

1/27/83

Dear John,

Went back to law means when asked to, returning just before Xmas, and am still swayed by the accumulations of the relatively long absences.

All celebrated not making Christmas off to visit the family by getting a cold that, as usual with her, turned into a kind of laryngitis and my own bad joke that she is "unpredictable". I caught some kind of cold in the left shoulder when in A.C. (and in 70-degree temperature and air-conditioner combination) that lingers, hurts, and slows me down. Finally went to the doctor, who prescribed a drug that mixed hell with my ulcer. In fact, having developed and healed the ulcer without even being aware of it, I for the first time learned what an ulcer feels like. I do not like it!

Wajuh's letter requires a short, pointed answer. I have held off not to embarrass you. Any objections? "Valued friend" indeed! Or should I just photocopy the epilogue to WILL and mail that, underlined.

I do not think you understand the Thompson opus and ploy. It is as brilliant as it is dishonest. It is a pretended criticism that, stripped down, is a formula to salvage the distressed government. It could be a CIA job. Aside from his generous "haste", what Thompson has done, in the guise of criticism (and he is careful to disassociate himself from that awful crew, "critics"), is to show the government that it cannot avoid acknowledgement of some error, that today everyone knows there was error, but that it can adhere to its basic conclusions about Oswald, the time and place of the "incident" as first hit, the fatal shots coming from the sixth-floor window and that there was no conspiracy.

In short, it is the only possible way for the government, today, to admit to the essence of its story. He merely throws in a couple of other books who just happened to have the same idea at the same time and to have, entirely independently, selected the same time and place for its implementation. It is too early to forecast the result.

John and I long ago discussed the editing of the books into a hardback set. The subtitles would then serve to identify the parts. The problem is finding the publisher with the interest... The fifth one is ready now. The problem here is money. I do not see going to risk the additional indebtedness. Instead, I'm trying a little thing with collateral rights that has lit no chance, I fear. John has been silent about well. I feel more strongly than ever that I should not be filing a number of suits. Glad you found Turner bright. He is also a literary lightfingers, whose thievery is not new in the January issue (which I haven't seen-the NYTimes read parts of it to me). They regularly use my material, pretending it is their own, while Turner writes nasty personal stuff, for example in Penn Jones' Forgive my Grief II (159). These people, for all their money and reputation, have been totally unable to come up with anything new in the field, so they steal and pretend originality to the main thing they actually believe it. I should tell you this, on the night of my very recent fatigue last year, had I been able to stand, I nonetheless pressed my opinion on this publicly that I am a realist, to object to their obscene greed. If you can get an extra copy, I'd like it, please. Love from here...Gotta go to your work. Good luck, esp. to your wife. Sincerely,

December 7, 1967

Dear Hal:

No, I haven't expired.....but there have been recent days when I would have rather.

Whatever strain of flu I cultured just before, during, and after your stay here in San Francisco is still with me; its lingering effects are weird, have me punchier than usual. I can still remember your remark about "respiratory infection" while we were working in MacConaugh's offices the night of the 12th. It was too late by then anyway.

The "thing" finally forced me into the hospital down in Carmel, where \$345.00 got me some useless pills and a fierce reprimand by our family doctor.

I figure to get back into full swing by early next week, assuming my self-discipline maintains and I suffer no more relapses. I trust you didn't take a sample home with you for Lil.

In the interim, however, I have been sampling the atmosphere left in your wake, to see what reactions, opinions, etc. et al prevail; when I have finished a complete canvassing (10-14 days) I will commit it all to paper for your review and consideration.

You're right that I never had adequate chance to explore thoughts and ideas with you; your schedule and metabolism pretty well wiped out a chance to get down to specifics. From my standpoint, however, I gained considerable insight into your modus operandi and attitudes.

Let me say first off that (1) I have learned not to stick my 2¢'s into the academics, and (2) there must be better handling of your relations with both the press and business communities. While we must both be tokenly conversant in both spheres, it is most obvious where our fortes should be applied. For my part, my apologies for sliding my snout into your bailewicke.

I am (once again) redrafting the ALFIE partnership to accomodate your time ultimatum of January 1st, which is an impossible time schedule for me to guarantee mobility. In essence, then, I am going to stipulate that you shall maintain the option to make outside publishing arrangements should the partnership be unable to do so in time. ALFIE will share in only those areas of profit derived from its immediate supervision. This will keep you from being hamstrung by possible ambivalence.

On other fronts: Josiah Thompson's Post piece was an excellent vehicle in so far as its communicating to the general press and public; granted, it's a generic steal-job from WW I, but it's in the right place at the right time.

After looking at the Meagher and Thompson books, the more I am convinced that you must turn to hardcover; the prestige factor, alone, demands this. I am toying with this general concept:

1. Your 1st four books should be reprinted in a (two-volume?) hardcover edition, edited and/or updated where necessary. They should be entitled simply as WHITEWASH, with sectional subtitles for the previous edition categorization, and re-subtitled into the various chapters. This should be done and ready to market by the time Garrison (whose Foreword would be used) gets into court.
2. Your remaining books (sans TIGER) should be ready for marketing within a month's time after the trial concludes; this would include a finale of the Garrison case, which only you could grind out in time. This book (or books) would be pre-promoted at the end of the first one(s) on a pre-publishing offer basis.

The above is not just idle thought twirling; I have probed about and it reads concensus. Unless you are able to climb into the authorship fray in the acceptable style - your colleague-parasite-hangeroner element is going to bury you with your own sweat.

Bill Turner is coming out in the January Ramparts with another major (?) piece; this one, Warren Hinkle tells me, will name names, dates and places in both New Orleans and Texas. Met Turner; a bright man.

All the above is indicative of only one thing: Payoff day~~x~~ looms.

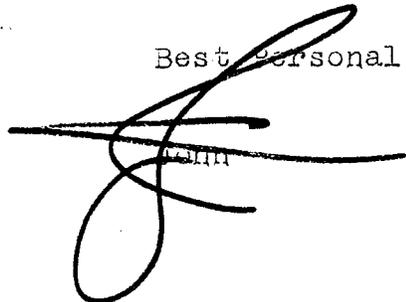
Lee Rashall (ABC) tells me that the first two eschelons locally are much impressed by my presentation/proposal. I don't expect to hear any official response from them until after the 1st of the year.

I'm playing with a token newspaper ad (enclosed) to see what the week of running will bring; this is merely to check the level of concern, rather than \$\$\$ return; I figure to drop \$140 on this as an experiment.

Verb has been waiting patiently for me to converse with him - and I must do so this next week; this is a valuable man all round, I feel; somewhere I intend to find a place for him in ALFIE.

More when my other senses return; my best to the lovely spouse.

Best personal Regards,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke at the bottom.

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# Assembly California Legislature

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COUNCIL

Sacramento, California  
November 21, 1967

Mr. Jonn G. Christian  
O'Gara, McGuire & Nestel  
Suite #536 - Mills Building  
220 Montgomery Street  
San Francisco, California

Dear Jonn:

Thanks for the books.

My problem with the Kennedy assassination never was who did it, but that it was done at all.

I hope you will understand my reluctance to become involved in what appears to be an endless rehashing of the circumstances surrounding the death of a valued friend.

Sincerely,



Jesse M. Unruh  
Speaker of the Assembly

JMU:ls