

6/9/71

Dear Hal,

I've had working company, which took some time, as has Lil's accident. Shortly I'll awaken her for the trip to DC to see an orthopaedist. Considering everything, she seems to be doing okay. We'll know later. Probably much therapy.

However, I've kept working. Drafts of two long chapters of AGENT OSWALD are en route to PH and JNS, I've a third one awaiting retyping, and I've begun another. Meanwhile, I've also done a bit of other thinking.

Given the combination of the taboo and a non-performing publisher (everyone else thinks they have abdicated or sold out, chiefly the latter), making something of FRAME-UP is close to impossible. But this does not tell me I must not do what I can. The enclosed carbon reflects an attempt to break through via feedback. It can do no good in England, if it succeeds, for there is no single copy of the book there, not even my agent having gotten one. Only that which BBC flew across the ocean.

The close to total silence in the press and the nature of the reviewers' gangup shows, I think, that everything is even more uptight than on JFK. Blacks in several walks of life were about to turn on, then didn't. Media people promised things in a few cases and did nix. I have to ask myself why and I have no answers.

I also know that this means the book will be disappearing from the stores, has already from displays where the subject or my rep caused them to be made.

Your silence I can attribute to your preoccupations with other things, like work, getting settled in a new place, etc. But it would be good to know it is not because of reluctance or opposition you have met. There are too many things that are not what I would have expected. Harv, for example, has not even acknowledged getting a copy of the book. The publishers say they sent those I asked be sent, but in no case did anyone of those I have considered my friends let me know, so I do not even know if the books were sent out. I did speak to Owen Spann's producer and he said they'd be back. That was well over a month ago. I did write Eason several times, and several times I left phone messages. No response from Jim, which is perhaps a bigger personal disappointment than his refusal to do a show. I have to consider it as a refusal, and his silence is really perplexing. Has success changed Jim Eason? That much?

You see, if with all the other too-many worries I am to do anything with this, I must know the score. That there has been no single thing in SF is to me incredible, given the past. And it is entirely inconsistent with the reaction I've had the few places I've been and done. Example: last night I was to have taped 8 minutes with Hilly Rose, who I never did before. He used to be in SF but is at KABC. So, we did better than twice that because he got interested. He then asked if I'd do an hour if he could get an okay. That, apparently, is exceptional for them. Barry Farber, the "liberal", the man who as finked out on every assassination airing he has ever done, wound up endorsing me and my work, the unheard of. The young fellow who did me in Washington I had to discourage from more, because I know his station longer than he does, and he'd get fired, as another did. Where it is station policy at WMCA not to air the same guest twice within 3 months, I did two shows for one guy the same day, one live and one for the can. At WOR, I was actually aired on back-to-back shows, exceptional, really unheard of. And I repeated one three weeks later. Other things, too. So, it is not reaction to me or the subject where I'm aired. And, I know it need not be any single thing. But what it is where it would be good to know, so I ask the score in SF. If you've not been able to do anything, I can understand that, but if you've been turned down, I want to know...Other reactions are pluses. We did a small mailing on our own. Ther % response was by far the best we've ever had. So, as a sample reading, it is inconsistent with media response. Even the Army has the book on its current recommended list, but silence from all the old friends? Best, Hal

6/3/61

Dear Hal,

With some found time and some lost time, while the coffee is perking I'll update you on the NYTimes, in the event it makes any difference to whatever you may be able to attempt out there.

The time I found is not having to go to Wilmington for a hearing tomorrow. It has the same cause as the last, I'd fell down the other night and had a knee the size of a football, but purple. She is quite lucky. X-rays show no damage. At the hospital they had anticipated it would cost her kneecap, that it would have smashed that into pieces. The doctor couldn't believe he couldn't find even a crack.

As she can be a pest when she has a headache, when she has something really wrong, she is the world's best patient. So, she has thus far been content to stay abed with her leg raised on cushions and packed in ice. She slept well last night, fitfully the night before, and dozed much of yesterday, so I think the indications are good. The doctor's opinion is that she may walk when the swelling is down. (Today she'll be imagining that), and that it will probably be stiff for about 10 weeks. I'm to check with him by phone tomorrow. So, I've had to postpone a hearing in a suit I've filed to collect what the most accessible wholesaler owes me. And, the hearing on my suit for the pictures of the clothing is set for the 15th, which it looks like I'll be bale to make. Much preparation, though, for the papers I filed are extensive and the government's (invalid) arguments are tricky.

Also, the brother of the man in the Miller column, to whom I'd sent a copy, informs me he expects it is close to the truth, whatever his opinion may be worth.

