

10/15/71

Dear Pearl,

Now that it is established that you are my junior and because it seems that we will, from time to time be in touch, I take the liberty of avoiding the excessively formal so that in all ways we can be less formal. My friends call me by my first name or as Hal, the younger one, who are in the majority, the shorter form. Most of those with whom we today are close are young enough to be our children, in one case, of a brilliant collaborator, he could be my grandson. We are childless.

Possible political developments for which I must prepare make my time more limited at this moment.

Do not let my hunch interfere with your plans, but it is that you should do the book first and sell a condensation or a series of articles. However, if your proposed collaborator has connections, his judgement may be much better. The story may kill the book. Unless the book follows such later, it will kill the collateral or subsidiary rights which, in the U.S. can be more profitable than the book. But I know a couple of reporters connected with syndicates, if in time this can help. They are not executives.

The Times clipping is enclosed. No rush on its return. I have a close friend in a distant city to whom I've written about the (thanks) Excelsior pieces.

I'm glad you appreciate my directness. To be otherwise is not to be a friend. Don't take my word and opinions without question, but I'll be truthful and my judgements are usually with solid substantiation if I offer them. My experience with various people at Ramparts (in the past) and with Turner in particular were the basis of what I said. Turner is a professional incompetent in the field in which I work and a blatant plagiarist, alas. Ramparts has done much good, but they have always been simultaneously dishonest.

By the way, I can't speak for him, but Vedric Selfrage, if you do not know him, is one to whom you might well speak. I am full of respect for him and he is a man of courage and principle--and a fine writer. I have never met him and it has been some years since I have heard from him. His beautiful (in every way) daughter did try to help me some years ago. My last address for him is Apartado 630, Cuernavaca Morelos, Phone Cuernavaca 2-41-14. He has a good understanding of the U.S. market.

The safest approach ~~with~~ with Garrison is to begin with disbelief. On Boddy: there never was any official emissary, and what Mark Lane used was ruinous in many ways, unoriginal, and the crassest commercialization to promote his (very bad) Citizen's Dissent. I think the family knew and knows nothing, including Bobby. The best that can be said for that to which I think you allude, the alleged Guantanamo incident, is that it is conjecture.

Your comment on Velasquez reminds me of another possibility: could you do this non-fiction better and faster in the form of a novel?

I am aware of the connubial considerations of the Mexican penal system. The tragic part is that you unintentionally put it so accurately, "(In Mexico, a man can have a woman for a weekend if he's well behaved...)". But speaking of the woman, I take another liberty: if you do not have a tape recorder, I would encourage you to consider using one for interviews, preferable the cassette type, which is more convenient. If you are unfamiliar with them, the two problems are not real problems. One is that infrequently people are afraid to talk on the record, and you can usually estimate that accurately in advance, and the other is that they sometimes ham it up when they see the mike. But it makes a better record, and memory is, sadly, so fragile! Later, things to which we paid no or scant attention of what we sometimes forget can be of great value, as we learn more and understand better.

No, you are not confusing us on this. I find it fascinating. I do think it has

real possibilities as pretended fiction. You can say the same things and work in what is so commercial, the sex and and the characterizations you otherwise might not dare. (What a job you could do on Hizer with help I can supply in either form!)

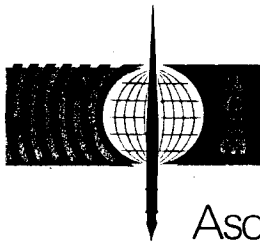
Speaking of the King actor, remember there can be some hazard to you and those you might enlost in anything having to do with any political assassination. I have also heard enough of the Mexican police, and I know how they work with the FBI. Be careful. You can't do enough good to justify any risk. But expand this to include any scuttlebutt about Oswald, if you hear any or if you know reporters you can trust who may have heard things that would interest me. Again, caution. No risk at all, please.

Is stuffed cabbage a Mexican dish? I come from Eastern European ancestry, and I love it, but I didn't know it is part of the Latin cuisine, and I have know some very fine Latin-American cooks.

Yes, my focus remains on the assassinations. I sug est you not make a restrictive interpretation of this, because it is not on staple crimes but in the broader, political context, one of the things that makes for unacceptability in the market-place and that also distinguishes me from almost all the others writing with seriousness in the field. If you'd like copies of the books I publish myself (I had to invent the "underground" book to get out at all) I can send you damaged but readable copies, which could provide the basis for asking questions about Oswald.

If I forget to apologize for my typing, I never have time to reread my letters, and I started typing hunt-and-peck in high school. So, I do apologize.

Best regards,



HOTEL CONTINENTAL HILTON.
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Asociación de Corresponsales Extranjeros en México

Oct. 12, 1971

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Dear Mr. Weisberg,

Once again, thanks for taking the time to write. Enclosing the series on the Excelsior editor's Chinese trip. As far as I know not available in English but I'm sure you'll find someone to translate. It's nearly a second language in some areas of the U. S. Or, next time you're in Wash. an embassy employee could find the time, or, perhaps a student.

Back to my favorite subject, Kaplan. What I've finally decided to do is this: Do a magazine piece with an AP writer here who has had access to files not open to the public, giving all of the original testimony - and even that is conflicting! Nevertheless, it sheds more light on many legal or illegal maneuverings. And between what he has dug up and what I have, we, together, might have more combined info on the case than anyone else. All we're waiting for is for him to complete his AP assignment which should be out on the wires soon and which will not reveal too much or anything at all of what I have as our agreement was for him not to see my files until his copy is released. I think his story should serve our ultimate purpose of getting a book publisher, so we can investigate further. My friend is honorable and has a detective's mind and is more objective than I. So with the combination of different facts and different approaches, we should stir up enough conjecture to last until the end of the century at least - or, until you find a means to keep the public conjecturing over what of course is a much more important story.

You are right in assuming what I tell you is in confidence. I hope the above might be the means by which we might meet and discuss our cases in person.

Your impression on Nizer quite accurate, not on my judgment but by a lady who happens to have been a very close friend of Mildred, his wife, at the same time she was a very close friend of Joel Kaplan's mother when all lived in Manhattan.

2.

In analyzing the personality of Joel Kaplan, whom I visited about a dozen times, I would say he fits your description of the self-destructive type - in fact he admitted being in rebellion against a militant father with whom he had no communication whatsoever. He is also bitter over the fact his father left his estate in charge of the supposed villain uncle, A. J., head of the Kaplan fund. Reckless, daring, pirate-like, intellectual and seemingly outwardly timid - are part of the enigmatic traits of Joel's personality. *

As for Ramparts, the only work I ever did for them was to help investigate the Kaplan case. I left Mexico three years ago before the Olympics and severed relations with them at the same time as they called and asked me to look for a negative story on how Mexico had no housing for those expecting to come. Although I do believe in necessary illumination I do not believe in negative muckraking. The purpose obviously is quite different. The last I heard from Bill Turner was the reply he wrote to my letter which asked what happened at the N. O. trial. I've told you about it. But thanks for telling me about his limitations. Actually, he didn't go into much detail in his letter, it was more like assuaging my curiosity. He also mentioned he was having a difficult time freelancing so I don't know if he still is with Ramparts or not. In fact almost all of the people I knew on Ramparts are no longer with it. It now comes out of Berkeley, Cal., and I think Peter Collier is editor. He worked on the Kaplan case and came to visit here several years ago. He's quite bright, not at all a rabble-rousing type and an English literature professor. It might be that Ramparts has taken another slant under his direction, I really don't know. I haven't seen a copy in several years. Have you?

By the way, why was Bobby Kennedy satisfied with the whitewash of the assassination? Do you think the family knew what really happened? Or was Garrison right in this point at least, that Bobby unwittingly contributed to the assassination of his brother? Something about a boomerang reaction based on a suggestion of his that John followed?

I appreciate all your advice more than you can imagine. But if you knew that even Velasquez has sent up smoke screens you'd understand better why I need someone like the AP fellow to keep the script steady. And thanks for offering the NY Times clipping with the family quotes, I certainly can use it.

* More clearly - Joel's outer personality suggests a slight, meek, undemanding scapegoat. His brilliance and his past performances in looked-for dangerous situations reveal the inner Joel - talk about a whitewash - his whole demeanor seems to be one - or else he could be a schizo -

3.

Yes, I've talked with Joel's Mexican wife several times. She's a whore ~~xxxx~~ he had to "marry" (He's still married to a woman in N.Y.) - because "every human privilege was denied me". (In Mexico, a man may have a woman for a weekend if he's well-behaved. In the case of Joel he had to pay for everything. Having a "wife" simplified matters. She doesn't expect to see Joel again even though she has a child of his.)

I do have several pictures, of Joel with Velasquez, of the dead man and the body that doesn't match his when alive, of a woman who came to Mexico and identified herself as the dead man's wife by means of a picture of herself and three children holding a picture of "daddy", when in fact she had only married him a few months before his murder.

I guess I'm only confusing you with bits of information, but I'm trying to give you the answers to your very kind suggestions.

I haven't been able to check anything on the King matter, but will keep trying.

I envy you having so much time to write, even though you seem so buried in it. But actually, I'm a divorced mother of two adolescents and therefore ~~xxxxxxx~~ have a divided dedication. Which might explain, when I think of it, more accurately, why I need a co-author! I'm either stuffing cabbage or stuffing paper into the typewriter! And sometimes one is interrupted by the other.

Again, I cannot thank you enough for taking so much time from your work - which, by the way, is still mainly on the assassination? And thanks too, for your invitations to see your files and to visit. One can always hope that both will be possible.

Best,

Pearl Gonzalez

