

8/7/67

Dear Sylvie,

I appreciate your frankness and hope you will understand mine. First, you haven't read the book and do not understand how I handled Russo. Second, let me tell you something about the kind of honorable people with whom other "critics" ~~and~~ have been associated and have helped. I begin with an explanation of the situation in which I am and found myself with this book.

They all agreed to do it while I was writing it. I therefore wrote it with them in mind. I was to get a \$30,000 advance. Their only out was if they found it libelous. I did not get the advance, they declined the book, and my agent went the rounds of most of the other publishers who might have brought it out in a hurry. All rejected it. My single regret now is that I did not then do a private printing. Had we not been so exhausted, my wife, upon whom the greatest work would have fallen, unwell, probably I would have. Parallax agreed to do it, making me co-publisher in lieu of an advance or royalties. If there is any profit, we split it 50-50. Same with any loss. It was their idea to ask Garrison for the introduction. I expressed a contrary desire but I left the decision to them for they are advancing the money when other publishers would not. They are also doing it when their normal distribution, S&S, will be denied them (and me), which increases the risk and means distribution will be improvised at best. So, there is, if not the effective circulation of the book to be considered, at least the recouping of the cost.

This is a factor you have not had to live with, for you have an income from your regular employment. It is a problem for Parallax and it is also one for me, for we have had no income for four years. We have had return from WHITEWASH sufficient for me to pay for the cost of printing and distributing it and II and to pay off all my debts except about \$5,000. We used my wife's saving and this to make a down payment on a decent place to live (for we have had a subterranean garret for 10 these many years). I am now in debt for the entire cost of doing PW and will be going further in debt for the cost of doing a much more expensive book, the private and complete version of Oswald in New Orleans. If there is a single person of principle or one who suits you and meets your standards who has moved even a pinkie to help, I am unaware of it. Garrison is willing to, and we need his help.

With all the discussion of what he is doing, if any of these people of honor has seen fit to draw attention to the fact that it comes from my work (or, not from those who immediately seized upon it to sell their books), I am likewise aware of nothing but silence. With PW printed and available, if any of these honorable people has tried in any way to get it in a single bookstore, it is news to me. Yet, aside from the good I think it can do, I have to pay for it.

Who are the honorable people with whom I have to live and associate? Those at WNEW, liberal as they are, one having been Eleanor Roosevelt's producer. You have only a faint idea of what they have done to me. They have made me promises they not only have not kept, but never told me they were not keeping. I trusted them and made certain decisions based on them. For example, when I went to California last December, the book was not out. It was being printed when I left. Lane's friends in Frisco asked me to come out and get him and them off the hook Liebler had them on. Maggie and Bill felt the same way and asked the same thing. They, however, did not do what the Frisco people did: offered to pay my expenses. Instead of waiting until I had a book in the stores to sell, I went out to help. I am still waiting for my expenses, more than \$400.00. Or Sauvage, who I know you regard as honorable, and who you know I have gone out of my way to promote. I helped get him on the Jack McKinney show when this subject was hot. I offered to tape an introduction-endorsement. By accident I was in Phila that night and the station wanted me to be there in the studio and share the show. I declined, finally agreeing that if he wanted it I would, but under no other circumstances. I also told them I would say nothing unless he wanted me to, that I regarded it as his show. His expression to them was so pointed

they were embarrassed in communicating it to me. This is the same Sauvage who had no qualms about coming to Washington for a press preview of The Minority Report for which I had arranged and at some cost, cash and time, and for a press conference for myself as part of it, and horning in on me, making it impossible for me to do what I planned and wanted to. Even if he had been made the instrumentality of someone else's design, he knew he was coming to my territory, knew he had done nothing to arrange for it, and did not even speak to me. He came into the room where my wife and I were and did not approach us. I later went up to him and he did not even introduce his wife. Why? What did I ever do to him?

