

Dear Jim,

7/21/75 JUL 24 1975

Today has been another of those days of constant interruptions, none of the kind there should not be but also all breaking up other work.

I read your 7/17 which came today and fear looking up that Butterfield memo because I can't imagine what was in my mind and hesitate to see what other foolishness there may have been. One of the problems of always rushing.

The initial startling thing to me that I am sure I recall clearly is that Butterfield neither invoked executive privilege nor called the WH to ask if he could talk. Nobody of his rank, particularly in the Nixon WH, would not want to do ~~this~~ this and by then would not have thought of protecting himself if not then-GL et al. I am pretty certain he was offered the chance to. Had he not been could not have been denied had he asked permission.

If I do not remember how long thereafter I came to the conclusion that the tapes WERE the excuse for nobody investigating, I do not think it was very long. I know it is in the WG book. And, of course, GL is the immediate beneficiary. His game also was to stall, so this helped that because all the hounds were running after one fox.

Not that it can't be argued that all of this tended to keep everyone away from the CIA. It did. And it delayed. As it turned out this delayed helped all those with something to hide and kept attention focused on the tapes and that issue only.

I think that in writing what I did I must have left something out. Perhaps from being interrupted, perhaps just haste or carelessness. As I look at it now what I say immediately above could be the "There was ample reason to suspect Butterfield served a master other than Nixon (which does not mean not Nixon at the same time). At this point or after "Jennifer and Jim White recorded their suspicions" something is missing to limit this to essentially what I began with, that it was a Nixon game.

Maybe I meant that one could theorize that the same game served the CIA. I don't know now. But I do know that it is inaccurate. You did not then express any CIA suspicion and I did not then have any, either.

And of course if he had angered GL the head would have rolled.

With the rest of what you say, no argument. One of what I'd forgotten if I knew can be argued the way we felt early. If Butterfield was going to Moscow he could have used that to stall his appearance before the Commission. That he did not strengthens the argument that he was anxious to testify.

No, I don't believe that Butterfield was a CIA plant. I recall misgivings about the whole thing immediately and writing Schorr (unanswered) later that first day. The net effect of this is to make everyone forget where it began with the leak from the House that there was a plant. If I were to make a nomination it would be more someone like Bull. I haven't had time to give it much thought.

More of the calls are from media people. Two of today's were from Les Whitten, who overcame his anger over my letters, as did Anderson, who was present but not on the phone for the second. They wanted a side other than Schweiker's and I gave them a list, some of which Les remembered as we talked. I think he said it is for Sunday's column which had to go out tonight. I think you will realize that much as they disliked what I wrote in all the months since save for one reference to earlier writing they have not touched the Castro-kickback line at all. This is to give the opposite.

It came about when he phoned Lesar. I know Bud was out of town. Jim said he should talk to me and he said we didn't get along too well and as Whitten told it to me Jim then asked him to ask himself if it wasn't his own fault. He referred to it at the beginning of the call. Makes his calling at all more surprising. Perhaps it represents what I've seen elsewhere, the beginning of a change in attitudes. The Post's long reprint of the long LATimes RFK piece with a pretended half-apology for the Kessler nastiness is another.

Part of the day's troubles came from the appearance of two Atlanta dicks at the JER jail with the announcement they had Bud's and JL's ok to see him. JER refused and wrote Jim who took hours getting hold of Bud (4-day weekend) who fell short of saying that he had not and had no explanation of not consulting the two of us. Henceforth to be different, ect. His attitudes, his weasles and the fact that this garbage begins with him makes me think he did ok. Lesar is writing Maynard Jackson stiff complaint. Best, HW