

Rt. 12, 21701

9/21/75

Dear Roger,

I appreciate your letter of the 25th.

You close with a reference to what you call the innocence of youth. This is fair but I think it is also unfair. Please pardon the avuncular. I recall my own youth with clarity. Some of the pain that was not from "innocence" I'll never forget. Or ~~was~~ ^{was} to or be able to. I don't really regard it as innocence ~~except~~ for its lack of concern for or unawareness of what the pursuit of principle can mean. And cost. It is, rather (as I see it), a pre-contamination period, a time when humans are most taken with considerations of honor, integrity, patriotism and loyalty in the non-rahrah sense and least with the consequences of leading an ethical, decent life.

Success, even survival, makes harsh demands in the modern world.

In any event, I do not regard dedication to one's employer's real interests or to decency and principle as innocence. It is probably part of what accounts for the feelings of horror and indignation and the perjoratives in my unedited writing, what others regard as turgid and prolixity. Perhaps correctly p today.

It is not impossible to lead a compartmented life. For me it is not even difficult. Costly it is, however. On ~~the~~ balance and with enough years to look back upon, mistakes and decisions to reflect upon, costs and hurts to recall, I am content to have paid the costs and to continue to pay them and happy to be able to make separations between different lives when called upon. I don't know what it is to have trouble falling asleep. I do have a little problem staying asleep, but since my late April illness and the weakness and weariness that followed it, I have been able to make a conscious decision to go back to sleep and be asleep before 4:01 a.m.

What you describe as innocence of youth is what immaturity can mean peace of mind. Plus financial and professional problems.

Thought for the philosophy.

Last Sunday I had to make a spot decision. I was confronted with a sharp conflict of interest, an ethical question, and as a result I declined to appear on the Ray part of the CBS special on assassinations. I repeated this refusal Monday and Thursday, having said I'd read the papers CBS files in court ~~in~~ in Memphis Friday, 9/19/75 if sent me. They were not sent. If I have trouble really understanding why this action was filed and formulated as it was, I have no trouble giving up the coast-to-coast attention on prime time it would have meant. That never has meant anything to me anyway.

I have not had any time for sustained thought on this and now I'm not going to take it. However, from time to time it has intruded on my thoughts and I have reached added conclusions based on the meaning I attribute to it and other events and non-events. As a result I drafted a letter last night that will not be retyped until my wife has the time. When she can I'll send it. It constitutes not "constructive notice" but notice. I now see a clear pattern and I have records of a past. I mailed the letter to Dan Rather last Monday morning because I did not want him to believe there was anything personal in my refusal to be on the ^{ing} part of the show. It had nothing to do with him but I had agreed for him to interview me.

I am proceeding with publication of my book myself. ^{It} is possible because I did sell print ancillary rights that will yield enough to pay the printer when added to an escrow account I established the first of the year to be able to reprint two of my earlier books that are nearing exhaustion. I'm taking the risk that when

it does endanger my ability to reprint these books for which there is a surprisingly steady demand - without any advertising or promotion.

I have heard from ABC, without solicitation. I know who is to be in touch with me. I know nothing else. But if they want to buy my rights, they are for sale. I offered them often enough to CBS. More correctly, I heard from 20th Century-Fox. These are normal literary arrangements and the first person to make me an acceptable offer will have it accepted.

What I can't predict is when the book will be out. A one-man publisher who has other responsibilities can find himself envying the paperhanger with the itch.

Rather has not acknowledged my letter. In part this can be because he has been away working on the show, as I understand he has been. In part it can be because he believes what others have told him. I told him the literal truth and what he does and does not do is his affair. If he has concern for his personal integrity he'll at least make an effort to understand what I wrote. Were I in his position and with some regard for my reputation I'd be making some independent checks.

I tried to be as helpful as possible to CBS. I took entirely uncompensated time when it was asked of me, I informed its people truthfully (as they have told me), but on all occasions I made clear that I was not about to give CBS any of my rights or the right to any of my work. There is a clear record on this. There also is little else I can do now. Besides, I have the book to get out. I'm writing this while resting after a bath after a bout on hillside mowing and prior to the evening news. After that and supper, back to work.

If you want me to keep you up to date on what I'm doing that has no connections with CBS, perhaps it would be better if you kept your different lives separate and I write you at your home.

The book will run 660 pages. It will sell for \$10.00, \$10.75 by insured mail. There has been enough non-delivery and non-return ~~anxiety~~ WHITEWASH IV for me to want to add that cost and then go to the trouble of insuring every mailed copy.

The news is out. Thanks and best wishes,

CBS NEWS

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September 25, 1975

Dear Harold,

I have received your letter of September 20, which you told me to expect when last we spoke on the telephone. There are several things which need to be said at this point.

If you already have an arrangement with a rival network concerning the Post Mortem material, fine. I wish you every success. I'm more anxious to see the material come out than I am to have any particular news organization become the one to do it. If you have not finalized such an arrangement, however, I feel it is in the best interests of all involved for me to recommend that you make a last attempt to interest CBS News in the story. You may not be able to convince them to get the book published for you or to retain you as a consultant, but you may get important publicity for the book which would at least help sales and aid in the recovery of whatever funds you have had to invest personally in the book's publication.

I make this suggestion at this time because I was obviously ineffective in interesting the executives here in your work. I tried my best, but as I've explained to you on many occasions, this place is so compartmentalized, and the people in the different offices are so involved in themselves and their own work responsibilities, that an outsider may have more success than an insider in attracting a sympathetic ear. Certainly you can understand this since you have called me many times to tell me what people in the very organization I work for are doing! Additionally, I have felt constrained by the ethics of the situation not to reveal too much of what you have told me in the course of our discussions, and, not having seen your book myself, this has also probably blunted my effectiveness.

The question is, are you willing to gamble with your material? Are you willing to contact someone like Rather or another correspondent and say, "This is what I've got, are you interested?" Since you say that your material is protected, and since you are close to publishing the book yourself in the very near future, what is there to lose? At the very least, you will have put yourself on record as having tried.

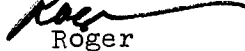
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If you don't feel the risk is justified, there are several ideas regarding publicity for the book which I would like to discuss with you in the near future. But that would be as a private citizen and a friend.

I admit that this letter reflects a change in tone on my part: I've been personally frustrated by the seeming lack of attention that has been paid to my recommendations. But I believe that at the present time, about seven weeks away from the first installment of the Midgley special report, there is still an opportunity to move ahead. As you can see, I have trouble giving up, perhaps a carryover from the innocence of adolescence.

Warmest regards,



Roger

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