Shall we go back to the appearance of the Epstein book? Upon what did all the toehr "critics" lavish their attentions, including in print? Show me a word about my work. Need I now recall to you those letters you then did not understand about those things you were writing and doing? Need I refresh your recollection about the vile slanders and libels by Arnoni and Vince? The result was to deny me any mention in the progressive press. Both knew what they then said was false. What good, after his letter to Dellinger, did it do for Vince to come up to me in person and say he was sorry, that he had been wrong? It salved his conscience but did not remove the harm that was not alone to me personally. There are other such cases with which I will not burden you. But I remind you of your own efforts, which entailed ~~my~~ no review of my book, no real assistance to it when it was the ~~only~~ viable book, without the doctrinal flaws, and we risked bankruptcy to bring it out. You cannot imagine the kind of really dirty stuff that was pulled behind the scenes by both publishers, if not the authors, when Lane's and Epstein's books were being offered overseas in competition with mine, or what that noble man of high principle, Richard Rovere, did with Der Spiegel, who interest in my book had been initiated by their N.Y. man.

These are only some of the things your principles do not trouble you about. They are what I have lived with. So, we have Garrison, who is set upon by the most enormous campaign imaginable because he says what is right and is determined to take it to court. The gangup is obvious, but what is below the surface you do not see and I think really do not comprehend. He is badgered and bludgeoned by the press. He is a political figure who has to live with this and survive it. He is the District Attorney who then has to impanel an "impartial" jury which daily is being corrupted in front of his face and yours. How can he possibly do this in silence? He was silent for more than four months. Whether or not you approve what he says and does, do you think had he remained silent he would have survived? Or that we would not all have been seriously hurt with him?

What is really at the root of it is not prejudgement of Russo and Bundy, which you did with NBC, whether you so intend or not, but what transpires in court. Garrison's first problem is to get there. His next problem is to get a half-way uncorrupted jury. These are the two major problems he faces, and he must, as reality requires, face them first. I have no doubt about the fact, for as I wrote more than 2½ years ago, and then and in what has since been published, wrote alone, Oswald's career there was that of an agent. When you have read my New Orleans book, which is, as you know, entirely independent of Garrison and his work and was completed in early April (all 600 pages had been retyped and mailed by the middle of the month), you will also see, I am confident, a prima facie case of conspiracy without even the Russo stuff, which I merely report from the papers. I tie Oswald with the right-wing Cubans, Banister and the CRC, which was organized by the CIA.

Have you ever tried to fight the CIA? And the FBI and the national administration and almost all the press? That is what he faces. I do not know the truth about Russo. Before any of the critical writing had appeared, I have in my own book expressions of my own. I also believe Russo is not the center of Garrison's case but a convenient surfacing in time for him not to reveal his case. I say this. I may also be wrong. But I believe it. Wait until you read the FBI "Ferrie" reports. He did threaten to kill JFK.

I have woven much material together. I also left much out for various reasons, including judgement and space. As much of my writing on this subject is, some if perhaps too elliptical. But I think you will find enough solid fact to satisfy you, and I am content to be judged on my writing.

My real reason for discouraging Parallax from asking Garrison to write an introduction was to preserve his integrity and independence and mine and not to tempt him to say what perhaps he should not. However, I have no apologies to make for accepting his introduction, and I am happy that he is willing to do it. Right or wrong, he is a remarkably brave man. He is also politically brave. Even if he did use it all after, in explaining it to him I asked him to make no public use of it before I did, where have you seen a public figure, an elected one, who would say what he has about the CIA, FBI and the anti-Castro Cubans and our own national policy?

You are also confusing two situations that cannot be compared: what the Commission did in a non-adversary proceeding and what he is doing in one where he faces opposing counsel and cross examination. Aside from Bundy and Russo, you make ~~xxx~~ a point of the number 19106. What you do not bear in mind is the tremendous mathematical odds against this being another "coincidence" (it is not in my book) and the other things relating to it, like Shaw's unquestioned connection with the CIA and the government's and Andrews' identification of him as Bertrand.

As long as Garrison stays within the norms of judicial and legal practise I feel you are wrong to criticize him in advance of his court case on the level on which you criticize him. The 19106 was introduced in a legal proceeding, not in a "leak". If it is wrong, it will be so proven in court. It can be wrong and the rest of the case right. It can be right and he can be proved wrong on other things. I have my own criticisms, but you have not approached them. It is not the same as uncontroverted evidence, which is what the WC used. This will all be confronted, and do not doubt that it will be and by the most competent lawyers. It is I who took the evidence that the CIA is paying opposing counsel to Garrison.

