

2/25/77

Dear Howard,

I've just returned from two intensive days in Washington. There is some benefit from them although in some areas not as much as I had hoped for.

There is some personal encouragement for me. I was able to pull 21 hours the first day and over 18 the second.

I blew the first reason for going there. Not entirely but largely. It was the do something about the wretch Lane. I made the mistake of believing that the station would be fair in having given me fairness-doctrine time to respond to a personal attack. It did not work out that way. The host of the show did not go that way. This put me in the position of seeming to be petty. Then confronted with choices I opted the wrong one, of not taking him on and trying to work around him. Before I could recover he went to the phones. I'll learn from this and if there is another situation like this begin in away that makes what he did less likely.

There was an exciting and slightly promising result, however. The rest of the show went so well that the host cancelled what was to follow me and I did the whole thing, to a late end. During this I turned on a woman who very clearly has first-hand knowledge of the JFK autopsy. Without doubt she was in the autopsy room even though there is no record of it. She was explicit in specification of what X-rays were taken and no less explicit on what the federal agents did. I'm not at all sure she is completely accurate in the latter part but I believe she is faithful to the actualities.

She confirmed that full body X-rays were taken and added dental X-rays, the normal and the non-existent. She says they left with the FBI agents. She says there were three of them in the room. I think she could not distinguish between the FBI and the SS agents. She said that as soon as there was anything the FBI agents took it and said "thank you."

It occurs to me that she could have been office personnel with a second-hand account. She gave no clues to this. I stayed with an old friend whose wife has a good reel-to-reel tape recorder and I have a clear tape. When I can I'll dub that part off for you.

Aside from the fact I think this represents something along the line of what I anticipated when I urged the course I did on the House committee as I had on Schweiker, laying out the basic facts evidence in an adversary situation and letting the situation that would result run its course. I did give my address over the air on the slight chance she'd run the risk of retaliation and get in touch with me.

I had an interesting meeting with the two top people at Zebra. Walter Zacharias comes across to me as a pleasant, informed, intelligence new-dealish liberal, perhaps on the radical side, a very sharp guy. He is now aware that the McDonald book is a fraud. The meeting went very well, everything clicking in place. I was informed and accurate in all the things he talked about, even the old-time Moe Annenberg and his contributions to gangsterism, on the things in Zacharias' past. He actually spent \$200,000 promoting the McDonald book. The meeting was on The King Conspiracies. It seems to have boiled down to is it too tough and will their lawyers be satisfied. He invited me to New York, which got me back to where I was three months ago when I offered it. I said I was willing but could not carry all his lawyer might want to see. (When I showed him only two pieces of paper it blew his mind. When I said the books would be based on three files cabinets of records at least 25,000 sheets of which would be FBI secrets he was flabbergasted.) So they are to be here week after next to take a look. I must now get to setting up files from what I've copied out of this enormity as I've been reading it. I've gone ~~over~~ over maybe 10,000 of the pages I have already. If they'll do what they did with McDonald we may get some-where. He is also interested in Agent Oswald. When he is here I'll give him the five chapters I wrote soon after we moved here.

Jim ~~set~~^{sat} in on the lurch with us, very helpfully.

The King situation is ripening well. Several reporters who are basically unfriendly were in touch with Jim yesterday in a not unfriendly way. He handled one in my presence, and he did it extremely well. They had had breakfast with Bell, the new AG, and Ray had come up. This happened as I had to rush to catch my ride home. We talked about it later by phone. I think that whether or not they do stories these reporters may wind up acting as intermediaries. If they do not I think I have this through Lou Gordon. Listen to the tape if your folks send it to you. (I don't blow them all!) And if that does not work I am confident I can do it in other ways when the time is ripe. I asked Jim to go slowly.

We deposed Courtlandt Cunningham and Robert Frazier yesterday. We will depose Gallagher and Shaneyfelt in about two weeks. The U.S. Marshals were slow serving subpoenas. We had the curbstones and 359 there without a peep of protest, too. Only a subpoena. We'll have it back for the other two. Then Jim will depose me. "By the costs! But we are making a record." Despite the stonewalling we got some good stuff yesterday. Frazier is a skilled obfuscator as I have ever seen. He was able to keep going into diversions and digressions and non-responses and above all claims of no recall. He and Cunningham both testified to the taking of lead samples from the base. Frazier said that so much extruded that it would not show. Cunningham testified that you can see where it was cut out. Frazier pretended there was exceptional mutilation. And that negative identifications are impossible.

I got Jim to try one he thought the AUSA would object to but he didn't. Thus we got some great stuff from Cunningham on the King ballistics evidence.

I can't go into all of it but there is one area in which I may have made a mistake that you did not catch if Frazier testified truthfully. It was not completely so the mistake is not all that bad. But I want to be sure he did not testify falsely.

He says he weighed the bullet only before any samples were removed. My own view is that he should have weighed it before and after and that evidentiary needs required this. So I'd appreciate it if you could direct me to his testimony on this or better xerox that page or two. I'll then go over it and give it to Jim. If we find that he testified to the weight as of the time of his testimony he testified falsely yesterday.

I don't know when the transcripts will be typed up. They are confidential until filed at least, perhaps until released by the judge.

I may have to find a way of getting to Dallas on this soon.

We got Frazier to testify falsely about the tie, the damage to it and how it was caused. Even that there was no significance to the absence of traces on it and the shirt.

Hastily,