

2/11/67

Dear Jim,

Thanks for the PSA on Merriman Smith. Please let me know if you log anything. Your chances are better than mine. He has declined to debate me at the National Press Club on the ground that public speaking is not his forte. Because he is fond of calling me a Maryland turkey farmer (and I hate turkeys), I presume he believes gobbles more qualification than "Thank you, Mr. President". So, I challenged him to debate me on his 1965 story, on which he is the world's greatest expert, and offered to accept any journal with which he makes arrangements and to give him my piece in advance so he can devote all of his time to answering mine. No answer.

Of course, he has acknowledged that with respect to this one fact he didn't consult his notes. He then ignored all he had built on this one fact. Once, if he does not change the rest, he is the authority for saying the shots came from the sheriff's office.

If he ~~says~~ answers you, please ask him to specify where I was wrong about the weather, wrong about the organization of the motorcade and with this "for openers" why he recommended his readers go no further.

I'd love to debate him, for his entire story was wrong, wrong by comparison with Merriman Smith and UPI above all!

My most recent researches have been among the most fruitful. They delay WHITEWASH III, as I believe will another book I think I'll do real quick, Manchester MACHIAVELLI: The Unintended Unofficial Whitewash, 25% done, if I go ahead. Smith has approximated but not quite equalled Manchester's record on accuracy (he is closer by one shot).

When you speak to Harve or Carl, please remind them of the copy of the tape I had asked Hal to get from friends in LA who had it. I did not need it when I wrote for it, because after a radio appearance against him that he'll never forget, I got tossed off a TV debate with "cuis Nizer. But I'd like to use it elsewhere. And give them my best.

If Harve would like me to debate Nizer on his program, would I be delighted! Also, he might be interested in knowing that Newsweek notwithstanding ending, Liebeler did not disclose that (if it is true) Lide accidentally destroyed the frames of the Zapruder film. The Baltimore Sun did two months ago after I was in touch with them, and these missing frames are on the original copies (I've checked, as has George Herman), and Liebeler did know they were missing in the stills (see WHITEWASH II) for he said so in his belated and incompetent interrogation of Zapruder....I've got a lot of new and entirely fresh stuff for the next time I'm out there.

Regards to you all, and again thanks,

Harold Weisberg

Dear Mr. Smith:

I have read your reports for years and appreciate your contribution to news-reporting in this country.

A listener has recently disturbed me by pointing out a discrepancy in your reporting from Dallas about the murder of President Kennedy. I have re-checked your reports and it seems your memory of the events is not as clear as you claim.

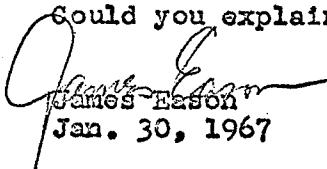
Nov. 23, 1963: The President's car, possibly as much as 150 or 200 yards ahead...  
...Next in line was the car bearing Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson. Behind that, another follow-up car bearing agents assigned to the Vice President's protection. We were behind that car...

Nov. 6, 1966: We were at the point of coming out of an underpass when the first shot was fired...  
...As we cleared the underpass, then came the second and third shots...

(Underlining mine)

Having checked the maps and photos of the Dealey Plaza area, I cannot reconcile your two reports. You have said you were behind the President's car and in front of the President's car.

Could you explain this, please. Thank you.

  
James Eason  
Jan. 30, 1967

Merriman Smith  
c/o U-P-I  
315 National Press Bldg  
Washington, D.C. - 20004

Hal — a copy for you.  
I'll let you know  
what happens.  
Stick with it!!  
