

Dear Mr. Stamm,

2/28/74

When a man writes with arrogance and self-righteousness it is difficult if not impossible for me at least to respond in a manner to which he is not likely to take offense. And if he has a little knowledge he is more likely to be unaware of the knowledge he lacks. When his correspondent has been electing to ignore existing questions of judgement that linger from the past, especially judgements about people and their motives and their records, indeed, their integrity and the solidity of their minds, the problem of not giving offense increases.

So let us begin by asking you to go back several years and ask yourself whether there may be in my mind what I might find reasonable basis for questioning your associations, those you have trusted whether or not you now do, and what I may know about such people that you should know. And if this is relieved in any way if you lack that knowledge, that basis for judgement.

Or the position you then took.

So, man who is God because he says he is God and knows all because it is congenial for you to wrap himself in this sanctimony, who hedges me with questions that intrude upon what might be real work because from the profundity of his ignorance he wills into the pretense of reality his ambition for his retracing of the past, instead of pelting me with all these chickenshit questions and pious pretensions hidden in them, why don't you ask yourself a few questions and answering them.

I would prefer that you agree that we are in the equivalent of a battle and not playing toy soldiers and to understand that what you have said of your plans is to me toy soldiers. Except that you may play the game with those of whom I know what you do not and that based on the knowledge you either lack or ignore, in the interest of success must refuse to accept your ignorance as superior to my certain knowledge based on a long record.

You should also understand that when I have a choice between your theorizing, which is a creation for your own purposes, whether or not you recognize this, and the realities which I have lived with for so long and so intimately, there is no way your theorizing or obscene lectures can or will influence me.

With the enormity of the work that can be done, why must you restrict the genius to which you pretend and the wisdom accumulated in a long lifetime to work that has been done?

With this great talent the representation of which exudes from your every page, why cannot you do your bit in another area? Is it that there are none that I have not plumbed?

When it has to be apparent that with a manuscript of more than a third of a million words I have to have done a considerable amount of work and from this work and the work with which you are familiar I tell you that what you crave is but a fraction of what I have gathered and put together and that it all requires context for real meaning to those who have to be reached and influenced - and that any piecemeal use can be destructive - why do you blandly ignore this and lecture me from this mount of your unequalled wisdom?

Why do you persist in this with all that there is to be done instead of doing some of the much that I have not addressed?

Why do you persist in the notion that I am not trying to get this work printed? And if there is any chance it can be, why do you persist in burglarizing it for the benefit of a few of those who need no informing at the jeopardy of what this entire work might accomplish?

(For your information, without checking the files, there are at least a half-dozen avenues I am currently exploring plus two universities of which I made mention. While I do not deceive myself into believing success is just around the next corner, I do try and I could try more if the self-righteous would be content to contemplate their own navels without intruding upon mine. I am to hear from one of these efforts today. I expect a negative, but I do try and I don't complete 600 page manuscripts as an ego trip, just to have something on file. So, it is not impossible that the entire work can appear and not at all impossible that it can have some impact if the greedy and self-important will leave it alone and stop kidding themselves about what they are really up to.)

Why do you now ask yourself if it is at all possible that were some of the rather large contents to be disclosed prematurely and particularly in some minor details it could not be counterproductive, might not turn other things off and might not reduce efforts

at suppressing that which those who do battle rather than pretend they are warriors are battling over right now? You are out of it, man. Why don't you begin by asking yourself if you have any right in a battle, or if your mere presence can interfere with it? Remember those civilians clogging the roads in World War II and what they accomplished militarily for their enemies?

Neither I nor the corporal's guard of those who are doing not just philosophizing can spare or can justify the time to tell all we are doing or all we know to those who sit at the fireside and tell themselves how important they are or all the good they can do with their unique wisdom shared with a few of their cronies who also soak in the warmth when it is bitter and cold where the battle wages. Why do you now look into yourself and what you might be doing instead of all this hogwash about your wisdom and your purity and the ~~virtue~~ nobility with which you assure you will chew the digested cud?

Why do you assume that in my scale of values with my work I have to have any confidence in your editing? What reason have I to assume that you will not undertake to change the doctrine of that which is uncongenial to you or make foolishness of what you may have written. Do you think I have had no such experiences, and with this work in particular?

Assume as I do that any good mind offers the possibility of increasing clarity and offering other benefits, there are other things entirely outside your self-assumed omniscience. First the number of those none of whom can have factual knowledge inferior to yours who have read and made suggestions, including those whose knowledge has to be infinitely superior and who have done considerable original work, not merely what lashes them to the Commission's printed self-justifications. They are quite a few and they run the gamut from medical people to lawyers. So where the hell do you get off casting yourself in this role?

