

Peter Skutches
Richard Gallen & Co.
260 Fifth Ave,
New York, NY 10001

7/6/93

Dear Peter,

From your 7/2, here today, we have no disagreements. There are some external problems I ask that you keep in confidence ^{rather} than with Richard on his return. I suppose much will then be stacked on his desk.

Richard is a dear, a cherished friend. I did not ask him for a contract and when he indicated he would be preparing one I told him I have no need of it. If he did not remember or did not tell you, when I told him a year ago what I would do and he indicated interest I then urged that there be something like a publisher's foreword to explain ^{why} there was less editing than there could have been: because of my age and health; because for a number of non-ego reasons I would much prefer to be alive when it appears and to be able to respond to any criticism, if any; to be available for what promotions are now within my capabilities; and because as long as I am able I want to continue to try to perfect the record for history. This plus what else could be said, for example the magnitude of my work and its scope, the unprecedented means by which I have done what I have done, etc.

All of this is true and it is also a natural promotion.

I also had in mind rushing it to the degree possible. It could have been out well before the flood of junk to commercialize and exploit the tragedy. ^{While} those who read, edit, review and report on books on this subject do not know what is real and possible and what is not, this book could have been a standard for those who review books. That I believed would make it more valuable, increase sales and benefit it if responsible reviewers and reporters compared it with the others. Despite the time that has ~~now~~ passed I believe something like it should be done. *Can be, I think*

With the passing of time ^{with} silence and then with silence in response to my inquiry I had become increasingly concerned. Several other factors figured in this. Like your being reassigned. However, I did not stop to think it all through. Then, when I did, old possible problems came to mind. On the publisher, it think it best that not be C & G.

It was months after I mentioned my book to Richard before I knew Livingstone was doing another book for C & G. He had lied to me when he phoned asking for help. He then told me that he was working on a TV documentary with someone in New York. I do not remember that he ever did tell me he was working on a book, at least not until long after I knew it. Then when he told me what his book was going to say I found it hard to believe that such a book would be published.

Richard has some but far from all of his letters. I sent him only what ~~is~~ I believed as C & G's counsel he should know. Whether or not what ^{H.L.} he wrote is in the book, and if it is he has me as part of two conspiracies, helping the one he said killed and leading that

he imagined conspired to keep him from "breaking the case wide open," as of last October.

However he may have misled others, if they are in fact misled, he is in fact rather much of a subject-matter ignoramus. For example, Kent Carroll's boast to PW that Harry knows what he talked about, witness the fact that it was he who brought the fact of JFK's adrenal deficiency to light. Were he not so ignorant of the actualities he would have known that my friend ^{Dw} John Nichols published it 25 years ago and before that the LBJ gang used it over and over again in that campaign up to and at the convention in an effort to undercut JFK's lead.

The rest of what Carroll said has me and the others "killing the truth" and accessories after the fact in the assassination. The only "killing of truth" he can be talking about is his own books, ^{and writing} and they are anything but the truth about the assassination or its investigations. If that is not laughed off the shelves C & G will be lucky.

Then there is the announced first print of 50,000+ this represents a not inconsiderable investment and forecasts a real effort to at the least recover it.

And my book, without mention of him (I have never mentioned him or his books in public or not in public for quotation) makes it clear that he doesn't know what he is talking about. I think that is understated.

So, ^{would} does not C & G have a conflict, and does not the size of the first print indicate that with the conflict my book is certain to suffer?

When I learned that C & G were going to do Harry's book I wrote Richard asking if he could not copublish with someone else in Publishers West. But I did not send it because I thought it might be misunderstood as an intrusion. I believed that Richard copublished with C & G only. I am glad this is not the case. I do not know who the other FW publishers are, but I do believe that Thunder's Mouth may also have a conflict, *Mark Lane*.

I hope Richard will make what arrangement on publishing he is going to make as soon as possible because another worry I had, believing that C & G would publish, is the missing of a natural and newsworthy promotion with regard to those Connally fragments. Once that matter came to a head, ordinarily a publisher would want something to use. ^{I plotted it with} When I heard nothing I ^{I wrote} asked for a rough rough draft of an article. I also heard nothing of that. Once I sent it, to make it easier to read without the many typos my wife retyped it, in the ^{entire} magazine would have been interested in it.

I also sent a copy to a writer friend in New Zealand. A year or more ago a weekly editor he knows asked him to ask me to do an article. I then did not, but as soon as he saw this rough draft he took it to the editor and they are going to do with after cutting it to the size of New Zealand interest by eliminating what is not.

This is the kind of thing I mean by a natural promotion, in the news.

I also misinterpreted the silence, believing that Richard copublished with C & G only.

After I wrote him a short note of inquiry I did give all of this the thought I did not give it earlier in part because of new medical problems and in part from other need for

my time. What decided me to do what I began a week ago this past Sunday was what ~~Kent~~ Carroll told Pub. Weekly Harry's book says.

I had told Richard that I did not intend, absent a need, to say anything about it and that I did not want to spend any of the little time that remains to me in such things. That was true. It also has been my policy for years, not to get involved with all the shit-slengers. Then Lifton raised his corrupt head with some of his typical nastiness. I asked ^{him} to return what Livingstone's cop Waybright stole from me and sold to Lifton, the only copy of my analysis of his hardback. When he refused I decided to replace that to the degree possible from memory and some citations from his book and his sources. *Written*

Putting all of this together and remembering that I am trying to ^{serve} history I decided to do a rough draft of what is tentatively titled Inside the JFK Assassination Industry.

The part I've largely drafted is accrediting myself, especially in the face of the existing attacks, Lifton's for example, and the coming one by the High Trash inventor.

