

Dear Dick,

Your letter of the 1st is short enough for me to have read it while walking back to the car from the post office. Having delivered my wife to her part-time job and with 13 minutes before today's Watergate hearings begin, I begin a response to the simple question you ask about an agent because the simple answer will not really suffice. It is, however, I'd prefer to leave this to your judgement, which I trust. Were it not for our needs, I'd rather wait completion and leave it up to you than. However, these needs, which are more complicated than you know, predominate in my thinking.

I have already indicated that one is simple financing, so I can do what is now precluded and so I can work more rapidly. So that, in fact, my wife can start retyping. (This will slow down my initial production but would make a completed draft available sooner, for I'd have to stop to read and correct what I've written. This usually takes me longer than the writing.)

One of the needs requires a frankness I trust you will keep confidential.

Have you the remotest idea of what it has meant to be married to me for about 37 years? And to have lived in poverty for the last of them? I'd doubt it. Well, what is means is that my wife, who was a remarkable tough character when I met her and for the earlier period of our marriage, has become depressed, figuratively and literally. I mean an inner toughness few men have. Like how she got out of bed unassisted the morning after five hours of surgery when she heard her doctor's voice in the corridor and recall that he wanted her on her feet as soon as possible. Or how she saved me from an early frame-up by making herself my Matron about 1940, when I was away and she got a hunch. I might have been jailed had it not been for this. So, one of the urgent needs is some encouragement, no matter how slight.

In the past she has read each chapter as I draft it and prepared corrections and suggestions for when I can go over them with her. She hasn't looked at one of the about 30,000 words (in sequence - I've written much more). First time, too. A week ago I'd asked her to renumber the pages to the point I'd written, each chapter in a separate folder, so I could number correctly as I proceed. She didn't do it until night before last. Or, with the experiences all one way, her intelligence tells her there is no hope. I must find some way of giving her a little.

This means some kind of advance and I feel that is extremely unlikely for all the reasons you know having to do with my past and my "enemies" and for others, one being the inability of the Establishment ever to recognize what serves its real interests, in turn meaning that all will fear a tough book, which this will be. Can any decent, honest one be other than tough?

Since I spoke to you my understanding has expanded much. There is nothing we discussed not still relevant and included or to be included. However, there is new stuff, and it makes a real switch. This book will be both an expose of the CIA/FBI and a defense. Yup, a real defense, for Nixon has been much more sinister than even I thought and the proof is beyond question.

Here am I, the one described by an agency of the Agency as "that old nemesis of the CIA", already ~~having~~ having written the beginning of that defense.

Off the top of the head, I'd say that with the right presentation, this could improve publishing possibilities. However, it makes it a much tougher anti-Nixon book.

The number of "secrets" that remain secret after they are public is one of the more astounding aspects of this truly strange case.

The broadcast has started. I'm writing what will be a kind of detective story. To give you a few clues, both the deputy directors of the CIA of his time were friends of Nixon's past.

...After the a.m. session, I add that the effort to frame the CIA in this continues, now conducted, if clandestinely, by the two Republican members who are covertly doing Nixon's work, especially Baker, and their minority counsel. This is subtle but the press should see what I have not seen it reporting. And perhaps it would be a bit more precise to say, instead of CIA, which is, to me, visible, former director Helms, who to these nuts represents its "liberal" past.

The original formulation was for the CIA to take the fall. Helms absolutely refused. So, Nixon axed him, removing him as directors only a couple of months before his automatic retirement.

These are some of the things I feel you should know before you decide if you will talk to an agent and if so, to whom. He should know what he is getting into and what a publisher might feel he is getting into or would before too long. Much as I want help, I don't want to ask anyone to walk into what he might later find to be whirling, sharpened knives. If there are, as there may be, agents who hold strongly to decent principles, I have yet to find the one who held them at the cost of his business or connections. Or who was willing to face any real trouble he anticipated.

You do not say why you think "your Watergate book will have difficulty finding a publisher." I take this to mean mine among many, because of me. If you have something in mind that I have not indicated understanding, I'd like to know what it might be when you can find a moment.

You also say "outsiders will have trouble." I have sent you published accounts of contacts with "outsiders." However, I would have to acknowledge that in sending them I also said they were not really Watergate books. They were exploitations of it.

FYI: the fix is on. I have seen its outline for some time. It is becoming clearer. This past week I laid aside the chapter-by-chapter writing to begin chapters on it, for several reasons. It is helpful to look back and see how accurately I analyzed things, how sharply and early I perceived them, if I did. It is not ego-tripping. Another is to get the basic thoughts on paper while fresh in mind, before the press of the enormity of fact expunges. I saw this so clearly so long ago that the second chapter, anticipating it, lays a basis for understanding of it. In addition, I started writing a chapter tentatively titled "Counterattack" before it began. Again, the basis laid early, the perception in advance of the fact, and the past week has provided abundant confirmation. Put it down that while keeping options open, Baker is the point man in that maneuver. He is assisted by Thompson and to the instinctive degree possible for the dolt, by Gurney. Baker's is a clever operation. Davis is a very dangerous man, but a man fit to have been Ev Dirksen's son-in-law. He has a smoothness neither Dirksen nor Nixon showed.

I hope that yesterday and today I correctly interpreted several things old Sam Ervin did as the beginning of his understanding of what Baker has been doing. But since old Sam has run something less than a real investigation, I do not hold out great hope. Without something really exceptional, I expect Nixon now to escape his own villainy. One of the reasons I am so anxious to finish this work and would like to entertain some hope for fast publication, not merely publication alone. Parlayed improbabilities.

This will be a long book. Long ago I recognized that publication would be unlikely with anything I do. So, I then decided that all I write should be conceived as serving as an historical record rather than a condensed book. I believe I am writing so that cutting is simplified, for the scissors and blue-pencil, not just normal editing.

I also have had no word from Manny yet. If he does not come up with all of this stuff soon, and I do mean soon, I'll have no choice but to write to the bar. This could mean more trouble for him. Would it be embarrassing to you to tell him this? Will I have, really, have any other choice? I have more than enough grounds for suing him now. And the relief of his suspension will not be helped if I have to do what he forces.

I will keep writing, thanks. Best to the others,

sincerely,