

Mr. Henry Durkin
Box 74
Westfield, N.J. 07090

1/19/76

Dear Henry,

Thanks for the enclosures with your 1/12. I'm particularly anxious to get all I can on Lane v. Lane because the man, in his unconscionable self-promotion is today the greatest single obstacle to accomplishment in and by the Congress on this. In addition he is threatening to sue me. My response, because that of which he complained was so modest compared with his character defects and records, was to send him a certified, return letter in which I spelled out a longer list and invited suit, predicting he would not dare. Can you begin to imagine what the executive agencies can do with his record in their lobbying with Members not for an investigation? Not that I consider those allegedly underway meaningful, intelligent, informed or with prospect. It will take a stroke of luck that can't be expected.

Garrison conducted nothing that could be called an investigation. As an investigator he could not find women in a bordello. I was unable to exert as much influence as I'd have liked. I tried and it made me unwelcome. My own work in N.O. was independent and had nothing to do with Shaw. On Oswald, Heritage is an attractive work. The first half is ripped off from what I told him in confidence the first time I was there, before I got to know and understand him. It would have been my second book were it not for the dishonesties of the Epstein and Lane books that followed Whitewash. He and Lane share similar lacks of scruple. But he is a magnificent writer when he does his own thing. Read what he contributed to Oswald in New Orleans. Or his intro to Crime, Law and Punishment. American Grotesque has every right to be partisan. I found it extreme. Also uninformed and uncritical. I asked him for his interview with Russo, for example, and he did not bother to respond. My interest was and is in Russo (again see O in N.O.) not Shaw. Nothing Epstein ever did was honest. For all practical purposes he has been working for the Dept. Justice. I realize you disagree with these things but I tell you what I believe and my beliefs are not political but are based on fact and knowledge.

I was not teasing you on McDonald. I'd hoped by now you had come to understand me better. I take this time now when I really ought not because I recognize your sincerity and do appreciate the little help I get. Mine are very old-fashioned standards. I defy you to find a man who will say to my face that I deceived him, abused him, broke a confidence or anything of the sort. Or a woman. This just happens to be the way I am. I'm not bragging and living this way presents no problem to me. The cost is minor compared to the satisfaction and contentment. So, I simply can't break a confidential relationship. I was engaged in a professional capacity, asked for release from the obligations I assumed with it and was refused. Only those directly involved, face-to-face, know whose consultant I was.

Dell and Dial rejected Whitewash a total of three times and when I made a success of the underground version came to me for it. They haven't begun to pay me the royalties due, gypped me in other ways including count, and did not a thing to promote the book. This includes refusing to repay expenses they agreed to on two promotions I proposed. Nothing on WW II at all. Stuck me for one appearance after approving it. Within the law they committed several frauds. I can't even get an accounting. Jim Lesar tried again for me personally last week. Perhaps he'll get one. If he does it will have a check with it or will be mail fraud. This kind of thing, which must sound paranoid, is a sure loser. Dell cost me money with an unpaid for special printing of WW they were to use to promote their edition and in terms of the sales of my edition I would otherwise have made. Besides the other dishonesties. They rejected WW II until in less than a month, just as soon as I printed it, their WW edition became a best-seller.

Lane's CCI can provide a 16mm version of Groden's Zapruder work. Groden says Lane stole it. I understand the charge is \$25 plus \$1 for mailing, etc. 16mm.

I begged Dell to edit WW. They promised to, didn't change a word, so what relevance was there to the lack of editing when it became their only best-selling work of fiction for 6 months? I do regret not even being able to edit myself.

This gets me to something I hope you will understand. I'd like to have time to respond to all requests, fully. But I simply can't. I'll appreciate anything you can send me if only because it will enable me to leave a fuller and more balanced archive for the young of the future. Most of those who send me things are liberals. And unlike Mao's practise, I do believe that all flowers should bloom. For example, when Bill Buckley's representative, who had read WW and knew me, asked me to head an investigation Buckley planned in 1966 with the Kohlberg foundation, I agreed. It presented no political problem to me, no questions of conscience. So, while I have friends who are conservatives, they are the minority of contributors to my files. And my only interest is in the young of the future. I wish I could do nothing else but sit and write what I've already researched and in perhaps a half-dozen cases begun to write. I'm pushing 63. If as I hope I have 20 productive years ahead of me I do not have to leave here to be productive, socially useful. The mere filing of papers for the future takes time I don't have but I feel the obligation and try to meet it. I have no help, from file clerk to typist to stenographer to investigator.

