

7/2/87

Dear Friends,

As a sign of the continuing change our way and the futility of the videocassettes, I have just had a phone call from Phil Willis. He has read, understood and liked WHITEWASH II. I had told Dick Billings about his unpublished pictures. Billings has seen or spoken to him. LIFE is paying Willis's fare to NY and putting him up for two days while they study his films. I gave him a pep talk on trying to get all the others who might have pictures to come forward and offer them for sale to the highest bidder. I have renewed my offer to go over all of them free, tell them what I see, if anything, and preserve their property rights. Willis is so impressed with what I have done he wanted me to go to New York with him, but I cannot. I think this may be the sign of a real change, for it comes after the shooting of the biggest bombardment.

I have also suggested to him that if he and LIFE do not make an immediate deal, he allow them to make copies for study subject to his property rights. I think he will. He complains only about Lane of us and specifies the unkept promises and money he claims Mark owes him. He says magnification of 5 shows a man and a rifle, as I suggested.

He also says he is flabbergasted that his wife was not called as a witness because she was looking right at the President when she saw his wife's head snap backward. Now he knows why his wife was not called. He says LIFE now knows who the "obushka lady" is. I hope so. He doesn't know the umbrella man but will study the LIFE Kourmier slides for us on this. I have told him that if anyone down there wants help and doesn't want to call me to get hold of Penn, who will help and will not steal.

He and BOA have a deal pending. Willis wants SIC on the theory that his pictures are most important. They are still talking Schultz. I have given him a pretty strong lecture on what might have value and what is just human interest.

His word for Liebler's interest is "indifferent".

I suspect his other friends were taken too late to have real value but apparently Billings thinks otherwise. As a historical record, they cannot be because he was there for only an hour.

He is so friendly he asked for autographed copies of my books, even asking that the names of his daughters be included, and I'll mail them tomorrow.

Colonel Gaston and his wife will visit us again this weekend. They phoned when I was in NYC Thursday or Friday. I'm looking forward to it.

Willis also says my books are still hard to get in Dallas. He said all the dealers told his wife there were not but that she persevered until finally she did get one. This is called modern mass distribution at low cost.

Excuse the typos. No time.

Best,