

APR 9 1977

JDW: We've had a cold snap after a warm period, over 80. Below freezing again. Got some lop wood sawed up and I've been heating us with that. With a large stone fireplace hot and radiating warmth I want to keep the fire going all night but my large wood is too large, so while I'm staying up to be sure the all-night piece I got on is not going to roll out a little more on some of the enclosures.

Assassinations now are much hotter than most of the press seems to indicate. I've been surprised at it and at the number of major-media reporters who are taking the time for a firm grounding. On the other extreme the Enquirer has gone ape. They are running the asses of at least half their large staff. So large that in one building many reporters do not know each other. I suppose I've heard from as many as six in a day recently, not counting editors. One editor and their best reporter worked into sickness on this, in part I'm sure because of the policy at the top and the control and dictation.

An old timer and an old friend there, now a top editor, had as much as he could take as some of these high-level staff confabs. He said at one of this morning's, look, all you are talking about Hal published years ago. I'm sure he has published much more that now is worth attention. So he has the job to reread and pick for use anything he thinks they can go for. He also promised me a consultation fee for the time they've been taking. It will help because we've ~~been~~ cleaned ourselves out getting the lane paved and a new copying machine. The court costs can stand an Enquirer assist!

I think you can get the change in attitude, which apparently includes me with some, from the fact that it was not Waldron who sent the new Times man here. It was Rick Smith, formerly national editor and now Wx bureau chief, plus other reporters to whom I've never spoken.

I'm also getting more volunteered input.

The Times appears to have done some special recruiting prior to Sprague's departure, an experienced man from the Phila. Enquirer, which is being sued by Sprague. He says he can guarantee that Sprague has no blood. Sprague seems to have earned the dislike if not the contempt of most Phila reporters. Not all. There is the Chardack he brought down to flack, the one who told an old-time researcher who had phoned why don't you amateurs just quit and leave the job to us pros?

Lardner says he is enjoying the ice from Stokes and others. Not his words but the import because his has been honest, effective reporting. I think the pair of stories I sent you made the real difference. Plus, I guess, the realization calling trafficante was no more than a cheap stunt. But nobody took the flimsy called a report and the stupid of that executive session apart as I did for him. I can feel the respectful reaction. I'm sure he and the Post are getting more from their peers. And how understated it was! Clowning is not uncommon in the Congress but this total bankruptcy after everyone is turned on is unusual. Perhaps in part it is because all the time they were writing dirty, putdown stories they had other feelings that have since become respectable. Now thanks to Wx Post they all know that it is not alone the public report that is a fraud. These people are worse than Garrison when they expect perpetual secrecy. 100% of what they discussed was bad. Some how to con the Congress and the media and most on their secrets of investigation which in all cases were zeros-nothing, fabrications that excited them. (In time they'll blunder into something because so many are feeding them.) I think also that the deMohrenschildt suicide hurt them after it got them re-constituted. They did practically kill them. I do not call them the Assassins committee when I broadcast. Now I know they ignored warnings about his health, did not phone his doctor, about whom they'd been told by the Dallas Morning News and instead sent the Fonz, affectionate for Gaeton Fonzi, down to give him a rough time. ...Ice above means hard, silent stares without complaint re facts. ...I'm accumulating a fat deM file but I've not been sending on the theory it would be too much. Please say if you want. Nothing much in WxPost but two Dallas sources have been productive of clips, former W-Unit Mgr., same as on Ruby's money order; and H.L.Hunt's former chief of security...Epsteink, aka Ed. J. Epstein, paid deM \$5,000 for an interview for his CIA/Readers Digest book. Just before the committee. He had help in locating deM. Best, HW 4/7/77