

INTERVIEW WITH WILLIAM WARD PIGMAN -- at his one in Rossmoor, N.J. (spelling??)
10/17/75

1) Pigman drinking martinis all the time I was with him, from 4:30 p.m. until about 10:30 p.m., when he was put to bed by wife (no food for him all that time)

2) son, Jim, aged 37, came up from Wash D.C. Friday night, but neither son nor present wife, Gladys, with Pigman and me during our conversation

3. Pigman says that stuff in FBI files (what can be read of it, apart from deletions) is pretty much correct: he was sympathetic to communism in the 1930's but says he never joined the CP.

4. He was active in the left-wing union Federation of Architects, Engineers & Chemists, and so was his brother George. It is ~~recold~~ his recollection that David Zimmerman [a/k/a David Carpenter] was the organizer of the union; that's how P got to know Zimmerman; says he never knew him under the name Carpenter. P says he liked Zimmerman, found him intellectually stimulating and good company; they were quite friendly in the 1930's and he still has fond memories of him. [asked me to give Zimmerman-Carpenter his regards if I ever saw him] Zimmerman visited Pigman's home in Virginia on several occasions; Pigman hasn't seen or been in touch with Zim since mid-1930's.

5. Pigman says it wouldn't surprise him that Zimmerman-Carpenter was a Communist, although he never made an attempt to recruit either Pigman or his younger brother, George, into CP.

6. Pigman says that there was at Bureau of Standards during the 1930's a man named Rodgers [or Rogers], whose first name he couldn't remember, who definitely was a member of the Communist Party. Pigman says that Rodgers tried to recruit him and George into CP, unsuccessfully. Pigman says that Rodgers committed suicide during the period when FBI and UnAAC got after him [i.e., during month of Dec 1948]

7. Pigman was forced out of job at Paper Institute as a result of g.j. appearances and newspaper headlines. [They gave him six months leave, to find another ~~job~~ job, rather than firing him outright; however, Pigman says he was out, as soon as he returned from NYC and appearance, around Dec 10-13 before g.j.]

8. No overt consequences after Dec except for one flurry when Pigman hired at Univ of Alabama at Birmingham, Ala. in mid- or Fall of 1949. Papers made a big play of this for a few days. (WAR: try and look up)

- a. head of Birmingham FBI was Pigman's next-door neighbor in Ala.
- b. also, Senator Joseph R. McCarthy's brother sold Pigman his house in Appleton, Wisconsin.

9. Pigman says flurry of FBI and UnAAC interest in Dec 1948 is only time, before or since, that he ever subjected to any kind of investigation.

10. At the very beginning of interview, Pigman volunteered that he had met Chambers (under a different name, one which he couldn't recall) once or twice in the 1930's. P says Zim-Carpenter brought Chambers to his, Pigman's home in Va. It seemed to be purely ~~as~~ a social visit. "I guess it was just to look me over," said Pigman, implying that maybe they had him in mind for espionage purposes - although he admits that is an impression derived solely from what he has read about Chambers.

a. This admission is contrary to statement Pig issued to press in Dec 1948: that he had never prev known WC under any name

b. I intended to confront him with this contradiction, but, not thinking it wise to do so as soon as I began talking to him, by the time I wanted to do so he had passed out from the martinis.

11. In response to my question as to how he thinks he was not dragged into the plot, Pigman replied: "I was too smart for them, I was smarter than they [the FBI agents]."

a. once the UnAAC began playing games and leaking stories to the press early in Dec about seeking a mystery witness who was in hiding, etc., etc. [Pigman says he was at his home and at his office every day during this time], a big show was made of following him everywhere: in Wisconsin, in NYC, back home in Wisconsin after g.j. appearances, etc etc.

(1) in NYC he saw four or five men dash into the room next to the one he occupying at the Wellington Hotel in NYC when he came down the corridor with his brother George, and he concluded they were FBI agents trying to monitor his conversation. Also he noticed men [whom he took to be FBI agents] following him everywhere when he in NYC for g.j. appearance. As a result he didn't do any talking with George except in open air.

(2) Says that, finally, in exasperation, U.S. Attorney who was questioning him (who was very tough and very hostile) before g.j. (and whose name Pig thought was Donovan or something like that -- he accepted my suggestion that it probably was Tom Donegan, former FBI agent, who was in charge of investig for Justice Dept in 1948), said to him before the g.j.: "How come you and your brother never talk to each other about this case?"

12. Also this: after waiting around for two days to be called before g.j., Pig says that U.S. Attorney "Donovan" called him from waiting room and escorted him down a hallway and into a room just outside the grand jury room. "A short, fat man was sitting there at a desk. 'Donovan' asked me whether I had ever seen him before and I said, 'No.' He then asked the fat man whether he had ever seen me and he said, 'No.' 'Donovan' then took me right into the grand jury room (after telling me that the man I had just been confronted with was Chambers),

and at the very beginning asked me to tell the grand jurors what had just happened. I think that was pretty stupid on his part, for right at the beginning the grand jurors were told Chambers had not recognized me."

a. In response to my question as to why WC had not said he had prev met him, Pig thought it was probably an act of decency by WC

13. Before the g.j. Pig never shown any microfilms; much of his questioning was about the kind of briefcase he had owned in the 1930's, its size, shape, color, etc. "Over and over again, that's what 'Donovan' kept asking me about before the grand jury: what kind of briefcase I had had when I worked for the Bureau of Standards."

a. Pigman emphasized that at the time he worked for the Bureau of Standards there was no such thing as classified documents. Everything they worked at was available in the Bureau's Library -- which was accessible to anyone, even the general public. He insists he never had anything to do with any secret or classified documents of any kind -- and he says he kept repeating that to the grand jury.

b. also in his conversation with me Pigman repeated several times that he had been "cleared" by the g.j.

14. Pigman says that to this day he has no explanation as to why he and his brother George (who also worked at the Bureau of Standards and who also belonged to the FAECT and who also had never joined CP but who in the 1930's was sympathetic) were dragged into the plot.

a. He thinks that Zimmerman-Carpenter is the one who could provide all the answers, as he thinks he was quite friendly with Chambers during the 1930's.

15. Pigman says he willing to cooperate in any way I would suggest to obtain docs from govt under FOIA, ~~ANY THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE~~ and throughout he friendly and cooperative and open. [He told me that before he agreed to see me he had had an investigation made by his lawyer about me ???????]

16. Pigman apparently quite well off today. [See bio in Who's Who]

17. Son, Jim's application for Naval OCS in late 1950's held up for about a year because of Pigman's file, but that -- other than being fired from job at Appleton with Paper Institute in 1949 (Pig says he didn't mind because he was getting fed up with the work there anyway) -- is only repercussion of Pig's 1948 involvement.

a. Jim, now 37, and father had never talked about 1948 involvement:
/ Jim: "I like and respect my father and that's his business; if he didn't want to talk about it, that's his business."

b. before conking out, Pig had ~~ask~~ asked me to give a brief summary of entire business to Jim and Gladys, present wife, when they got back from airport.