This is another reason C & G ought not be first choice!

It is a record for history but it might be welcome after the flood of mutually-disproving ^{assassination} tripe of which I read in PW. *Not a single one attacks, not one of them.*

I've got the Lifton part done and it is absolutely devastating. ~~With~~ the interruptions I can expect this week I'll probably not finish Part 1, autobiographical but that only as an explanation of the learning experiences in jobs that are not exactly everyday and a few rather serious problems with very powerful enemies who were really determined. And I beat them. With what an education for it! *What prepared me for what I have done. It is not taught.*

Unless I'm told otherwise I'll ~~not~~ postpone the reading of Never Again until I see ~~proof~~ proofs, which I'll also have to read, so I can complete this new one.

Wrono has an epilogue and I have yet to do a ^{bi}ographical essay vice ^{bi}ography, which will be limited to my FOIA records and my previous work. ¹⁹⁶¹ Also the list of those lawsuits.

On the lengthy quotes, whichever way is faster is my preference now. I did misunderstand you on the footnote and I'll think of a formulation. ² However, I think it is also important that the reader not be under any misapprehension. In this field that would get much criticism and there are those ³ anxious to criticize and in the past ^{truth} ~~truth~~ was no impediment to them.

I have no problem with interview by phone or, as has happened, if a satellite truck comes here. I do not know the nature of the ads or the space but again, because I must be abed early, my health and age should be indicated. It may turn some off but it also might interest some and make them wonder what kind of AK is that.

I do think there is hard news in the book that can be used for legitimate attention.

I do hope that Richard finds it possible to rush this all he can and that he will consider a publisher's note of foreword along the line I've indicated to explain any lack of editing and introduce the fact that an AK, albeit a bit battlescarred, did the book. And what is not a boast because there was no alternative, without any notes or outline. Thanks and best.

Harold

Busy-on-return Richard via busy Peter,

7/7/93

When Peter's letter came yesterday I was unsteady and a bit unclear when I wrote. What caused that was no more than one trip up the cellar stairs. I had to go to the files to get the pictures the NZ paper wants for that story. After I wrote this letter I decided not to write the rest of the day. I'm sorry it is not as clear as it could be.

I append this to emphasize a point: please get your publisher as soon as you can.

With a publisher and his use of what I wrote as a magazine article and could have been shortened for newspapers there would have been an excellent promotion for Never Again. There can be other newsbreaks appropriate to the content of Never Again that can be natural news promotions for it. Making proper exploitation of them requires a publisher.

Remember, I used to be a reporter and I've a little experience in promotions.

Something is happening to us next month that can make a "feature" or "human interest" story, as they used to be called at least.

Hood College is giving Lil and me honorary degrees, to be awarded 8/22, a Sunday. How many octogenarians are awarded such degrees? And how many are in such condition that on its own the college decided I'd not be able to do the walking from building to building during the convocation ceremonies of what the awards are part and got a golf cart and a driver to carry us between the buildings? That can make a story and with a picture the caption alone could be a natural promotion for the book. 161 years en route to degrees!

And the only ones ~~you~~ to be awarded for work on the JFK assassination.

If any of the coming books on the anniversary is early and/or attracts controversy, a publisher can use that and could refer the media to an expert/arbitrator. Who would undoubtedly condemn both, a plague on both your houses.

There is no way of knowing what will work with the ~~XXX~~ media but nothing can without a publisher or, as with the New Zealand Sunday paper, anything that involves me in the media should be able to identify the publisher of the coming book.

I do not know that it will happen, but suppose that New Zealand story interests other papers in other countries? Those stories ^{should} ~~such~~ carry the publisher's name. The captions could have credited the book but there was nothing I knew that I could say. (It uses pictures from the book.) The story itself would ordinarily identify the book's publisher and if known the pub date.

These are only some of the reasons for having a publisher as soon as possible. The book is in a field of ongoing news interest and not that infrequent news developments. If there is any attention ~~to~~ ^{for} controversy over any of the coming new books it is not unlikely that some reporters would consult me. Like Lardner on the Post. I would undoubtedly cite the content of Never Again. That also would be a natural promotion for it. I have a friendly relationship with the AP reporter for this area. She wrote a story about my archive at Hood, interviewed me twice and could consult me for AP if there is controversy. May do a story about the degrees. Reasons for a publisher to be identified.

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July 2, 1993

Harold Weisberg
7627 Old Receiver Road
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Dear Harold:

Had I not been out of the office on jury duty and then returned to the press of two deadlines as well as some legal work that has been occupying most of Richard's time, I would have responded sooner to your letter of June 6 regarding the editing of Never Again.

We do, as you say, seem to be in agreement for the most part. Even in the matter of self-quotation, I'm not sure we entirely disagree. From your response, I think you may have misread my suggestion. I was not proposing that we delete the quotation and substitute a citation referring the reader to another book. I was suggesting, rather, that we set the quoted passages as text instead of as an extract (which would be blocked and set in smaller type) and insert a footnote to the effect that the information on such-and-such pages or in a particular chapter was previously published or appeared in a slightly different form in Whitewash or whatever. If you feel such passages need to be published as blocked quotation, however, we will comply.

The manuscript has been sent to the editor.

Richard would like to meet your expectations and publish the book in November, if possible. The if may be big. He is looking into the possibilities of a joint venture with Carroll & Graf and of an independent publication through Publishers Group West. The book will be done in hardcover. Some special promotion will be necessary as fall catalogs are already printed and fall lists are currently being sold. Richard thought an ad might be placed in Radio-TV Interview Report, a publication for broadcasters, if you feel up to radio interviews or call-in shows.

He should have firmer news after he returns from his vacation mid-July.

Best regards,



Peter Skutches