

10/21/66

Dear Bill,

This is as far as I got last night when something very good happened. Let us take it as an augury. When you called I was doing some work that didn't require close attention and I had tuned in WCAU in Philadelphia where, as I told you, Jack McKinney has been wonderful on this subject, giving both sides and in abundance. The time he has devoted to it is in excess of what Vince told you. He has had me alone on for ~~22~~ 12 hours and with Vince and Curtus Crawford for at least eight. I thought he might air my challenge to Hudge Fein. After we talked, the tiny transistor set was still going and he was again on the Warren Report (the first damned thing I'm going to do when we pay the printer in full is get a decent radio, one with at least 15 transistors and also getting FM, so I can hear good music when I work and get programs like this when I want them. The little thing was fading and I could only hear part of it). McKinney has been so wonderful his audience is actually researching the subject. One young man is actually studying WHITEWASH. He has checked it against the original sources and she called a half-dozen typographical errors to my attention! A woman last night had checked some of my quotes and misunderstood the original material. While she and Jack were talking about this, I got the right page of WHITEWASH and the right testimony - that of J. Edgar Hoover. By coincidence, when I had spoken to his producer two days ago I had suggested that Jack could get an interesting fillip by calling me, whatever the hour (he's on until 2 a.m.) whenever a question comes up. He was telling this woman that he had made such an arrangement when I called, and that announcement, the word from his producer that I was on the phone, was a nice twist. They patched me and the woman called both in on a conference phone and I had the next hours. I think it was excellent, and I got a lot of good stuff in. I also praised the woman for what she was doing and expressed the hope all Americans would do it - with me and with the Commission. From the time we -you and I- finished talking until midnight I had a very good and a very large audience that I know extends from below Florida to the Arctic and to west of the Mississippi. So I went to bed feeling good, wide awake, and thought of the situation that worries you. Wide awake and alert, as these broadcasts leave me, I got some ideas. One of them is enclosed. It is a statement that, if you desire, you

can release out there. Perhaps you can get someone like Mort Sahl interested in using it.

Ray played me part of the beginning of one of his Lane programs. If Sahl is interested and will do this, I'd be just as happy if he played down the hero bit. Lane is less than that, and so am I. Maybe it builds audience interest, but I have found fact does a pretty good job this way, too, and I sincerely believe we want and need neither heroes nor villains, only the truth. If Sahl is interested, he can phone me once a week and each time I'll give him a question for Liebeler to answer. If you check these references in WHITEWASH you'll find a good beginning, and WHITEWASH II should end his book unless he wants to write, without student help, "Mis Culpa".

If I know my wonderful wife, your last night's phone call will give her more energy and she'll type WHITEWASH II faster. Her fatigue is not entirely of physical origin. It is in large part due to the strains and stresses of 30 years with me, and that, alas, was not easy on her. I really believe WHITEWASH II is the answer to Liebeler and many, many others. It is rich, more shocking than WHITEWASH, and puts the entire investigation into perspective with punch and fact. Its fact is sensational. Without Liebeler's lusty participation there could have been no whitewash, and this includes on the question of whether there was any kind of clandestine connection between Oswald and the government (please let this go no farther than Maggie).

So it is not alone because I know this is the way it must be that I encourage you to find a patience one should never want to have on such a subject. I think the immediate problem, like most if not all the others, will soon solve itself. Meanwhile please get to me every word Liebeler says, everything his apologists say, every tout from Lomax. I may see and understand something not immediately apparent to you, and I am familiar with his record. If you have any bright kid out there interested in doing a little easy work, please get him to scan the record and make me a list of all the witnesses Liebeler examined. I will never be able to remember them all, but I may well recall on the spur of the moment what happened - or didn't that should have - in these interrogations.

With each passing day I become more convinced of the viability of my approach. Stick to the record. And eventually I'll make Liebeler stick to it, the one thing he cannot and will try not to do. He cannot survive it.

Before I forget, I should have included it in the statement, but try and not let Liebeler forget and try and let your people, especially Sahl and any other TV or newspaper person who might be at all fair, know that Liebeler ~~refused~~ failed to appear for the taping of the coming Metromedia special. Here he would have had to face, if not Lane, then me. The Commission and the lawyers were invited to attend and participate. Liebeler picks those he'll meet face to face, and pick his own ground. This also shows he is not very devoted to his cause, for he ~~is~~ put his own defense, which is, as he should never be allowed to forget, involved with that of the Commission and its Report, in the hands of others to whom he gave no help.

I also am more than ever convinced that the proper focus is on the Report, not the Commission and its members.

Another before I forget: when is that TV show on which we can see what you look like?

We^{all} want this to wash out clean. I think most of us want it to come out fairly and honorably. This means these people must understand. In turn, this means time, and in turn, patience. With the play Lane alone got in LA, it is unfair to expect the media to subject themselves to legitimate criticism by not giving the other side its day. It is also in the interest of the ultimate truth, and I suggest that it will also arm us. Wait until you see what I have done with Specter. On this, I'd like to ask a favor of you. I have no time for TV and have given up newspapers. My wife clips from them what she thinks will interest me and I've put them away for the future. When there is something like Specter on Today (they will not have me, told people in New York they'll have me on any other subject but this) could you tape it at 1 7/8 or 3 3/4 so I can hear it? ^{Jⁿ August call} Thus I can know about it and perhaps be in an eventual position to use it. But to return to the original subject of this paragraph, from the not easy point of view of fairness, what is wrong with Liebeler having equal

opportunity, the equivalent of what Lane got. This reminds me of something. Neither Lane, nor I nor anyone else should ever be regarded as anything like an "official spokesman" for those of us who say the Report is wrong. We are all independent, all have our own views, and none of us should want to be hung with any who err. I try not to err, but I know all of us, no matter how hard we try, can make mistakes. The unfortunate thing is that some of us have been ill informed and have made serious mistakes and others have been careless and self-seeking and made silly ones. Some day there will be a reckoning. Everybody is taping everything. Lane has been taped for years. The publishers have been taping me and I hear my own lines coming back at me. This is so obvious that others are calling it to my attention. So I, too, speak only for myself, not for you or anyone else. This is necessary if the injustice is to be corrected, as we want. If I make a mistake, don't you sink with me.

