

June 9, 1966

Dear Mr. Wittenberg,

Many kindness have been extended me recently by many people, some slightly known and most entirely unknown. These have enabled me to achieve the almost impossible, the successful launching of a terribly handicapped book. I shall, because I believe both because of its subject matter and history and intent (you are interested), tell you of this below.

First, however, I want to thank you for what I cannot attribute to any other, the very flattering and encouraging letter from Thomas McDade telling me WHITEWASH is eligible for consideration for a Mystery Writers of America award. Perhaps you do understand how I long for this long-shot, and if there is anyone who might conceive this is not done for selfish ends, it is you. I need all the help I can get with this book and its objective, and this would be a tremendous assist.

However, in sending Mr. McDade the two books he requested, I avoided even a covering letter, fearing I would say something I perhaps should not. I have one additional hope: that Rex Stout is on the committee!

The consequence of themany kindnesses of so many good people is that WHITEWASH has five of the largest distributors handling it, is now available almost nationally, and aside from those we have mailed out in response to orders and for press purposes, there are 2751 copies in or consumed from commercial channels! Sale in Washington has been excellent, so good that from this alone one of the larger reprinters seems to have gotten interested. It is only now reaching other points.

Perhaps you have heard of the incredible press I was able to arrange, beginning with an eight column front page story in the Washington Post. I have also told everyone of the Epstein book by Viking, as a consequence of which that book has often gotten more of the publicity than mine. While I neither anticipated nor desired this development, I do not regret it for I regard INQUEST as an important book and as complementary to mine. I have and I will continue to call attention to it, as on a current series of radio programs, for it is not possible, even with Viking's wealth, for too many people to know what is available and should be read.

There are, from what I have been told or know, several reprinters interested in the book. I believe, with the tremendous investment of time and money (need I say bloody) I have in it, I will not go for broke, sit back and wait for the offers I now think I will get. One insists a major magazine is interested, but I cannot confirm this and really have no reason to credit it. I sent those who had read the earlier edition copies of this one, for there is more material in it. If you know of anyone who might be interested in getting copies, or in getting additional copies (for example, I sent one to Eugene Prakapas, senior editor at Pocket, but to no one else there), please let me know and I'll mail any promptly. This includes you, if there are any to whom you'd like me to send copies, for any reason.

Perhaps some day soon I'll be in New York again. One of the things I now hope for is that one of the distributors or bookstores will interest one of the talk programs in wanting me. This, of course, would attract considerable attention to the book. When that time comes, I hope you are well enough and free enough for us to meet without separation by the problem we confronted before. I think you will be interested in what happened at the ABA meeting in Washington earlier this week, where everyone was so wonderful (with even Viking telling people they hadn't done my book, ~~which was~~ ^{in fact} offered to them a year ago, simply because they were cowards and that mine is a much better book than theirs! I told no one of this and I wasn't there when Viking people so spoke.)

Also, I have in between other public relations, printing, distribution, sales and other necessities continued my inquiry into the documentation and I have new material as shocking as anything you have read. I have written one long magazine piece on the purging of both the printed and the permanent record of every scrap of paper dealing with the autopsy other than what is in the printed version of Exhibit 397. I have checked this thoroughly and officially. I have also traced all the suppressed data, and I have receipts tracing the photographs and X-rays from the hospital to the Secret Service, which has not responded to my demand for access to them. These, you may recall, are not in the record.

You may also recall my references to other such denials of basic information. I have written the appropriate letters to the appropriate people with the pertinent questions. All are unanswered - for the moment. But each and every one of these people has been sent a copy of the book. In addition to asking of those of whom I believe it proper that they release what they are improperly restricting, I have asked all to either show me that WHITWASH is wrong or join in its demand for a full and public airing. I am especially interested in a reply from Mr. Rankin (and his associate, your friend Mr. Redlich) to my question has he charged J. Edgar Hoover with incompetence or worse? If I were Mr. Redlich's public-relations counsellor, which I am not, I'd certainly advise him to go no further than his statement in the Times of June 7 and to read nothing that would require an honest man to in any way alter what he told Peter Kihss. I have not sent him or most of the other assistant counsel copies of the book because I cannot afford to do so.

Through a long ^{and} difficult period that is behind us, the willingness of so many decent people to lend what aid or simply encouragement they could has meant much. We do appreciate your kindness. There still remain many tough days. I have yet to pay the printer a cent, and it will be some time before there is any revenue with which to pay him. The knocks thus far were easily converted into boosts, but the day may not be far off when there may be knocks of a different character, not so easily converted. Then again, all these fine things that so many decent people did will come back and will comfort and help. For yours, we are deeply grateful.

Good health and good luck to you.

Sincerely yours,

Harold Weisberg