

6/12/72

Dear Jerry,

I giving me Sylvia's piece in The Texas Observer yesterday evening, you said, "I know you won't like this." You were correct, based on my general attitude, which I've expressed often enough, and based on my own refusal to engage in such meaningless scribbling except for pay. A writer writes for a living and to live what he might otherwise prefer not to do, does do. However, I also have other objections after reading it in haste last night, a few I didn't expect to have. I have never regarded the deliberate and unauthorized and uncredited use of the work of others in a sense calculated to represent it as the work of the person whose name appears with the writing as ethically or morally commendable. No matter how often it is repeated, the measure by which it is judged does not change. Nor is it influenced by the pose or reputation of the one who does it. In addition, there are a few factual errors, one a bit unkind to Lattimer, over which I shed no tears, and the other another non-accident of a kind Sylvia has repeated in dealing with who did what when. Cyril did not apply to Marshall for access to the autopsy film in 1966. I know as does Sylvia that I was the first, the morning it was in the papers that this stuff had been deposited in the Archives, when I appeared in Bahmer's office and went thru the formalities. Moreover, as late as after Graham's story on the contract appeared, Cyril not only did not have a copy but was so ignorant of how to get things he didn't even know he could get this from the Archives by writing them. He didn't even write the lines for a copy of Graham's story. He asked me to get that for him (with three secretaries of his own yet!). I bought him a copy of the original, for which I await repayment (which I note only because of some of his less warranted recent self-justifications) and, to the best of my knowledge, even his thanks. It is I who sent him the copy of the panel report, from New Orleans the Monday after its Thursday night release, and he didn't understand that, so I have to explain that to the this eminence of forensic pathology. I made a tape for an entirely different reason, to keep a record of the Halleck proceedings, so you can hear it. Thus I tell you that entirely aside from my basic reasons for opposing all such ~~feetings~~ ~~feetings~~ into windstorm (and you know the last attracted a hurricane), which can have predictable consequences (witness the accuracy of my forecast the last time), I also tell you with bluntness that despite his highest qualifications in his field, and this is sincere, he is as good as the best, I oppose his seeing this stuff because he just doesn't know anything of his own knowledge about the related facts of the case and has never taken the time to learn. So, I fear the consequences on this basis alone. There are the others of which you know. But I am beginning to wonder why Sylvia, with her rather better than average record of accuracy, has this lingering penchant for non-accidental misdating. I haven't the prerequisites for plumbing the human mind, haven't tried it with Dirhan or Bremer, so I won't with others, but in this case some reasons are fairly obvious, as the most casual examination of the new writings, as on those of the past, shows with consistency. I'll be content if there is no followup as the last attracted. MW