

11/30/77

Dear Ted,

I'm returning the four transcripts of the four Rules committee sessions on the establishing of the House assassins committee. Thanks very much also for the copy of the Snapp book. I've begun it in odd moments, from when I shave (electric razor) to when I go to the toilet to when I'm a few minutes early for supper. It is an important work and from as far as I've gone I'd say an honest one. I'd never have bought the book because of the price so I'm even more appreciative of your kindness and thoughtfulness.

Right now because of the time pressures of other work for court I've no time to read these transcripts. However, I'm certain you have done an important thing in getting them because if you had not they would be denied historians and assassination scholars.

My wife has made an extra copy for the press. This can be important in the near future if the committee's report is as you indicate, which is precisely what I told you a long time ago it would be. These transcripts will be of usefulness in a sheep-goats separation, in preserving the credibility of those who deserve to be credited.

The Downing part must be particularly crazy because his own staff would not let me have a copy of his prepared remarks.

Of the tapes you said you'd sent I'm most interested in the show in which Mark reflected his changed opinion of the committee. I think he said he was critical of them and in particular of Blakey.

When you dub that entire tap I'd appreciate it if you'd make a second dub of where he talks about the committee only. I have a special use for this and I'm not now able to make a dub as I listen to it.

There will be another couple of Anderson columns beginning perhaps before you receive this. While in general the press hews the official line it is self-destructive to take the Lane line that all reporters who do not kiss the assassins committee ass are CIA agents. Reporters are human beings and like all others include good people as well as other kinds. Some of those who do not agree with us are very fine people. Some who agree with us in secret are not so good. You really have to take each as an individual and remember that they have to hold their jobs. The publishers and editors are responsible for the press hewing the official line. Some reporters, who work for papers that have a strong position against us, have done some very good stories that do help us. One will be here with his family for dinner this coming Sunday. I will send the copies of the transcripts to ~~him~~ another reporter through him.

Several of the larger papers have gotten together and have ordered a copy of all the records the FBI is releasing. As of yesterday it was their information that the release would be next week. To illustrate the point in the paragraph above, this was from Gardner, who wanted to know if I'll be available next week so he can check with me as he goes over some FBI records. It will be impossible for the press to go over all 80,000 pages before stories are written and it is almost impossible that any reporter will be assigned to read them all. It costs too much. This means they are vulnerable to officials who will, as usual, direct their attention to what officials would like given attention. Thus Gardner's request that he be able to check with me. If you stop to think about it he is really asking if he can check the FBI's accuracy with me as well as to be able to ask if anything is new.

Regardless of what opinion of him others hold this is the right course for a good reporter who wants to be honest - to have a source he trusts on the other side. If his purpose was other than not being taken in by officials he'd not go to this trouble or take this extra time. He will have enormous time pressures when he gets those records. I hope this helps your understanding and can perhaps help you build your own relationships. Again thank

Sincerely,