Then how dare you evaluate for me how I will spend my time? First I'd have to go over the editing and then I'd have to accept 100% of it blindly. If I disagree, what am I then to do? Engaged in lengthy explanations with God who sits on the mount so far from me and so high above? And I to teach him what he does not know, as I have had to undertake in the past with others who have similar lofty concepts of themselves and their unique genius and their understanding so greater than any other mortal could have?

So I have all this time to invest and what it can lead to. Then I have to do the same thing with the typing, for it is my hope and plan to print this as I have the other books. I'll have to go over every single word with care. If I find any typos and their type face is other than I have, what then?

The index is completed. Am I to cause my wife to re-index because you have this soaring concept of yourself and what you can do?

Do you have the remotest notion of what I can do in less time than you propose wasting for me? I could, for one example, complete the book Agent Oswald and have time left over. I could prepare a couple of more freedom of information lawsuits and file them.

What reason is there for anyone other than you to have any disposition to believe you can add anything of worth? Or if you can, anything that is worth what I could do with the time it would require?

In short, how about a little humility and self analysis and a few less self-serving lectures, pretenses and self-deceptions.

The question in my mind has nothing to do with your intentions as you see them, honesty as you conceive honesty. It has to do with what the best you offer can cost me or the work in which we all have some if differing interests. Frankly I see no benefit for the work or do or what I am willing to believe you seek in farting around to indulge you. Nor do I see any possibility of anything but indulgence in your proposals.

Now if I ignore you I am some kind of bastard. If I speak to you honestly I am at least a bastard, arrogant, self-important and an entire ~~catalogue~~ catalogue of evil things not because you are in any position to evaluate but because if I am not you have to face yourself and the hidden you persist in hiding from yourself with this nobility you pour on me.

The childish literary devices you employ may please you but they address nothing and they do not give me any reason to hold your judgement in higher esteem. I have NOT

called you "abysmally ignorant," I have NOT suggested that you are a "scheming knave" and all the other demeaning drivel you have on paper. It becomes neither a good mind nor seven decades. Whether you would take my labor from me ought not be in question because you are quite explicit in saying you will do it by duplicating it when no purpose except theft is in prospect. Except, of course, that which you simply will not face, the probability of hurting me overall by any use of it.

You follow this that would offend a self-respecting barnyard with a gross and deliberate misrepresentation about editing. You are steaming yourself up into some Olympian stance but you address nothing. The facts are as I state them and it is by no means simply because as you misrepresent them "your 600-page manuscript is typed[sic!!]"

"Would you then consider editorial review of your manuscript?" Come off it man. Doctors, lawyers, classicists, authentic scholars of several fields and those I regard as having best best knowledge of the mix facts of the case have already done it, where the hell do you get off pretending otherwise? (I could include historians, plural, a physicist, those who deal professionally with the workings of the mind and if it were worth the time I'm sure more, but your apparent self-concept is such that all those are nothing compared to your and your firm latch on the past. And face this, too, man, in this field, not in yours, you are of the very dim past. Others have been doing hard, costly and difficult work while you have been kidding yourself.

Have you any idea how much I have researched and have ready to write? Don't accept my representation of this. But if you are man enough to face what the hell you are into, what you are interfering with, ask young Howard Roffman, who is one of those who have and have used free access to my files and who know how much I have ready to write in final form if the self-important will end their interference with it because they think so highly of themselves.

So you are "enlisted in the struggle to lay bare the truth." hear, hear! A truly great man. He says so himself. Sumner ~~switzer~~ soldier who has yet to see gore or feel real pain. Well, if you are, go fight your own battles and stay out of those being fought where you can only hurt, not help.

I need no representations from you, who have only hope and theory and self-service as a means of tolling me the present mood. If this book were printed now I have about 500 orders waiting for it. Of all those who have written I am alone in seeing to it that his work is still available for those who seek information. I have a very tangible way of measuring interest and I doubt you do. Again, come off it man. You are incredibly arrogant for a man who I am certain would want to be this least if you could escape his own self concept and self importance.

Ready you say? You arrange for printing and you see how long it takes you to get a bound copy! You know absolutely nothing about the things about which you invent and pontificate.

