

later 4/27/71

Dear Js,

I've read the enclosure on New York magazine. If it is a suggestion that I should try to do a piece for them, that will be taken care of in two ways: a mutual friend is to speak to one of those named in the story. This was set up six weeks ago, when they were both in New York, both spending much time away from there. The other is by my sending my publishers the clipping. Were I to make a direct approach, it could never work after what Felker printed by Schiller and Lewis, without checking and knowing it to be libellous, when he was at the Trib.

Those geniuses never tried for any minor shows, undoubtedly really believing me to be nuts when I told it to them as it is. So, predictably, they not only got turned down by all the major shows, but they made no approach to the smaller ones. All to date they have had nothing to do with. Likewise, they were so certain that Life and Look would be fighting Playboy for the serial rights, they did nothing else on subsidiary rights, where they might have succeeded had they started with the bigger ones earlier and learned it was as ~~they~~ I had told them. So, considering subsidiary rights synonymous with promos, they did nothing about promos except to fly one of the partners on what amounts to vacations out of the scant ad/promo budget, leaving so little they apparently can't pay my "advance".

Thus I can't hold forth any serious hope they will do anything, but I will send it to them. They are actually insulting to those who tried to help, those who have done what has been done, to the point where even the dedication of true friends to me cannot long survive it. I left behind five shows I was to do on my return. All required at least a week of scheduling, that is, a week's notice minimum. We knew three weeks ago. If they have one date made, they haven't told me. A young friend, who phoned today, will try and pick up the pieces for me. He also arranged one show I hadn't, and that is scheduled. It will be like it used to be out there, when Hal, the world's best booking agent, with my encouragement, had me going day and night. That is an early-morning show, and the night before I do one to Texas by phone until 1 a.m., maybe 2.

I've been thinking, when my anger and nerves would let me, and there is a pixie notion forming in my sneaky mind. If what Bud has done blows what I was working on, I think I'll do the bromo-seltzer book next. I first considered it and wrote one on him where there was a chance Mark would cause a mistrial in the Shaw case. I next considered that with Garrison about to blow us out of the water, I might do "The Mardi Gras Solution to the Political Assassinations". Believe me, I could! And having just gotten word that he does not want me in N.O. (which may be an interpretation, not a quote), I'm no less tempted.

Such a work, especially if edited by one with a frothy touch, would be, believe me, solid in fact and could have a beneficial effect. We could clean this mess up and eliminate (save for the even-possible recruits) those who are so ruinous. I think it has commercial potential. I'd have to abbreviate what I did on Mark, make room for a few others besides Big Jim (and not forget the syncophants), expose Thompson (and with him Geis), Flammonde, etc. And it could close on a hopeful note, that there are serious people doing serious work, quietly, unselfishly, hopefully. Aside from whether or not it is a good think, my problems would begin with having too many chapters and too many verses. It could include some of what I'd planned for "Letters from Finks", the book to begin with an index and have no table of contents! I have 'em. I am, of course, reluctant to do this. In fact, I even refused to let Louis Ivon see what I had done on Mark when he was worried about Mark. Nobody has ever seen it. After you've had a chance to consider it, I'd welcome your opinions. I have to do something that can bring a bit in, and the question really is, would it be constructive? Or would it be sour-grapsey? Best, HW