

2/20/69

Dear Steve,

There is little point in a correspondence of trivialities. I have asked certain things of you. You have declined them for reasons you consider sufficient, and I will let it rest at that, save for ~~what~~ what you seem not to have understood: if anything eventuates. It is then I will have something to say. There is a crime of silence, when it is unmanly to be silent. The chances of what I anticipated coming to pass in that form now seem slight. In other forms, perhaps much better. In any event, you will have ~~played~~ played your role, in several parts, and will have your own responsibilities to bear. Right now you are ~~hiding~~ hiding behind Jim's ~~skirt~~ skirts, a slight shift from his apronstrings. Your affair.

But if anything does come to pass, it will then become my affair.

You have made the sycophantic mistake of equating all of what so many of have worked so hard for with Jim. You have made the error of assuming him to be right, and not just most of the time but all of it. You have, in fact, made yourself his dogrobber. That's not the same thing as being his friend. Certain things are required of friends neither required ~~of~~ delivered by servants .

My interest is the protection of all of us. That includes Jim. It is not long since I saved him from the fruit of his own folly and abysmally poor judgement. If he is neither gracious nor grateful about it, he also is not happy, for it makes his concept of self more uncomfortable. It increases his lack of liking for me, which is not abnormal, especially for him. However, the fact is that I did save him, at least for the time being, and in doing this I have saved all of us and - I have had nothing to say in public. Unless it becomes necessary, I will not. If it becomes necessary, I most assuredly will, believe me. My desire is not to hurt him, not to embarrass him. But he is at once proud and capable of consummate stupidities, which makes the job of protecting him from himself more difficult. Do you think it is anything more than his fear of personal ~~of~~ embarrassment that impelled him to ask you to remain silent? How stupid that is! I know more than anyone could want if my purpose were to hurt or embarrass him. He does only what he has from the first, he cripples himself.

Do you realize that with all his publicity, influence, access to people and money, all the power of his office, unless he can convict Shaw and make the conviction stick, which I regard as unlikely even though I do and have believed Shaw is Bertrand, he has contributed not a single thing except error and irresponsibility to what is known about JFK's murder? Do you realize that much of the attention he has gotten would otherwise have gone to others of us, who would have had knowledge to offer? He has been an effective propogandist, but he has carried no fact to the people and has developed none, not himself and not with all the effort you people out there put it for him, at the cost of other work you could have done. Well, I think he also realizes it, and I think it makes him uncomfortable.

One of his too-many great blunders was L'Affair Hepburn. It hurts him, yet he paid no attention when he was cautioned and later gave the crap its new name. I started warning last February, when it was obvious to me there was no possibility of KGB association with him, no matter how indirect, nor with any of us on other than an entirely singular basis. No one would listen. You were all geniuses, all subject to flattery. When I saw the text of part 3 ~~in~~ (was it June?) I wrote him pointedly this could not be for real.

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No intelligent child can read that guck and credit it, but all of you did, and now you are embarrassed. Your embarrassment will be greater if it makes us more trouble, and I will see to it. The better course is that I have chosen, to prepare myself to defend. However, I have nothing personal in defending the most colossal stupidities of the decade and everything personal to lose by it. So, I certainly will not go to a lot of trouble to protect you fools from yourselves. The hell with it. Keep your petty secrets and stew in their juices. There is much too much I can do that serves a constructive purpose. In the time ~~xx~~ I have wasted trying to help him ~~wik~~ who would not be helped, I ~~ik~~ could have written one of the books I plan, and with what it has cost me, personally, I could have come close to publishing it. That is a cost I will not continue to waste. With but a fraction of the effort and money you children playing men's game pissed away, there could have been real work done in New Orleans. The basis is laid, and I laid it. Much would likely have been of value right now, but that great genius was playing dollhouse with the assassination, with little girls who shave helping. I do not like this at all, and I acknowledge it makes me bitter. It has not, however, influenced what I do and have done. If you do not know it, eventually you will.

I hope this gives you a little better understanding, whether or not you like it, whether or not you believe it. If you have a genuine feeling for Jim, you had better come to understand that all that protects him and has thus far, aside from what others have done, is the most fantastic luck in the world. It is so exceptional, it might even hold out. The odds are against it. Those with a genuine feeling had better try more tangible defenses. Those with any independence, any self-respect at all, had best assume the responsibilities and attitudes of men, to think and act like men. A certain amount of your nut-country gibberish feeds back to me. I do not care, but I wonder that some of you are allowed out alone at night!

