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10/20/66

Dear Bill (and Maggie) (and I hope by now Lillian),

Enclosed is something I would not ordinarily send, a copy of a letter to Ray that is largely self-explanatory. I may be wrong in this, and if he asks your opinion and it is contrary to mine, tear me up. If it is not, I hope you can speak frankly to him. I know he is determined to make no changes. I think it would then be better to drop the whole thing. On the other hand, he really can do something worthwhile with this, even more than I was certain of when he and I spoke and when I wrote, for I have just had a long-distance call from New York reporting what I had already been told but with an addition. The Manchester book does say that only two bullets were fired. It also says that the Warren Commission also said that only two bullets were fired. The man who phoned me is in contact with Harper's, where he apparently has friends. I may hear from them tomorrow. Now if the Manchester book comes out right after the first of the year with a big stink about bullets, and it will be a God-awful stink if it does, about which I've spoken to Ray briefly and haven't time to go into detail here, anything having to do with bullets will be like a license to print money.

Without help, I'm confident I'll ruin the Manchester book. I've been in touch with Look and Harper's both in the past, offered them proofs contrary to Manchester's public statements and strongly represented that the appearance of an unofficial white-wash would be an additional national disgrace of incalculable magnitude. I've been working on this privately for a year in various ways. I also sent Look the stuff you saw, so they know its content, too.

There is the further hazard, returning to Ray, that with so little to add to what is already public knowledge or with the story incomplete, including his failure to use what is related and is already public knowledge, I fear it may injure his reputation. I may be wrong, but Popkin's reputation has not been improved by his book. Ray is too nice a guy for people to be saying such things about him when he is one of the people of whom this could never be true.

After getting a copy of the Saturday Review last night I wrote an immediate and indignant reply to Wein, politely calling him a liar and a coward, proving he misquoted me, asking why they took the liberty of editing my cover, and challenging him to a debate in their pages or elsewhere. Completely independently, Jack McKinney, whose radio program on WCAU is one of the best talk shows and whose clear channel gives him a vast audience that Vince and I (last week Sylvia, and she did well, I'm told) have already educated on this subject, was outraged at the SR piece. He sounded off last night, saying especially nice things about Sauvage, Vince and me, and almost inviting the judge to appear. They phoned me today and I asked them to challenge the judge to meet me in debate on their kilocycles. If he does, fine. If he does not, fine. In the latter event, after enough time passes for the SR to reply, I'll ask Jack to have me back. He is a very decent guy, and I have in the past set his phors a to jumping and his audience to letter-writing, so he may give me the opportunity to reply to the judge if the judge doesn't show. Maybe we can get a dialogue going. Unless Wein is an awful liar, bigger than even his story shows, he hasn't read my book. That will be wonderful if he shows up.

Metromedia is making a big thing of the panel show, to be aired in LA and I suppose November 12, if no announcement has been made. It is 8-11 here, 9-12 in NY. They are taking paid ads in the papers using extensive spots on their stations, and working on all the possible tie-ins. I asked them (DC) to have a press preview and if desired for me to be questioned thereafter. They have agreed. It is to be 11/4, 7:30 pm, with RSVP invitations to about 100, who will each be given a copy of WHITE WASH.

This will cost me money, but I think it is worth it. Metromedia will provide refreshments. They are even inviting reporters from Baltimore. The station manager took the time to look at the first hour and told me yesterday it is very impressive. I've suggested further that they offer the members of the Commission an entirely private review. Whether they'll do this, I do not know.

This Manchester thing may be real big. He just cannot be right. Did you see the Siegenthaler letter in Newsweek (I haven't, for I have no time to read and still no money for subscriptions) but I've had it read to me by phone. One way or another WHITEWASH II will be available first, and between the two, I think, aside from the vast resources of Harper's, the job will be done. I've had private correspondence with the Kennedy family which I shall not refer to, but going back to last summer I've been warning Bobby's office of the potential for ruin in it for him.

My best to you all.

Sincerely,