

8/6/68

Dear Jones,

Over the week^W I knocked out a short book that I think will please you, if nothing else happens to it. I call it "A 'Citizen's' Descent". It is a factual document evisceration of Mark like none ever. I begin by saying he has done the hitherto impossible, defamed the media and libelled publishers, then wind up a little on him, then say that because I am not like him I do not hide behind sneaky words, but say exactly what I mean, and then, point by point, I really clobber him. I wish I thought there would be some chance of publication, especially by offset, for it is so documented all the proofs could be printed from his book and the comparison sources, particularly on his plagiarisms.

Where he says his book was accepted by 15 publishers then not done I say what those publishers told me and worse, prove that he broke the one contract he had, with Grove, with his agent as source and his new book as proof—he was still conducting interviews months after contracted pub date. I have the story of how his book did get published, the one credit he didn't give in either book, how he did a lot of other of the meanest and most contemptible things in recent literary history. At that I held back. For example, because your friend Eric Norden did his Playboy interview, I made no mention of that, as I could have (and how—Playboy asked me to go after him and I wouldn't!)

Most of us who know and detest him really do not know how deeply and sincerely despicable a character Mark really is.

On the plagiarism in particular I have him. There is no possible explanation for he invented non-existent sources and gave fictitious footnotes. I have him distorting and misquoting, and on one, it is lovely. He twists what I said about an FBI Similes report, wretchedly, even for him, pretending to "defend" me against a charge by Kaplan as a device for one of his snide insults. On the day I wrote that I got a call from a young man who has been working with me telling me that he has a contract with Similes, signed, and that we have the use of four as assassination pictures Similes still has! These can be used only in the book this chap has written, but not for use, a few of us will see them.

On the lies, I have him on tape. And all of it was in advance, written to both Mark and Holt. Neither has responded. I'd like to print these letters, too.

Got any ideas?

Tried to phone Eric several times. Not in. I hear things that make me think he may be in trouble on his book and that he may not know it.

I have also done a short book titled "Coup d'Etat", on all ~~xxxx~~ the assassinations. I have in it much that I think will pull the middle class Jewish liberals. A fair amount of entirely new material. I wish I had a good agent! Or one who was my agent. Mine does nothing, having surrendered on the subject.

Vince was here over the weekend. He read "Post Mortem" and thinks it is the hottest book on the subject yet. He also like "Coup d'Etat". He did not read this one, which I finished late last night and haven't read. He feels as I do, that we will all be better off with Mark publicaly castigated and exposed, that we will be less vulnerable because of what he does and has done. He also told me of some Kennedy political deals of which you had told him. I'd like to use them but will not without getting it from you, which also means with your sanction only.

At eleven last night I got a call from the guy used to leak the so-called Mafia threat to Jim. That was checked out and found "accurate". He has twice overheard a similar thing for when Jim is scheduled to be in New York this week. I'll phone Louis this a.m. I have it on tape. He had no details.

Don't know when I'll be in New York.

There is one official group on the west coast that is satisfied Bobby was killed as the result of a conspiracy. They are in a position to do something about it. I would like you, in confidence, to give me the basis of the things you told me so I can relay it to them so they might do something with it. They have asked me to ask you. I had hoped to do it in person, but as time drags and I cannot afford the trip, I ask you now. I think you should do it. I also think if there are other deaths and you haven't you'll have a few troubles with Jones Harris.

If you have any ideas about what I might do with this newer writing, I'd like to hear.

Best regards,

Harold Weisberg