Please understand I am not isolating you, not saying these things relate to you and no other. Our postscript may be legitimate. But it is not because you are young and inexperienced that you have done damage (and again I speak not of you alone). Two others in your same age group are among the most solid and dependable workers we have. They are never heard of, but they ~~did do~~ excellent work, have made legitimate accomplishments, have the most mature judgement. But if you do, genuinely, care, which is what you say, you must express your concern ~~k~~ with something more than a lapping tongue. Being Jim's handmaiden may get you a little transitory publicity. It will do no more for you, and it does nothing for anyone or anything else. If you do not do your own thinking, your own understanding, you are but the empty shell of a man. He may prefer such around him, but when the time comes he will find he has been surrounded by ghosts.

One other thing: if at any time you change your mind and decide to tell me what you know about the people, etc., in this operation, if you exaggerate, distort, lie, twist, interpret or in any slight degree depart from what is absolute fact, then I will haunt you even more, for there is only one thing that can do us any good, and that is strictly impersonal fact, with neither self-justification nor embellishment. Remember this well, for that may be an operation other than you conceive it.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg

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UNIVERSAL CITY STUDIOS, INC. AN MCA INC. COMPANY

February 18, 1969

Dear Harold,

I received your reply today. Realizing how tired you must have been after the hearing in Washington it is understandable that you could not say much. I know that my letter must have seemed to be an unending defense of my actions and also that you have already defended me but I was not trying to excuse myself rather to explain some things which you asked me to do. I will not belabor the points anymore.

I was sincere when I told you that I had been advised not to answer your request for detailed info. on the Farewell America "bit" but I must say your letter brought me closer to wanting to tell you what I can. I will, at my soonest opportunity, talk to Jim about sending you some of the information which I turned over to the office upon my return. I have spoken with him recently and his opinion of me was not as low as yours, however, I believe that some of your words are not meant as insults as much as they are a way of elucidating certain criticisms. I hope that is true.

Since you have written a book on the Attny. General's secret autopsy report review and the other materials it would be a waste of time, in my opinion, to attempt to review all of that for an "exercise" in analysis. There must be a more constructive project to work on. I will seek that. My father very kindly offered his time in examining the work but without a detailed knowledge of other aspects of the case he would not be able to realize some of the discrepancies which are not strictly medical (like the extra weight of CE 399 added by multiple fragments being present in the neck wound.) I would like to know if you think it important to fully investigate the background of Jim Braden, aka. Eugene Hale Brading and if you do or not could you avail me of any information which you have gathered yourself.

It seems that Jim Rose had made a rather cursory examination of some information about him but I am not only double checking that but developing some more info. on a lead which I discovered in the newspapers.

Well, I shall close this note, since I meant only to tell you that I would try to send you the material you specifically requested about the F.A. bit. Since you do not plan to remain silent you should have all the facts if you are to speak about it. Then, I would hope you do not retain your anger as you did in your letter.



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One thing puzzles me. When you speak of how we (the young students of the case) have damaged ~~you~~ the critics with our inexperienced efforts- and you are correct that our mistakes have been ~~so~~ costly - what did you expect of us? If our efforts were sincere, they were inspired by you in the first place. If I had not read your books, and those of other critics, I would not have become aware of the fraud. If I were older and more set in some sort of profession then I might have been a lazy, irresponsible citizen like the rest of them. But after being exposed to your work I had to get involved. I had to do something because not only was I outraged by the corrupt and criminal manner in which my government was misrepresenting me and all others but I cared a great deal ~~how~~ about what was lost in Dallas. I had been originally inspired to "give a damn" by President Kennedy in the first place. The meaning that that inspiration gave me was taken away. Then the bitterness and loss suffered by us all was given new hope to replace it by the fight that you and the other critics and Jim Garrison waged. To watch it without joining that fight would be to let others do the work that I should have been doing - if in any small way to contribute. Now that I have tried I truly regret having damaged your progress but I would like to continue, having learned certain lessons about the ~~responsibility~~ responsibility, to help.

Very Sincerely yours,



Steve Jaffe