

1/23/72

Dear Ron,

From your last letter I feel I must begin with two protestations: this letter requires no answer unless something in it interests you or anyone in whom you have interest; and there is intended to be nothing in it that could by any stretch of a facile imagination be construed as criticism of you, no matter how subtle or indirect. I have dealt with at least a dozen agents. Among them you occupy a unique position. While one was a rather nice person he was also lazy and poor in business, thus I got beat out of more than \$30,000. Aside from him, you are the one who has been nice. You are the only one who has been thoughtful and considerate, whose has extended me the courtesies that you have. Clear enough? I do mean it.

At the time the car and the courthouse were blown up in the Rap Brown case I saw a book in which you had no interest. I did keep files, hoping the situation would change, and I have had a chance to consult with some competent police. They share my view that the stories of the bombings were knowingly false and intended for political purposes. Bear in mind that these police are not friendly to Brown or anything he represents or they think he represents. But they are honest. At that time I told you I thought I could break the case rather spectacularly and without great effort. My own commitment to the special futility I live prevents my spending a great amount of time on any side issue, no matter how much interest I may have in it.

Time has passed and with it some of the things I then planned will be more difficult, for with the best of intentions people forget and with the worst of intentions they are reached by St. Edgar the Indispensable and his boys..

However, there is a potential benefit to what I have in mind in the capture of a man said to be Brown. This means that at some point there will be a defendant in court and that, in turn, means things to me because of my special kind of writing and investigating and what it has taught me can be done by the activist writer who has escaped the captivity of the taught limitations and the norms that often become stereotyped practises. I know that at one time you represented Brown. If what I have in mind is possible, I would want to be no more than co-author and I might consider having no connection with the writing, just making what I have in mind possible, if it can be, and then turning everything over to someone you trust and represent.

The other has to do with the King mess, which it now is. Gerold Frank's book, which gives every promise of literary disaster, represents an initial investment for Doubleday only part of which is a \$100,000 advance. Even Hule, who gave Frank his own material, in my presence and publicly forecast the bleakest prospect for Frank, who is hung up on the official fiction which has been spoon-fed him. Like Bishop's anti-black bomb (that suddenly, after failure in the literary market-place is in prominent syndication in the larger papers), it may be and I think will be a book very bad for all black interests (if I or any other white can see them as black eyes do or might). It is my information that it will be offered by three book clubs, D's, Book Find and Playboy. This seems like an exceptional attention for a book that can't be better than a very bad one and must have as one of its by-products the message that if black leaders are killed, the whole white Establishment will rally to the defense of the killers. In any event, Frank told me he had been given the King autopsy pictures. Unless the family did this, and I have no reason to believe they ever had them (I know the prosecution does) and he uses them in any way they will cause much pain and other hurt and in some ways, inevitably, will be an indictment of many, including those who at least in the past you represented. But with what pretty clearly is much steam behind this book, I think it will actually be an encouragement to more assassinations. It is the first to get any real promotion. I suspect it will be advertised hard and that a movie may be in the works, or at least sought. The book would seem to have little prospect or returning the investment already made. I can only wonder at such poor business by those who know it. In any event, no answer needed unless any of this interests you. Best regards, Harold Weisberg