Many things are working our way. I told you the probabilities with the Manchester book. There are other things, some small, some possibly major. I have two major newspapers re-examining their positions. Tonight I'm having a Mencken-type meeting with reporters from the morning and evening Baltimore Sun, at their request. On the fourth there will at least be the opportunity for a major part of the Washington press to hear what I have to say after the private screening of the Metromedia special. The Washington Metromedia people fell in with this suggestion and are even providing food and drink for it. That program will help, too, and the 12th is not far away. Every days feels like the only important one now, but they are all important and all come in due time.

The thing that more than any other opened this up for us, aside from the residual suspicions of the people, is the abuse that was heaped upon me. This first happened on the "Long John" Knebel show in NYC, where I cut my clear-channel eye teeth. What I improvised then was fine, especially for me. I feel this thing so deeply that I always approach it almost timidly. The sooner some one takes after me the sooner I get going. Knebel and his two jackals, Buckley's O'Dougherty and Victor Lasky, abused me personally. I gave them little resistance until I had the audience sympathy. The, bing! And I did it by sticking to the record and trying to hold them to it. This attracted the attention that got me on the Burke show, where my opposition was not the radical right

but the supposedly responsible people. Those terrible lawyers made me into Galahad and I got a really vast and concentrated audience. This show, I believe, had more to do with the opening of the electronic media than anything else, for it proved audience interest, which is what stations and sponsors want, and it showed that at least some of us who insist wrong is not right are responsible and have the interest of the country at heart. I really think that more than the superb public-relations done by Holt this opened up TV for Lane. I laid the basis of credibility for him, as for Epstein, and in the right place, where all the people who make the decision are and either saw and heard for themselves or heard about it. I cannot begin to tell you what that show really did (outside Metromedia, where the results are obvious). One example is in a letter I got this week. One bookstore sold 300 copies of WHITEWASH in a single day. Epstein had a page 1 review in Book Week, by Goodwin, no less, and I outsold him right in NYC, as elsewhere. That week, according to the wholesalers, WHITEWASH was the best seller in New York with most of the stores never having heard of it and not knowing where to get it.

So, let them abuse us. Especially let Liebelar abuse me. I know I'm really not the white knight, but if it helps the people understand the truth, let some dope like Lasky or Liebelar make me into one.

Do not despair. We cannot win every round. If we win too many, we'll get overconfident. I've been plugging Penn in every way I can. Right now he had a very merchantable product (and he is a very decent guy, the only one of my "competition" for whom I have a genuine regard). With his stuff on the mysterious deaths and mine from the record we have our best weapons. He is slow and drawly and I'm staccato when we are on the air or on camera, which makes a good pair. He also is not in this for what he can get out of it. What he says is quite comprehensible. It is, indeed, very strange that these people all died or ~~were~~ were assaulted, and people can easily understand that it is unnatural. After WHITEWASH II is out there is the possibility of a really sensation^{al}/joint appearance of the two of us if he gets me what I've asked of him, and in a letter I got from L.A. yesterday she promises a picture would be in the mail the

day after she wrote that one. With the anonymous help of a person whose identity I think I know I may have come up with a very important missing link. If it pans out, it will be a real shocker. This is pure Perry Mason, for which I wish I had one of those real tiny tape recorders and an automatic subminiature camera, like an automatic Minox if there is such a thing. I will not and we'll do it without such devices.

Not to toy with you, for you will know when I've got a copy of the ms ^Tto send you, but Hoover invented a false "False Oswald" and booby-trapped the Commission with him. PLEASE say nothing of this, but I've got it very solid, over Hoover's signature.

On the ms, as soon as I get back a couple of chapters I asked my artist to read, I'll have a complete carbon. I'll send this to you if I have it before the Xeroxed copies arrive. It is not necessary for you to Xerox your own copy, I thought it would speed things up and give Maggie a chance to read it while you were. As soon as you have read it, make ^{kind} any suggestions you can (including specific ones), you can return it for it is the only extra copy I have and I have arranged for the ~~xxx~~ managing editor of a major newspaper to read it. If he and that paper then do nothing, which is the probability, they will know its contents and this does have an effect. I found this to be the case with WHITEWASH. Even though the introduction of Inquest to Viking was on a personal lever (not Jones Harris but Arnold Krakower to Tom Guingberg) it helped for Aaron Asher, the editor, to have read and wanted Viking to do WHITEWASH, for he knew the truth and knew there was little to worry about in that thin gruel of Epstein's.

Other things also are going to help us. Lane's book will be in paperback (Fawcett) in early January. This will materially increase its circulation. There is a chance for mine, too, and at a buck rather than five and with general availability it can also do more good.

On Xeroxing, if you can get access to an 814, you can use a larger sheet of paper and copy 2 pages for the $3\frac{1}{2}$ price of one, which would make the cost not much more than \$10. My wife is calling me to breakfast, and then back to the ms until the mail (and I hope orders). Chins up, good people. Truth is a shield. It will take time, but we are going to do this thing!

Best to you all, Harold