Jerry phoned day before yesterday to say that he'd spoken again to the editor of the Sunday Book Review. That estimable gentleman explained that the reason they printed Geoffrey Wolff's letter rather than mine or the many others of protest they'd gotten is because his was set in type! Whata confession! Wolff's happens to be false, and I've sent the proof. He also said he'd answered my first letter, of more than a month ago, but it hasn't reached me, and by snailpouch it should have in that time. And, he is going to do a page on the letters. I think we all understand that this can mean, with proper editing and selecting, another axe. They'll not print any of mine unedited, but perhaps one or more of the underground papers will. If we can get them out. But, the NYT has gotten some pretty classy flak. I've heard of some of it. And I've done something I've never done before, I've asked a lawyer to explore the possibility they have met the "malice" requirement of modern libel law interpretation. With their past, it occurs to me they may have accomodated. This is their heaviest and nastiest gangup on any assassination writing. I think it gives me a fair estimate of the book. If I failed to send them sooner, I'm enclosing copies of the Publishers' Weekly and Saturday Review reviews. And Jerry is distributing copies of my letter where I've not been able to. This will include your/my silent friends, Eason and Spann.

There is what I have sized upon as a Ray of financial hope for the future. I've supplied a friend with a major publishing house with what I think is a beautiful live story, interOracial and wartime. From my description he went for it. But it is real, not fiction, and I've taped five hours of the first-person account of the woman. He had a chance to begin listening to them this week. His secretary, a very average persona and typical of the mass audience, was utterly and totally fascinated and captivated. She couldn't work for the rest of the day. She had to hear all. So, she listened with the earphone while he worked, then took the tapes home. He has listened to about a third and agrees with my estimate. His girl friend is a novelist, and she has heard enough to want to be the writer. He thinks it is not impossible his people will go for a package on it. He agrees with me it can make a movie. Wish we could know soon! I've the two longest chapters to send him as samples of AGENT OSWALD as soon as 'll can assembled the second. It's typed.

5/30/71

Dear Hal and Js,

I anticipate that what is now assuming the character of a NYTimes campaign against me, probably not as personal as against FRAME-UP, will not without effort facilitate your p.r. efforts on my behalf. However, with Kaplan at Stanford and his USIA effort, there is a local angle and the basis of the entire attack against me is fraudulent and the grossest error. My enclosed letter to Leonard is not at all inclusive. I restricted it to this length on the theory that this is about as long as the underground papers have any chance of using. I also assume that especially with the clear history with and before Kaplan, was with Epstein's attacks on me (entirely unrelated to his poor job vs Garrison), there is no chance the Times will use anything. They a case against Kaplan when they elected these Wolff lies.

Unfortunately, we lack facilities and funds, for I think a suit against the Times in that jurisdiction might reach a more receptive audience because Kaplan is local and because of his official propagandizing in the Angela Davis case. But among the impossibilities this would mean, even if a lawyer like Bob Truehaft could be interested, is the cost of my cross-country travel.

Malice, the current libel requirement (and I suppose damages are separate), can be met in this case, I think.

I expect no help, not even hand-holding, from the publishers.

If Jim Eason can sit still and silent with this, it will be one of my larger disappointments, and I have an extensive inventory.

Soon I'll be known as the country's most litigious layman-lawyer. I have the Baltimore Federal attorney due here Wednesday on my old damage suit against the government. Thursday I go to Wilmington for a hearing on defendant's motion to dismiss based on a contrived allegation of non-compliance with procedures (I did, as the court personnel acknowledged). This will be Friday a.m., after which I'll return. Then the big one for the moment, my argument in court and so very alone in my suit for the clothing pictures, 6/15, with what I assume will be ample DJ preparation. It is on their motion to dismiss. The record is already longer than a long book, and I'll have to familiarize myself with that again, and the regulations, etc. And see if there is anything I can do to press perjury charges I've already filed as part of this action. I've not pressed for hearing, as I could have beginning 2/16, out of consideration of the large volume of papers I gave the judge and not to annoy him. Also in the hope that given time the DJ would find rope. To this moment they haven't. Were I a lawyer, I'd be without doubt of the outcome. And, with all the other things, this is rough on my nerves. I don't know when this will reach you, but aside from Jim, Owen Spann always treated me well. See if you can get past his producer. Maybe Harv will help. Lee Rashall would have, I'm sure, but he has been sick. Was last time I tried to phone him, maybe six weeks ago. To this moment not one of those I've long considered close friends on the west coast has aired a thing about this book, which is, I think a reflection of the Nixon-Agnew-Mitchell-Kleinendienst changes. Repression. Fear. Same here. Aside from one show to Texas by phone and a Pacifica taping, I've had attention in New York only.

I expect to have copies for both of you. One is to be copied for PH and sent later. If you know any of the Stanford students, where there seems to be ferment, I'd like to hear from them, especially if they have a student station, as many schools do. I think a friend in NYC may approach Liberation News, possibly the Freep, which has always boycotted me, never paid for the books they bought, and refused to answer dunning letters. I sure get it from both ends!

Thanks for trvix. Best to all,