me October 22, 1965 expressing regret at the loss of some pictures I had given him. Between the time of his first letter and that date, one name disappeared from his letterhead, that of a woman, which may or may not be connected with Hunt's going there.

It is possible that he and Littaur just folded up. It is more likely that they sold a successful business which subsequently changed its name. Their telephone in 1965 was LS 4-3350-1. Their cable address was Litwilk, N.Y.

I find myself wondering, with this history and the seeming connection of the CIA with the agency, whether I have enough to justify an inquiry at the CIA or more. I am without the means of doing anything about it but I would be quite happy if there is any reasonable basis if anyone would pursue it for me.

If it seems a bit paranoid to suggest such official interference, let me say that Mac Mathias read the manuscript at about that time and got quite interested in it. When he learned that it had been consistently declined by publishers whose editors had like it, which happened often, he told me he felt that each time I entered a publishing house I was, in effect, followed by an FBI agent who made official displeasure apparent. I then did not believe this, nor do I entirely accept it now. However, there was a subsequent incident that bears directly on this. When there were but four copies of my second book and the printer did not yet have a copy of it, J. Edgar Hoover issued a press statement "answering" charges in it against the FBI that had not yet been made! These copies were out in the trade.

The CIA has had interest in my public appearances. I have carbon copies, not xeroxes, of what they had done by a private agency, a transcript of a phone conversation with the manager of a local office and the head man (I'm described as "that old nemesis of the CIA"), billings, checks in payment through a dummy set up for this purpose and the names and signatures of those who ran this CIA front. None of the three names I have has figured in this case. This front had printed checks (American Security) but not envelopes. On them they typed their name and "P.O.Box 1282, Main Post Office, Washington, D.C. 20013". Last year, with the appearance of another book, I decided to have some fun. I phoned the manager of the private agency and made a deal with him to let him know when and where I was appearing if he'd give me dubs of the tapes they made. I also taped it. After overcoming initial shock at my openness he was both frank and funny.

In haste,

Harold Weisberg