

Dear Dick,

2/6/76

On the King book there is some help in your letter of the 2d. So you'll not have to recall it or get carbons from files this is what you said:

"...the most commercial approach is to present new facts -- new data -- providing significant leads and speculations as to the motive ~~affix~~ and perpetrators of the crime. These are the positive areas to stress. The negative areas to avoid are:

- "1. Not too much detail
- "2. Not too much documentation.

"You are writing for a general audience which is not as meticulous as you are..."

In general I can understand this and it is in accord with my thinking. I am aware that what I consider not "too much" others may regard as indeed too much. So, in the writing I've done to date I've tried to both limit and arrange for editing by hunks.

I'm trying to arrange the chapters the same way, so that if necessary whole chapters can come out.

There have been some changes in the situation of which I'll inform you. But for your thinking and understanding of the finished draft please bear these considerations in mind:

Under the best of circumstances it will be some time before the book can appear. It deals with what in news is called a "breaking story." It therefore must anticipate all developments and changes that can be anticipated.

It is a subject on which reviewers have hangups. I can recall no professional reviewer who has ever written favorably about any assassination book except Albert Johnson who raved about Frame-Up, which could not be more detailed and documented. The book is going to have to be detailed and documented enough to have a chance to overcome the pasts and hangups of the professional reviewers. Bantam went to enormous expense to give the crappy Anson book this appearance, with elaborate and essentially unimportant footnoting -- even phoney footnoting. I understand the original print was 250,000 and there have now been five printings.

We want to look forward to a second life, in reprint, for the book. This has to anticipate a number of developments of which I note two: Ray gets a trial and this is the work that provides the basis for it, which should make it commercial as possible on this basis alone. (You were ill when we discussed this 1/16 but you then seemed to consider this a promising aspect of sales potential.) Ray does not get a trial and this is the "new evidence" that permits taking that route in court.

The changes are in public, especially black attitudes, in the Congress and in possible court developments. We have one who may be a very good judge in C.A. 75-1996 the calendar call on which was postponed until next Wednesday because the government attorney has the flu. There is the possibility that the case can come apart in this suit, in court.

Monday I had a call from Congressman John Conyers, leader of the black caucus. When was the first time I could see him when he is free. When he learned I would be in D.C. Wednesday he cleared his afternoon from 2 until 5:30 so we could go into this. He later included black college people from his district, a president, a dean and about four faculty members. They decided to make a national issue of the King assassination. My role is to lay the factual foundation for what they will make a political issue and they specifically included 200 black campuses. Not limited to but including. If this becomes a political issue it will have potential as a book that is a positive. It will thus have to have enough detail to be persuasive to essentially establishmentarian minds, no others having much chance of leadership and policy posts on any campuses, as well as

what I should have noted earlier, documentation enough to overcome publisher fear of libel, a fear that if it extends to the major media, especially electronic, can be ruinous except to what this is not, an "underground" book.

Conyers expects to be able to turn on other Congress people. The book thus has to have enough detail and documentation to overcome their reluctance. Not one ever mentioned Frame-Up when it came out. Only my Senator did by putting Fred Cook's Saturday Review piece in the Congressional record. (The other good review was by Albert Johnston in Publishers Weekly and he went for the detail and ~~was~~ documentation, calling it "pure dynamite.")

Perhaps what I have enjoyed will enable what I think will be a means of striking the right balance. I'll be using some documentation in the text and the rest in the appendix. If I restrict the text to what is necessary for credibility and comprehension ~~of less fragmently~~ to make or emphasize the point we can have the documentation in an appendix that will not make the text heavy and yet will make the work authoritative.

For the most part I expect to do the writing without stopping to insert direct quotes. ~~and~~ I can't use my files that easily. I'll leave blank pages for these quotes. That provides flexibility in editing, I think.

If you are saying that it can be too overwhelming I agree. The problem is understanding and then achieving the right balance and structuring the book so that cutting is simple yet so the draft can serve all possible purposes, including developing situations. If Ray loses in court, for example, the need is greater than if he wins and we'll not know with the sixth circuit decision. The State will go to the Supreme Court or we will. If the book is out by that time and if they grant cert....

Yesterday Jim Lesar, the young lawyer who has done most of the legal work and represents me in my FOIA cases, had time because the calendar call was postponed. He drove me home and we discussed the book and its structure. It was quite helpful. We developed a simplified organization for the earlier part, first by breaking it into two part and then by rearranging the second. The first two parts will both be on the coverup, the ~~first~~ first on the FBI's direct and indirect involvement, the second on the lawyers and Ruiz. The second ~~part~~ will be on the fact of the assassination itself. It will have a second part "providing significant leads and speculations as to the motive and perpetrators of the crimes. I'm not going to take the edge off of it for you but it will begin with more than new leads. It will begin with the first account of how the crime was actually committed and the only speculation ~~will be~~ about identities, where there will be leads. Pictures, too, ~~one~~ of the reasons I addressed use of belt offset so this kind of thing can be where it belongs in the text. It will even include a taped confession, of advance knowledge by a man who can't get over not doing anything about it.

Most of the first part is drafted. I have a student who is a slow typist working about 5 hours Tuesdays. She began this Tuesday. I have not yet discussed price with her but told her that at the end I'll pay her. She knows it won't be a high hourly rate and I have to find out what a fair one is. I also want a measure of how much she produces and how well. Until I can get more ready unless I had a stenographer, part time, and I've found none, this is adequate. I've begun the second part of the first section, on the coverup. I think it will be possible to use very little from Frame-Up and have this all new and much hotter. I plan to use only a few of the documents in Frame-Up.

This is for your information. ⁺ It requires no response. Unless you want to say something.

However, I can right now with some certainty say that I can sell ancillary rights to the National Enquirer for the cost of turning out an "underground" book.

Sincerely,

Richard T. Gallen

ATTORNEY AT LAW

14 EAST 60TH STREET, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10022
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February 2, 1976

Harold Weisberg
Route 8
Frederick, Maryland 21701

Dear Harold:

I hope you are feeling better. Please do not use me as an intermediary with Dr. Segal. His address is:

Dr. Robert Segal
35 East 85th Street
New York, N.Y. 10028
(212) SA 9-9251

For any information you contact him directly. I strongly recommend that you assume the responsibility for your medical decisions once you have the proper input. It seems very clear to me that you are not getting proper attention and a change is necessary.

With respect to the Martin Luther King book, the most commercial approach is to present new facts--new data--providing significant leads and speculation as to the motive and perpetrators and the crime. Those are the positive areas to stress. The negative areas to avoid are:

1. Not too much detail
2. Not too much documentation.

You are writing for a general audience which is not as meticulous as you are. I shall be happy to review material as you prepare it. Please take care of yourself.

Best wishes.

Cordially yours,

Dick

Richard T. Gallen

RTG/r