

New address: Rt. 7, Frederick, Md. :: 501/475-8186

February 24, 1968

Mr. Steve Kane
Mr. Hal Ewretz
The Joe Pyne Show
KTTV, Los Angeles
California

Dear Steve and Hal,

As Brutus knew, it is not difficult for the trusted to use the knife. And as I have so often heard, it is difficult for a whore to become an "honest woman".

It is because I trusted both of you that I was seized by my sense of outrage that so inhibited me. Hal is the man who told me a year ago that he left production of the show because he could no longer stomach a career of demeaning people under circumstances that rendered them close to defenseless. And Steve is the man who phoned me to say that at least there were being changes made to make the show more responsible, to ask my assistance in this. So you can be genuinely proud of your accomplishment, Steve, I want you to know that I did increase my indebtedness in an effort to help you and I had tried to locate for you some of the kinds of guests you said you wanted. As you know, I had developed some new, quite visual evidence, and I had come all across the country saving it for you.

In our country, we are now half way between Germany 1933 and Orwell 1984. You have each made your contribution toward keeping us there. Unless I am to assume you are without principle or decency - and can I possibly do that? - I assume this was your purpose. So, be proud; you succeeded, in your small way. You have converted the press as you represent the press into an agency of government. This, of course, is the traditional function in our country, is it not? This was the intent of the founding fathers, this the dedication of Zenger, the glory of Jefferson. If you have forgotten your Jefferson, I can supply a few quotes. Or is Jefferson "subversive" to you, is the Constitution, freedom from government by the press?

The best that I can say for Butler is that he is a sick man. The alternative is that he is an agent of the government. When Steve asked me to debate him, knowing I would be without sleep the night before, I agreed, believing, naively, that it would be a debate, that he was a man whose word I could take. There is much I know about Butler and the function of the group that is his multiticket. It is not inconceivable that a man with a genuine interest in his country would have wanted the airing of a genuine dialogue on the man who runs the misnamed Information Council of the Americas and its antecedents, of the most extreme of the radical right with which it is affiliated, of its seeming involvement in the New Orleans part of the story of the assassination, not the least of which was its assistance to Oswald - and Butler's, personally - in helping him establish an intelligence "cover".

Butler's INCA seems to have derived from the earlier "Friends Of Democratic Cuba" (Did you ever know that Batista was "democratic". You do now.) While I was with you, although I didn't then know it, Garrison was preparing a subpoena for Allen Dulles. One of the specifications in it has to do with this group. You will find the document he cited on pages 101-2 of Oswald In New Orleans. It may strike you, in the light of your recent performance, as less than strange that the representative of the Friends of Democratic Cuba was attempting to buy trucks in the name of Oswald at a time when Lee Harvey Oswald was in Russia and when several others of that name were in the employ of the same coffee company which employed him when he eventually got to New Orleans. But you may be interested in what I have been told during my investigation of this FBI report.

Joseph Moore is one of three aliases of a man who is now a captain in Special Forces in Vietnam under one of these aliases, having, after he left New Orleans, been involved in the Dominican incident.

So, you can see how entirely detached Butler really is.

After he left your hallowed hall he went to Washington to "testify" before a radical-right "Communist" trial. You will find a half-column story on this in the New Orleans States-Item of February 21. It begins this way; "The assassination of John F. Kennedy was pinpointed by student of agitation and propaganda (some student!) as one of the underlying causes of the urban riots of recent years." So, you can see that Butler shuns commercialization of the assassination. You might also be interested in knowing that one of the judges is Herman Fortell-Vila. If that worthy's gludatory contribution to truth in the story of how our President was murdered, I refer you to page 144 of Oswald In New Orleans, where you will see his total fabrication of a non-existent Castro speech, of his invention of the \$6b1e that Oswald had been to Cuba, as detailed by the FBI you seem to have the quaint notion I never believe.

You are in good company, aren't you?

Just before your show, according to what I learned in Los Angeles but made no effort to confirm personally, Butler was engaged in his own special kind of "anti-Communism" (it is a career with him). A new group of "activists" is being formed there, to take the story of the murder of the President to the streets. Do you think that is where it belongs? They call themselves the "Kennedy Assassination Truth Committee". They wrote me on the letterhead of the Los Angeles Theater Arts Committee. I have since had two letters from people whose names are on that letterhead assuring me that the use of it and their names was entirely improper. The first meeting of this group was described to me as "unruly", and I am told that Butler was recognized there. He did not identify himself. I am also told he attended the second meeting, ~~but~~ offered himself to be a member of the executive committee. I have been further told that this group is led by extremists of the left. Had I at one time believed it to be the proper approach, I might have checked this information out when I was in California.

No doubt by coincidence, there was a recent column by one Paul Scott indicating that the House Unamerican Committee and the Senate Internal Security Committee were leaking information about me. From that column, this "information" is precisely that your "guest" tried to use. Because you made no effort to learn from me whether it was true or false -and I do know how your show is prepared, do I not- is it unreasonable to presume you believed it without checking it personally. Would you risk the reputation of the man who employs you, subject him to a libel suit and confront your distributor with the same problem if you were not confident your "information" was not libellous? I have less difficulty believing you would credit an official source than assuming you would take Butler's word after spending five minutes with him.

After all these years, memory may be fallible. However, it is my recollection that one of the lies Butler used was never published. So you will have no doubt in your own mind, I want you to know that when I warned Lyne he was about to air an open libel, for I could see what Butler had in his hand, Butler switched immediately to another slander that he never got a chance to finish.

Unless we are to assume that there was official dishonesty in these recent efforts to damage me, we must assume that official minds, despite the perpetuation of official files, also lose clarity with the passage of years. So, perhaps Butler, or whoever directed him to you, failed to tell you that the State Department acknowledged its error and apologized - and that the lawyer who represented me now sits on the Supreme Court. Or that the agent of the House Unamerican Committee was indicted, pled guilty, and got two years - and that, despite the most stalwart official efforts, including pressure on a district attorney who^{is} appointment as judge was held up - the grand jury that indicted him refused to indict me.

So, maybe there are things about government and its agents you may not have known from the contact you may have with such agents. But please believe me, there are times when those with a genuine interest in freedom and democracy must oppose this kind of government and these kinds of agents.

In any event, you can now, perhaps, better understand what I meant when I warned you against libel. There remains a question about whether it exists. This was my purpose in asking for the tape you promised to send but haven't. Now I know that the reason it hasn't reached me is not because it is impossible, for the tape was being edited in Hartweg several days ago. I remind you that you promised me the unedited tape and it has not yet arrived.

So, be proud of what you have done, what you have made yourselves part of, how well you have served your country, and, if quiet, of your own expressions of your own dedications to decency and freedom as so clearly represented in what you have done.

Accept my assurance that you are now, in your own (small) ways, now part of the history of your country, and your great love and dedication will be recorded - if no where else, in a book I will eventually publish. It is entitled, "Letters To Finks". I will know where to find you, and I will send you copies. You will be in fitting and exalted company.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg