

8/17/74

Dear Dick,

I was in New York for three days the 11th through 13th. I phoned before leaving and on the 11th and 12th but getting no answer presume you are vacationing or taking a long weekend. I had a xerox of the transcript book (Warren) with me.

A trusted friend who, as often is the case, was unworthy of trust, leaked the document to Penthouse, which asked me to see them about their publishing it. Their offer was worse than offensive. It amount to a cheap license to suppress, the kind of thing I went through with Frame-Up. But worse in some ways, the guy they selected to head their book publishing is a loser. With a towering ego and a low sense of promotion. So, no deal.

WHITWASH IV: TOP SECRET JFK ASSASSINATION TRANSCRIPT, is camera ready and has been for several weeks awaiting completion of the index. A couple of footnotes will now need to be added. With completion of the index I'll add documents to the appendix to use the full 224 pp. It will sell for \$6.00.

Because the young lawyer who is my colleague in the suit for this transcript and in the book and I were both pressed for time we went up in advance of this meeting to do other things prior to it. We went from there to the train. So, all I had time to do was arrange for one wholesaler to stock the book when we bring it out as an "underground." It will look like WHITWASH. At the station I phoned Alan Burke, who I expect will air me on his new TV show and make a start. However, I should have thought of approaching S&S to see if they'd distribute. I'll tell you a story about this.

Had this friend not leaked to Penthouse, it had been my plan to make a proposal to Playboy Press when I could show the completed work because Penthouse is coming out with what has to be a crappy book by George O'Toole, who has something called a psychological stress evaluator by means of which he says he can tell if people are lying. He has tapes of various JFK assassination figures and says they lie. This is like proving the world is flat. However, I'd thought it might interest Playboy to have a competitive work that is solid and entirely new.... After leaving NY I remembered that S&S distributed for you at Parallax but would not touch the JFK assassination. I think after Watergate and with the documents in this work, all in facsimile and most of it, they might have a different attitude now.

When the contract for WHITWASH was broken in 1965 a friend of Alexander's sent me to Pocket Books. Alexander was not there and I saw Frakapin. He and everyone above he went for it big until it got to Shinkin. There then ensued what was probably the most pleasing publishing disappointment I ever had, real honesty and a real effort to help, volunteered. There had just been Grossman's disaster of Galeries Don't Count and the Department of Justice had the jail doors yawning. Shinkin (correctly) saw publishing WHITWASH as waving the red flag before the charging bull. His people laid it all out frankly and then tried for me on their own with other major houses, and these they approached were just as honest in their rejections. It amounted to fear.

So, do you know anyone at S&S I can approach for distribution or to whom you can speak for me? If you'd rather not I'd appreciate it if you'd send me the address so I can write (is it Leon?) Shinkin when I have a copy to send him?

My text is about 20,000 words. It is followed by facsimile reproduction of this executive session in which the old boys let their hair down on many things, enough to destroy their own integrity and their Report, beginning with how they would wipe out the "dirty rumor" that Oswald was an agent, not how they'd investigate it. On the CIA and the FBI, in Dallas' own words, it is what FW said of Frame-Up, "pure dynamite." In 1965 Ford stole this transcript, a criminal act, and used it in his S&S Portrait of the Assassin. He doctored it unconscionably, altering its meaning in the parts he used. I use the eight pages on which

he did this facing pages on which his alterations and editing are laid out. It thus also becomes a new document on our new Glorious Leader, who is anything but the man now described in such glowing headlines. As we shall learn soon enough! (Nixon picked him to give the pals no inspiration for dumping Nixon and it worked for months.) However, I do realize that with this climate, of binding rather than healing wounds, there may be apprehension on this score.

I have made printing arrangements. You may remember my artist. We have designed the cover and he will execute it soon. Printing will not take much time. We will rush as much as we can because amendment to the Freedom of Information law is pending. The Senate amended it after the decisions in my case (explicit in the debates) and that of Patsy Mink et al. Fourteen Senators sponsored. The vote was overwhelming but the DJ is naturally opposed. There is some concern that Ford may be tempted by DJ to veto. I believe that with his record on FOI public he will be less inclined and that this law is more important than ever now. The amendment is in conference. Ed Kennedy is pushing hard for it as amended. And we will give 535 freebies to the Congress, a considerable personal cost when we are borrowing to print. There will be a letter pointing out the most relevant parts. My colleague has a legal commentary on what the courts have done to the law and how the DJ corrupted both the law and the courts. With facsimile proofs.

The appendix to my text and the transcript itself, aside from this Ford material, consists of FBI and Secret Service reports once secret and largely on the phoned investigation of Oswald as a federal agent. There are also a few devastating pages of other Commission executive sessions that are appropriate. At least 90 pages are stamped TOP SECRET.

Another possibility that may not be credited easily without seeing the transcript is that I finally got it because it can be used in Nixon's justification and in the defense of his henchmen like Haldeman. Five lawyers independently agree on this possibility. Once I demanded this transcript and was refused and more after I filed suit no one dared use it without letting me have it first. Otherwise new law violation and new stinks.

As I can I'll be writing these with whom I've dealt in the past to see if they'll handle this book.

I was in the penultimate chapter of The Unimpeachment of Richard Nixon when he was forced to disclose his tape of 6/23/72. It requires no changes at all except in what I've not yet written, where I'll use it merely as confirmation of what was written. Which has much more than that tape, believe it or not. As soon as I clean up what I have to on WHITEWASH IV I'll be back on it. Then the major job of editing will begin. I wrote this under the worst of conditions and it has come to where I can't write this stuff except in the anger that needs eliminating. But it seems that there is no adrenalin without passion (that the ordinary reader loves and writes me about but editors and intellectuals detest) and that at a weary (for me) 61 and with the hours I work there needs be this adrenalin. I do believe the prospect of this approach and all its new content is good. If there were a major publisher with the interest to do the editing once I have read for complete accuracy I think he'd have the most substantial Watergate book of all. The first, by the way, to really deal with it. It already says how he remained unimpeached and gives more than enough of what he hid and why he had to that is unreported. It is a tough book that really says in time of crisis all the institutions of society fail it because it documents all the suppressions and shows by whom. With more than enough of what was suppressed. It is a book that also can influence the next presidential elections.

Best,