

NEW ADDRESS: Rt. 7, Frederick, Md. 21701:::301/473-8186

January 31, 1967

Dear Mrs. Payne,

Please excuse and understand the delay in answering your warm and very welcome letter of December 3. I will explain it.

I do try and answer all the letters I get. By now, over a thousand people have written me. Fewer than a half-dozen were nut letters, and fewer than a dozen were anonymous. A few require no answer. All the others have been.

The Payne Show you saw was taped 11/20 in Los Angeles. I was away then for three weeks, including one of work in New Orleans for Jim Garrison. I got home for Thanksgiving and a week later returned to New Orleans for two more weeks.

During this time, the mail accumulated. I got back two weeks ago and have been spending every available minute on it. We have moved, as you can see, hence I did not get your letter until after I left again. It was one of the first to come then, hence was close to the bottom of the stack.

Aside from personal satisfaction, letters like yours are the only reward we have gotten. Our work continues, despite mounting debt and no income. We have finished the fifth book, POST MORTEM: THE SUPPRESSED KENNEDY AUTOBIO. However, I now fear the debt its publication would add. It may seem hard to believe, but the effort to suppress my work is even greater than it was. The Washington wholesaler thrice refused to handle OSWALD IN NEW ORLEANS: CASE FOR CONSPIRACY, twice after he knew I would be on the Payne Show. It was not until ten days after that was aired in Washington (the week after the New York showing, and I didn't get to see it) that he ordered any books, by then having missed the impact of the show. The New Orleans wholesaler, while estimating his sale could reach 15,000 copies, refused to handle the book without an advance \$50,000.00 indemnification against a non-existent law-suit that his lawyer admitted was both unlikely and not because there was any libel in the book. As you may have noticed, you have not seen me on TV in New York. Chicago and West Coast stations welcome me, even pay my expenses to get to their studios, as do other TV stations, but not New York. If you recall my appearance on the Alan Burke Show a year and a half ago, that is the only TV appearance I've had in New York. They could not avoid me on the Minority Report show that followed it, because I had established the prospect of its success and established an audience, but about two hours of me was edited out of that show. Thereafter that station and its syndicate accepted my challenge to be included on a Majority Report show the Commission lawyers asked for, and the lawyers gave up their show rather than confront me. The station made me a number of other offers and promises and never kept a single one. When they asked me to face Nizer and any staff lawyers who would appear with him as a champion and I accepted, after what I did to Nizer in a four-hour radio special, they tossed me off of that, for the great man couldn't take it. How strange it is that Payne is the only one who has treated me decently and given me the opportunity for a presentation of a little of the suppressed evidence-and without niggling and nagging!

There was a time when I hoped that help would be forthcoming. On a few occasions people in a position to help said they'd do something (without my requesting it), but in no case have they. One man, who wants my work for an archive in his college (a major one in the east), has often said he must do something. I have told him all of my work and files are his, but the offer of help has yet to materialize.

Those many friends of the late President are likewise silent. Since I wrote it more than a year ago, not a single thing has happened to make me want to change a single word of the epilogue to WHITEWASH II. Imagine what this means: of all the powerful and wealthy friends of the President, not a single one has done a single thing to help establish the truth of his murder, and not a single one has done a single thing to help the man who did the first work and is the only one continuing his work. I think that when the history of this period is written, it will be clear that I have done all the basic work. Others have come along later and used it, without credit or permission. A few have belated and probably independently found some of the same things. But of all that has to date been published, there is not a single major point that I did not first publish. And for this, not a single friend of the late President has had any help, not a single publisher any interest or support. Dell reprinted my first two books (and I still await an adequate accounting or the payment of royalties, for which I'll probably have to sue, and I have not a cent with which to pay a lawyer). They then offered me a good advance to do my New Orleans book, which I had partly written when they made the offer. I do not know what pressure they felt, but they broke their agreement and paid not a cent of the advance. In order to get even a very small publisher to handle it, so great is the fear, I had to forgo any advance or royalties and make a share deal. If they profit, I'll share the profits. If they lose, I'll share that, too. They did a miserable job of editing, almost no proofreading, have spent not a single cent for advertising, can only improvise distribution, and I've had to do 100% of the promotion work myself, in addition to all the other things that have, until the past two weeks, taken up a day that averages between 18 and 20 hours.

I do get a kind of help from plain, ordinary, "unimportant" people, particularly in arranging appearances for me and housing and transporting me when I get to go around. A few also try and help by offering suggestions from their own research (you'll find these few credited in my writing). But not a single important person, no publication of any kind, no single one of the many now-important politicians who owe their prospects and positions to the late President has lifted a finger.

When I bring a new book out, I always send one to Cardinal Cushing, in the hope that he may be the instrument for some help reaching me. He made a fine statement a year ago. Alas, he has stopped with that. I am particularly distressed at this because increasingly my mail reveals a campaign to blame the Catholic Church for the assassination. This horrifies me, and I answer every letter with a denial. It likewise horrifies me that increasingly people feel and say as I say on pages 6 and 9 of PHOTOGRAPHIC WHITEWASH: SUPPRESSED KENNEDY ASSASSINATION PICTURES, that the obvious beneficiary of the assassination had something to do with it. But when the President is personally responsible for the continuing suppression of what cannot properly be suppressed and what should not be, how else can people feel—or, indeed, how else should they feel?

It was not my initial purpose to answer your fine letter with an outburst of this sort. Perhaps because you are so restricted in your movements and what you can do, I wanted to assure that whatever the cost-and it has been great beyond your comprehension or anyone else's- we will continue what we have begun, at least through the publication of what we project, a minimum of six books, probably seven. The sixth and seventh are researched and partly written. They will come close to telling the whole story, at least as it can today be told.

That will be the limit of what we can undertake. It has made a premature elderly couple of us and has indebted us for perhaps the remainder of our lives.

If, because of the depth of feeling I think I detect in your letter, this means something to you, I ask you to consider the dedication of my first book. I mean it today as I meant it then, in mid-February 1965.

We will get the truth!

Many thanks for your kindness, for taking the time to send me encouragement.

Sincerely yours,

Harold Weisberg