

1/9/66

Dear Penn,

Maybe my 5 a.m. letters are shorter. I lay abed this morning, unable to sleep over the Capitol thing. I have to go to Washington early. I've launched what may be a frontal attack on Capitol and Schiller. I've challenged a Washington radio station, both on their own program and last night in writing, to let me stop the record each time there is a lie, distortion, half-truth, etc., and point it out. If there is no response from them maybe I'll ask Jack McKinney the same thing. I also challenged the DC station to produce Liebeler to face me. I've demanded the return of every copy of whatever version of my interview and challenged Capitol to withdraw the record, if they have even a shred of integrity left. They will not, of course.

It is my recollection that when Schiller phoned me from Texas he said he'd spent the day with you, what kind of a wonderful guy you are, etc. Please, if you can, tell me what did happen, to both you and Shirley Martin. I have little concern for what he did to Lane and have my own ways of answering it, I think rather effectively without compromise with my own conscience, on two basic points: literary scavenging (where I tee off on Connally, Ford, all the former President's writing staff, and wind up with Manchester. I'll have to add Nizer) and Lane as the only lawyer true to our great traditions when Oswald was without a legal voice raised in his defense save Lane's.

From the one brief hearing of the record, perhaps only one side, I've decided to say nothing about any of the rest of us save you and Shirley, to just point out the assorted dishonesties. Please tell me what you can of how the interviews with you and Shirley went. As the Castor thing unfolds (and it is) there may be a very good thing on Shirley. How much of your time did he take. What did he say, indicate, promise. What did he say of the doctrine of the record? Did he give you the bit he gave me, a historic document for colleges and universities, etc.

Liebeler is, I think, again a key figure in the False Oswald story. He made the same point with Michael Paine over the October Cuban meeting he did with Walker. Warren Reynolds told him of Latin types running away after he was shot. I had forgotten the date of the shooting, which makes it quite significant if, as Reynolds says, he was publicly credited with having followed the Tippit killer for so long a time and presumably in the public mind was credited with a close view, after Oswald was dead. His identification of Oswald as the Tippit killer would have hurt no one, provided no reason for attacking him. Only a contrary identification would have prompted this.

I am little concerned with what Schiller can do to me. He can take what I said even further out of context, perhaps embarrassing me. But I think there are a few things I can do in return. He told people in New York of his great respect for me and my work, etc., and I've written them asking them to commit it to paper. I think I may have taped his phone call, simply because I didn't know who it was and it came from Dallas. If it gets real nasty, I won't worry about me too much.

Late last night we got indirect word from Dell. They've bid a million dollars for the Manchester book, but they think that if they get it they'll make more on WHITEWASH. And they say they want WHITEWASH II (which they had for two months and then didn't want). We do not get an accounting from them until April, but if what I've heard is correct, in the past month there have been more copies of WHITEWASH sold than of any other book on the subject. They reprinted twice before they placed the first ad. Four Italian publishers are bidding on II. Sage is doing the chapter of I "The False Oswald" and wants me to do a critique of Manchester-LOOK. Soon we'll be out of debt and have a few bucks of our own. Orders for III are regular, large and encouraging. One day there were 25!

I'm presuming you've heard the Capitol record. My copy hasn't arrived. But if you haven't, they were vile to you and Shirley, very rough on Mark, dismissed Sylvia's index as polemical, and said of me that I'm a walking encyclopedia or a buff or both. My mind was on something else when I heard that part. I've no doubt hurt them seriously in Washington, but that is not enough. I've got to get to do it in New York, hence I'd like to hear from you as soon as you can write. Chins up!