

Dear Paul, W

8/25/76

According to a call from Les Payne yesterday evening the Abby Mann operation now includes Lane, Freed et al.

Last week I heard from a good source that Lane was working, if that is the word, with the Black Caucus on King.

Simple enough: he's wrecked everyone who would listen to him on JFK so he has to turn to something else.

Freed can't raise the money for his own movie, so he's doing what he can with Mann, as I've known for a while.

They can excite anyone who does not know anything and of this I fear the Playboy plagiarisms can hurt me.

So it all goes together, like poison and Ivy.

Les and I discussed what we may do. We'll see.

I don't know what kind of person Mann is. He has not called me. He can't do any research at all without knowing of me so I presume those scavengers have picked down to the bone and have left poison.

I believe I once suggested to you that you might find an occasion to discuss this with Vane's son.

There is a limit to what I can do besides keeping the grindstone turning. However, the time is going to have to come when I make arrangements for doing something. Jim, too, is very limited in time. He lacks experience in this kind of law. We have already discussed obtaining co-counsel for some cases.

With ABC, if there is a need, I doubt there would be a problem because there is money at ABC and if they steal, with Freed and Lane involved, as I can already prove they are, I've got the records. This is something Vane really should understand. You see Freed started on his King kick with me. That fell through when he wanted me to sign a license for pie in the sky. The correspondence is extensive, including a law firm he got at one point. And I've more.

Lane is a professional plagiarist and again I've an abundance of records. I've even got the egomaniac on tape justifying stealing. He actually did it on a show I gave him before I realized how sick he is - and how crooked.

Records and track records will not be the problem if there is any thievery and with ABC's money I doubt getting a lawyer will be.

There is also another aspect for ABC: will they have what they could have, if they want a good movie. They won't.

What may be worse is what can happen to them after they have it all in the can. Lane, Freed and Mann will have no way of knowing because I'm not telling and I'm the one who has been doing it and is going to be doing it. They have been trying for months to pick it up and can't. What I've done in the past is not hard. But the present only a few people know and they won't talk to whores. I deal only with decent people and I've cut myself off from the others. Have for years. They've been trying with Les and they've been trying to pump the people I've turned over to him and he has done so remarkably well with. If it was working how do you think I'd know? Les is not only a fine human being and a first-rate investigative reporter, he is also a very, very sharp man and an honest and brave one.

I presume that success out there requires an ability to avoid scruple. Nonetheless, I'd appreciate a rundown on Mann as a person. The time may come soon when I'll need it.

There is also the question of Jim, all the unpaid work he's done, fine work, and all he is doing.

They don't know me if they think I'll not do anything and everything I can if they rip Jim off.

You've met him and you know how I feel about him.

What I've never been able to understand about Hollywood types, whether they be out there or in Chicago or New York is that they never learn how much easier and cheaper and better it is not to steal.

Meanwhile, I've been making time on the court responses. Yesterday I completed the drafts of a series of long affidavits. Until Jim gets back and has time to read them I'll not know what he plans and wants. There may not be time for what I want if it has to conform with his perfectionism. My desire is to lay it all out in the most direct and pointed confrontation under oaths, what Jim called with Rankin the Battle of the Affidavits.

Today I'll start reading and correcting them. I think it is possible I'll be able to retype them before Jim returns, depending on how long it takes for her new typewriter it really be the new one we've bought. Yesterday they brought the third, a loaner until they get the new one right. The keyboard on this one is not identical. That slows her down some.

I've no doubt about the content. Nor have I any about the importance this can have to the FOIA and any future efforts to emasculate it. The only ones of the many people involved who have even met me are Dugan and Wiseman, both of whom you've seen. Well, baby-face, tough-guy FBI Agent Wiseman has backed off. This time they filed an affidavit by one of his colleagues and tearing it up was simple. So were proving lies, irrelevancies, perjury and a lack of either first-person knowledge or the claim of it. Here the great importance of my court of appeals victory can have meaning. That court ruled that in these cases of great historical interest first-person is required if and when available.

I'm overjoyed that my analysis of the right way to deal with the Nader disaster seems to have been precisely correct. The beginning of the raw material part is done. There now remains the job of putting it all together, first in the form of an exhibit and then with an explanatory affidavit.

By the time Jim returns I'll have the equivalent of a book ready and countless appendixes available.

Here the real question is time. We don't have it.

What I'm going to do to a long string of DJ lawyers, including the head of the Office of Professional Responsibility, is not common in this history of government lawyers. What I did yesterday and the day before on five or six is all in one draft and I believe is powerful. I was able to flip into files and come out with their own records addressing even intent to violate the law, their own memos on this.

Please try to let me know the kind of person Mann ~~was~~ is and if you can, speak to Mann's son.

JMC

Best,