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12/31/76

Silent friend,

Or embarrassed one, now that the column, hoping to entice the future leaks it would have gotten anyway has beat the drums for ripping off the Treasury and the public mind.

I have no House committee sources. But I can do some guessing. It is not a guess that this disinformation was launched when it hears rumbles on the Hill about itself.

So let me take a little time to suggest how you might get the story behind the story.

They probably will not identify the alleged source if and when you ask, unless you have already been told in confidence - not impossible because you could find a partial story persuasive. You plural, not personal.

One of the clues is "not spoken to by any investigative agency." Another is the time. There are others.

Ask it if was Harry Avery, former Commissioner of Corrections for the State of Tenn.

If they say no ask if this witness came as a volunteer or was fed them by an agency whose primary obligation is something like law-enforcement, perhaps the Memphis D.A. or the State D.A. or someone in or formerly in these offices.

Was it Departed Ozer's work? Was it checked in any way to determine if the story is within possibility?

You can ask Avery -there are other similar possibilities but he seems most likely - if as soon as almost as soon as Ray was in his custody he tried to get Ray to let him do a book. Did he also try to get Ray to let him get Ray a new lawyer by using Jerry and by driving Jerry around while he showed off his two-way radio. Within a couple of weeks did he direct Warden Wake Russell (one of the alternatives) not to let Ray's ~~many~~ lawyers see him when they came to get him to sign a legal paper? (True, and all since has turned on this.) Did he finally get fired (he'd probably deny over this but it was)?

Separate from the b.s. the column went for I have some of the above in the ms of the book I've been working on. This part is abundantly confirmed, with documents I have, and it is pretty Byzantine.

May you do better in the coming year, which means

best wishes,