

4/6/72

Dear Jim,

You know that it is joy when I write you a couple of hours before doing a show with an articulate man who will be live when I'm on the horn and I didn't get to borrow a copy of his book until last night. It is 200,000 words, so I've skimmed it what I think is enough and write, if briefly.

I had several reasons for suggesting that you first ask the Doubleday folks to have him appear, just like that, what they will take as straight. After you get an o.k., you can develop a sudden recollection of your personal and your station's dedication to the fairness doctrine and its requirement that both sides of controversial issues of national importance be aired by all licensees. Perhaps the murder, per se, is no longer controversial in Doubleday's view but everything related to it, from plea-bargaining up and down, assuredly is. So, with me being the only author of a book on the other side, you are making me to do that other side by phone, Frank in your studio.

Now if he accepts, you'll have a livelier show. I'll have a better notion of the prospects in a couple of hours. If he does not accept you'll have a real deal, the kind we need to do but check to check in those cramped closets by thigh to thigh (sorta tell you in person what evolved from one of those early Sunday A.M. shows - he had said if you tell him it was a young man of mixed ancestry).

Now if there is anything to all that puffery, why in the world should not the movie-maker, the world-famous investigative reporter, pal of Zsa-Zsa et al, want to face down an old chicken farmer? (The line comes from a show he did 4/3, -ong John.)

With a bit of luck, I'll be able to play cassettes of what he said on that show while you and I kick it around. So, you'll have the real Frank, if not quite standing up. I have a friend who taped it and another I've given parts to dub off (both in NYC) from the notes I made while listening here. One and two sentence things.

Anyway, I suggested you tape your conversation in which you ask him to agree to be on the phone. If he agrees, he'll be live. If he does not, you can ask why. If they ask about the money, if you see it, you see in your studio. The way can't be because they don't want to call by back. First of all, it has as much right to be sold as their's. And second of all, try it. You can't get it. VHF tried all over Washington for a TV show done yesterday, and a Yale law prof wrote me that in three months he had not been able to get one. So, I can't profit. And if it sold all in print it would not profit me because enough to assure the advances were not even printed.

Anyway, I think that given a choice, people might prefer chickens farmers to chickens.

Great to hear from you. Best to Harry, all his, and everyone I'd so love to see again.

Sincerely,