But do, pray, tell me where that great boon, "an article based on the book which would appear over your signature (oh pure, unself could that you are!)" could appear and how much good it would do? THAT is what it takes to "whet interest?" Where were you when I was bleeding to "whet interest" in early 1966 and thereafter? What one appearance did you arrange when I was all alone and the book was out and there was interest to be "whetted?" If you think some putka article in some minor journal is going to make a success of a book, well...you have said much of yourself, your judgment and how practical you are.

I tell you all over again first that I am not going to indulge your childish or genile curiosity about the death certificate(s), that I am not going to tell you the contexts they require or anything else about the long years of labor invested in them or what they prove and what the package can do. If you are going to be a damned crook and glorify thievery as you clearly do everything you say, there simply is nothing I can do to prevent it. But if you are the man you pretend to be and if you intend no more than circulation of your great wisdom among a few friends, then at some point you are going to have to confront your arrogance, your refusal to consider that I might indeed know what I am saying and what your lust can do to what you pretend you so long for. May I also suggest that if there can be any question in your mind when I make such representations, on this basis alone you ought be examining into yourself. You have not into the possibilities.

What have you ever done that is worth a shit in this endeavor to which you say you hold desparate allegiance? What are you really talking about, in real terms, when you ramble on about what you can do for the cause? Inform a few of the already informed?

How do you know that Burkley ~~XXXXXXXX~~ had what you call a "role in the Kennedy assassination?" Is this a sample of the kind of editing that would improve my already edited work?

What I gave in New Orleans that was used there is in the transcript. All the great contribution there added was a single name, Kenney. Because Oser is a good lawyer and a competent cross examiner, this might give you what your self-estée, will not let you accept, a measure of the amount and success of the work I had by then done. It also tells you that where there is reasonable prospect of letting other have it I do let them have it. I see no such prospect with you nor have you undertaken to even suggest it exists.

Yes, what was put into evidence in the New Orleans trial is public. It was well reported in the papers. Now, pray, do you propose to advance that without robbing me and endangering what my completed work can accomplish?

I'm sorry I can't help you with a transcript and assure you it is not worth buying. But if you have that kind of money to invest, I suggest there are better investments available, if they are less of an ego trip.

I will not attempt letters that are less admonitory because they are the only kind you justify. If you can't put yourself and your overweening ambition and your ego into some kind of perspective, there is no way of communicating. You are right because you say you are right and because you want to be right and all else is unworthy.

I don't think you are at all uncomfortable because of my conditions and if you were it would neither relieve them nor make me feel less uncomfortable. Sophistries like this are no credit to you and they have bite in your own partisan mind only.

Regardless of what we have in common, as you put it, you have yet to suggest that when I have a choice between doing some new and possibly constructive work and indulging you I should gratify this overblown sense of impirtance you have instead of doing real work. Like, for one of countless example, filing another suit against suppression so all those who like you sit back uninvolved can benefit from it.

I am not in this for "an abiding interest", not for wealthy and fame, neither of which have been apparent in a decade. I am trying to accomplish something tangible. To a degree of which you appear to have no awareness I have. And all the time the self-important waste is that much time taken from what might, just might, serve some more worthwhile purpose than "interest" or curiosity or whatever you chose to style your project and yourself.

I have taken this time for several reasons. I do want you to be aware that regardless of what you have in mind of tell yourself you have ~~lost~~ that you are lost, that it has all past you by, and that if you are genuine you can hurt not help by what you are up to. I also want that you now be one of those who have cause to feel pain if you also do this. But above all I want us to succeed, not keep fooling ourselves with soothing fictions and indle intellectual notions, the fairies and needles stuff that, with the extremists and irresponsibles who have gotten so much attention, have ruined what could have been done and with it destroyed all credibility the only places it counts.

Please try to understand what any reasonable man who has had any experience in life and is 70 ought not have to be persuaded, that there really is much you neither know nor have any way of knowing and you do need some perspective on yourself, one of the reasons I have been blunt. Not, whether you believe it or not, to hurt you. To keep you from hurting yourself and what you say you would like to come to pass.

But I simply can't keep on taking this kind of time. I can't keep you from stealing what I have done and misusing it and taking the edge off a large work or giving it to others who just may not be precisely the kinds of people you conceived (and could I be specific, but I will not because you are entired to your own opinion of those with whom you elect association) and have a record of persistent torture and misuse. There is nothing I can do to prevent any of this.

And if you are the kind of man who, knowing that I have completed a work of over a third of a million words and lack only the means of printing it, would do naything to jeopardize the work of one man alone, you are impervious to any moral or ethical argument.