

9/17/67

Dear John,

Having to improvise so much has some advantages: one is often prepared. Before I tell you why I'm writing, I have written John again. I've heard nothing.

The text of the fifth book is done. It is about 60,000 words. In my format it will look small, a little shorter than the Photo WW text. With appendix as I now conceive it, it will be about the size of PW. If I can make it a little smaller, I shall.

As it dawned on me that this book, without change, would be too expensive and would still be sort of misbegotten, it also suddenly dawned on me that, with my doctrine on Manchester: if he says Gods Is In Heaven, that is doubtful, probably wrong, any documentation on the entire subject is appropriate to Manchester Mach. So, I return to my original concept, a specialized book, like PW, on the autopsy and what relates, with perhaps 200 pages of once-secret documents. Really nitty gritty too, cat! Then for Manchester I've got more good stuff than I can use for appendix. My problem there will be, will that book then be too large? But it also should help that book, give it meat to go with the Manchesterian Milktoast.

I'd appreciate your fast reaction to these possible titles: Post Mortem. Autopsy. Subtitle to be something like WHITTEWASH - SUPPRESSION OF KENNEDY AUTOPSW if title is Post Mortem, which tentatively I favor, or, if AUTOPSY, something like WHITTEWASH- SUPPRESSION OF DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE. Either to carry a top slug on "Secret Documents", but nicer than Feehly Peectures.

My wife has already started typing final copy. Alas, that is the way we have to work. I'll try and reread what she hasn't typed when I return from being away most of the week. I have to go to DC in the pm tomorrow, to Phila the next a.m. If I leave there Wednesday a.m. in time to get to Washington before offices close, I may get to DC on my way home. Otherwise, I've already got several appointments there for Thursday, so I just add what I'd have done Wednesday. But this kills the week. And I may get enough Wed-Thursday to have to do some fast writing and rewriting. My book is designed for it. What I anticipate I think I can work in with no trouble.

This means several things: I go over the appendix while Lil is typing final copy. I do the appendix of in N.O. as soon as I get page no. Between the two, this will keep me busy for a while, for I've other things to do. I think, however, that this will move everything considerable forward. I have that opinion of the content. One of the way I save time was to make no carbon. We have a visiting assistant who has retyped the ms, and I have a single carbon of that. This sped her up. She leaves in the a.m., and we'll have all but the last chapter in duplicate then. We've gotten the mailing out and are getting a good response.

Life will complicate a little because we are closer to being able to move. This will be a gradual process, already started. Every time I go there I load the car. The appliances are installed, most connected and working. Unless I can get Lil fairly comfortable before leaving, I may delay the body moves until the trip. No word from Parallax, hence no tentative schedule! But I am looking forward to moving, even if it will slow me down in writing.

Going at this pace and hearing from no one, I've had no time to think, but I took a walk for a quarter or an hour before writing this. The more time goes on, as I see it, although there now may seem like little possibility, I think the movie thing is the one with the best prospects, of return and of success. When you see what I have for the new book, possibly you will agree. Even more it establishes that I have done not only the definitive work, but all of it. I know of three pending books, two scheduled for November. They are dated before they are out. They may get attention if it is bought for them, or on a fluke, but not on content. This will not mean they are not worthwhile. One I expect will be very good. The third, unscheduled, should also be excellent, and I anticipate it is. At the risk of towering immodesty, I believe I have done an investigative reporting job like no other in history, or vice versa, with an output I think never equalled save with boiling pots, and with all accurately and responsibly. I do believe there will be a change in the climate, any one of a number of things facilitating it, including New Orleans and other things I am and have been working on. The coming election and the growing unpopularity of the war (brought about by the assassination), etc.

Would it be a good idea for me to try and see any of your people on this when I'm there. There are also other reasons, like I think I've got other movies, of which we've never talked. I think I have a combination of Mrs. Blandings Builds Her Dream House and The Egg and I, for example. But for real, not fiction.

Gotta get to other things, but wanted to dash this off first.

Best,

Hal.