

8/28/67

Dear Maggie,

Thanks for the clipping. I didn't mail the letter to answer yours. If I have heard nothing from Billien in a long time, since before I sent her PW. However, I am getting some interesting material on the Jean Valjean theory, which is how I think of her sewer bit. There is a man who has it and is in touch with me. He has sent me some absolutely fascinating pictures he just took and an official set of prints of the underground pipes for that area, before and after the plaza construction.

These pictures open up an entirely new series of grassy-knoll possibilities. One of them is that there was shooting under the picket fence rather than over it, and I have a series of photos which shows how a man could have been hidden while doing this. That back is a picture as of that time showing an aperture. There was also another and quite sheltered possibility. I hope to be able to get out there in perhaps a month. If I can I'll bring these along. While I have never spent any time on that and am not now, these are fascinating possibilities.

My source also tells me that at the time of his murder Tippit was engaged in another kind of moonlighting, that another man's wife had left her husband, that this couple and the Tippits were about to get divorced so that J.D. could marry the other man's wife, and that she then was carrying his child. Interesting?

This man is known to Penn, who he says doesn't trust him. I imagine if there is no other reason, his reactionary politics would account for it. Penn has not responded to my inquiry. He has his own troubles now.

I've had the same experience with the saudges. Available with cement. If you want to know how to use that, let me know.

Someone else told me LIFE is going after Garrison on Mafia, I believe attributing it to Turner. Possibly. I'll be disappointed if true and astounded if Billings has anything to do with it. I have no indication, expect to see Billings in two weeks. I find this association incredible, but do not find it hard to believe that he knows people who may or may not know people connected with the Mafia down there. My own stepbrother knows Marcello, but he is not himself of the Mafia (he was also Ferris's doctor, was successfully treating his alopecia, then arrests, when Ferris abandoned doctors). Interestingly enough, G. Wray Gill seems now to be helping Garrison. This does not mean the Mafia, does not mean not the Mafia. I suspect the Mafia is not above helping him to cleanse themselves of the persistent rumors of their own involvement. I think it is wrong to expect LIFE to blow the case, but as of last week I was told the editor working on the picture story would finish a special assignment by today and would be back on that story. They have some very good stuff, if they use it.

I am never in communication with Lifton unless he initiates it and you have seen those letters. When I was out there I saw him only because Bill encouraged it. I have neither interest in nor liking for him for my own reasons, not in any way relieved by yours. I tell him nothing about anything. I have believed he was in touch with Liebeler and so told him, which he denied, claiming Liebeler dislikes and distrusts him. I am not impressed with anything attributed to him and am horrified at some of the things he seems to believe, as I have from the first been (like the papier machie trees).

Follow your own instincts and judgement on your own book, about which I had written you when your note arrived. My purpose is exclusively the one expressed. I think it can be helpful to you. I have a fairly decent following who might be attracted to your work by the mention. I'd like to be able to do more of this, but there has been virtually no response, and I'm certainly not going to spend a lot of time digging up what is in too many cases unattributed feedback. This would not be true of you and Sylvia. There is an additional hazard in this, as I have just learned visavis Ray and Lidton and the Moorman picture (on which I am not at all sold). Whatever I do, regardless of motive, I fear they will misconstrue. I really have no time for such trivialities, especially when so many have opposite interests and performances.

Liebeler must have been having publishing difficulties, for I understood, I think almost a year ago, that Norton was interested in his book. Whoever does it is in for an unpleasant surprise but probably a profit from the sycophants. I sure would like to tangle with him if and when I can get out there. I think when my N.O. book is out, which should be soon (I really know nothing about its schedule for Farallex hasn't told me), the timing should be very good, especially because I really tear him in it. If it was heavily edited he will still bleed. It should still take care of him, but good.

Lidton, really, does not interest me, save as you warn. But Liebeler ~~is~~ does. Bill's tapes have been valuable this way. I am not as much informed as I'd like to be about his statements. Some day we will not.

I have just heard that my distributor has begun to get PW around in the stores. I hope that it is true. There will then be a long, hard pull that you'd better be prepared for, letting people know there is something new and important in the new book they see, not just a rehash. For this reason, several recent shows I've made reference to yours and Sylvia's. People may recall. Unless I can get to promote it I must expect it to be a loss and not accomplish what I want of it.

Best regards,