Right now age is not the problem. Time and health are. My doctors negligently let a bad case of phlebitis develop. It severely limits what I can do. It is not crippling. Friday - put in a 21-hour day, flying maybe 2,000 miles, conducting an in-jail interview for five hours, working with one reporter on a long trip to NYC and with another for the 4 1/2 hours after landing. I got up at 5 in the south after a speech and got to sleep about 3 Saturday morning then had to get up at 7:30. I run these risks when necessary. I ought not. I don't know what there is that I have not been told but I know my left leg is entirely loaded with clots and there are some in the right. I have to sit and type with my legs parallel with the floor. Try it some time, young man. After I sit for a half-hour I have to walk around a bit, stopping what I'm doing and breaking continuity. Ordinarily I do get more rest, but this reduces the working day of about 18 hours, reduced a couple of years ago from about 20. But I'm trying as best I can to make what kind of contribution I may to a better world and more decent society. I have done work others have not and would like to complete it. However, I do have a serious and potentially fatal problem from the first serious illness I've ever had in my life. So, please understand that there is a limit to the unnecessary correspondence in which I can engage. I answer most with a form explaining the illness. If there is something you do consider important enough to take the time from my suing (three active cases in court plus my work on the Ray case) and the possibility of returning to writing, please include a stamped, self-address envelope to save me those snatches of time. Do send me whatever you may consider of worth when it is possible. But please don't expect even acknowledgements. I can't do it. Understand also that I have no regular income and when I print something it means continuing debt. Even stamps are something I can't afford. Now I do have a lecture bureau, which does supply an occasional appearance. I've just returned from a successful speech in conservative territory. It was entirely non-political. It was so well received that after it a faculty member from another college nearby asked about my appearances. The college before which I was cued him in. The dean later told me this man was from the most conservative college in the area. My approach is neither left nor right. You got hungup without understanding. As examples read in the intro what I said of Warren's treatment of the Birchers in WW or in the Epilogue what I said of JFK's closest, where I expressed opinions. I think I am unique in this field in this way. Anyway, the only time I can really justify taking from work now is what can help me survive. Please understand this and don't read me wrong. I just can't justify taking time to answer the kinds of questions you asked. In this case I did with a large stack of mail besides the other accumulated work because of the past, because I did not

TO: Harold Weisberg

FROM: Henry Durkin

January 12, 1976

Thanks very much for your letters of December 30th and January 2nd.

I've located the article from Atlas magazine and also found a duplicate, so here's one for your files. It appeared in the May 1967 issue and was translated from the January 12, 1967 issue of ~~the~~ the Belgian magazine, Special.

Your teasing me with hints about the McDonald book. I'd love to read the original three versions and do a detailed comparison. I'll pay the postage both ways and make you a xerox set of the versions at my expense, if you'd be kind enough to let me read the stuff and make a set for myself. And, I would not use the information in any way, either in conversation or for publication...and that's a promise. It's your news story and you should take the credit for doing any expose of McDonald.

Your books contain so much detail compared to the other stuff that is on the market. As you say, your books are not edited. This may account for the fact that commercial publishers don't want to bring them out. But what about WHITEWASH I and II --- both of these were done in paperback by Dell. Surely they sold well enough for Dell to be interested in publishing III and IV and POST-MORTEM. But maybe Dell is too enamored of Lane these days, having issued the updated RUSH TO JUDGMENT.

Everybody seems to be peddling Zapruder films these days. I got a very grainy and lousy color quality print some years back for \$25 from Cutler. Can you recommend anybody who has better prints and at reasonable cost?

In going through the clipping box, I found an item from the March 31, 1967 New York Post, which quotes Lane as saying he knows the assassin. Copy attached for your collection.

What's your opinion of the Garrison investigation? His own book, HERITAGE OF STONE, was curious in what it did not report. Compared to AMERICAN GROTESQUE, THE GARRISON CASE and Epstein's COUNTERPLOT, HERITAGE is pathetic.

I'm about 5 months behind in all the reading I want to do. There's too much happening in the world these days for me to bother with fiction anymore. So it's a steady diet of political and current affairs books these days. I've put POST-MORTEM on top of the pile and will get to it as soon as I finish White's BREACH OF FAITH and Rahter's THE PALACE GUARD.

Regards,



P.S. - Press release from Pyramid on McDonald's
"Hours of the Blue Fox" enclosed. H