On LIFE and my misjudgements of people. I acknowledge this and I never expect to change for I can live no other way. But need I remind you of your own initial devotion to Epstein and how you sloughed off my own written questions about him and his writing. So we are all poorly equipped to deal with dishonest people. I do not believe this, of Billings. I do not argue with you about LIFE. There are some things I will not put in writing but will tell you about if you remind me. He did offer me certain help I almost accepted. I could have gotten it from no one else. I turned to him because he has facilities I do not and as an alternative to asking Bill to undergo certain physical dangers he is not unwilling to accept. What they will do with it remains to be seen, and no one could be more honest on this than Billings has been. What they have done I do know, and that, I think, you will approve. They have collected a vast amount of worthwhile material that could not have been collected by others. An effort will be made to use it. And it does exist. They have also made the editorial decision (that I suppose can be changed) to do a story on unseen pictures. That Hall stuff was enough to get the FBI swarming all over where he is and, if we get it and it holds up, is as sensational and important as any you can invent. They also loused up the getting, but that is not Billings.

Personally, I suffer more than any other from what CBS did, and perhaps sometimes I will give you all the details. This, save for doctrine, is my idea that they stole without credit or compensation. They also plagiarized from me. I may yet sue them. But, despite the immediate effect of their show, from which I alone of the critics at this time personally also suffer, on balance I agree with Richter's opinion. The ultimate effect is to advance the quest for truth.

I have turned over to LIFE other things I could not handle myself. To whom

else? Once I turned a live lead over to Bill. It was too much for him, he felt, so he brought Turner of Ramparts in. I have yet to get the first inkling from him or them of what he learned, yet it is I alone who could fit it in place. Or credit for turning it over when they printed this as though it was their own in a piece in which they also used material of which I told them in confidence in December. I could tell you other things about Ramparts and me.

I'm afraid that I am not a hermit and when I cannot do myself what I think must be done I will enlist the help of those who I think agree with me. Of Billings I have not the slightest doubt. Please believe me, he is an excellent investigative report and has made major contributions to knowledge.

I published the fact that Willis had unpublished pictures. Who else did anything with it, to cite just one example. They paid a lot of money just to get to see them, and we can thereby know what they show. And they did get the statement you asked them to get for me. I'll ask him for a copy when I speak to him again. They are following my Lovelady-shirt stuff down. They will not give the Lovelady's \$5,000. But what else was I to do with it? I think that if they see the shirt they will print the Martin picture.

And privately, please, I tell you that Billings has been paying for my phone calls on this and the Hall thing, and they come to money I could not spend. He offered it, I did not ask. He trusted me with his credit card. I have not misused it.

In short, I do not think I am associating with dishonorable people. And I think them, by your standards, at least as honorable and decent and Lane and Epstein and all the eminences. Did I ever tell you who I asked to read WHITEWASH and who I asked to write introductions, without asking them what they would say if they did, and none would? Did I ever tell you the names of some of the established "progressives" of whom I sought help, and from 100% of whom I got nothing? And we to this date have gotten no help at all?

During this, which has taken more time than either of us has, I have a long interruption from One Horne, who represents the British publisher Peter Dawney. Dawney has done Joesten's new book in England and is thinking of distributing it here. I'll get a copy soon. I have it in German.

What do you think of Liebler refusing to testify in N.O.? Had to consult others and then refused. Subpoena issued.

Before I close, I must remind you that in my opinion PW is a really sensational book. What paper, besides the Times, mentioned it? What radio or TV program invited me to mention it? Three programs that I sought only. We very much need help, Sylvia, unless we are to write for each other. Have you any idea the kind of a loss I may take on WWII or PW or what I shall yet do? Show me your preference in people with a raised finger among all of them. And tell me how, sitting where I sit, I should think of the performance of two men of whom you think highly, Vince and Arnoni?

Excuse the abuse in my not taking time to read this. I hope you can dope out the typos.

Regardless of what you wind up thinking of Garrison personally, I also think you will agree this is the only possible course.

Sincerely,

And where are all those valiant fighters and men of high principle seeking to answer AP, CBS, NBC, etc? I have received no letter from anyone reflecting a willingness to start this fight. Am I alone? I asked Vince's help on a legal proceeding that I will eventually start. It is not forthcoming. Arnoni has yet to withdraw his vilifications or to stone in writing.