

Dear Dave,

8/29/78

Your 8/26 is well thought through and I appreciate it but as of now, which is not the time of the King/Ray broadcast, I think it is probably impractical.

When the hearings resume, on JFK, there will be a different situation, different people who have to a degree organized to exclude me and it would be unwise for me to ask PBS for the time.

What I ~~was~~ wrote you about was NPR. It was kiboshed by the HSCA, Frank Manckiewicz or both, beginning with the cutting of the interview that was aired. I did not hear from PBS. Faith Fancher called me at Manckiewicz' suggestion.

Although I took all of this up with others in May, including Bud, Hoch and the AIB people, there was only selfish reaction, none to me. Except, of course, that to my face Bud agreed. He was in fact so anxious to talk that he went to JL's office instead of accepting my offer to go to his. He has arranged for Hoch to stay with him for the period of the JFK hearings.

On the 6th I'll be taping a new a.m. TV show for Washington airing. It is Tony Brown's. I think it will be aired about 9/18, possibly as his opener. If it is his opener other stations probably will take it in.

I have no desire to enter into competition with these other people, even though none can claim impartiality because all were committee supporters.

On the other hand, I cannot represent myself as any kind of supporter of what it is generally (mis)understood to be the committee's supposed subject of investigation, the official accounts. If I were to seek time on my own I could not do this as a supporter of the official accounts. Or, while I am alone in this middle position it is not so understood by those whose color comes in black and white only.

If PBS or anyone else would want me I'd be willing to take the time if transportation were included. The bus is too much of a hassle, the cost accumulates and the schedule is lousy, infrequent and inconvenient except for getting to court. I expect no spontaneous invitations and I think I should not make the request because it would undoubtedly be misunderstood.

There also is a problem with too many people. All gets diluted and too much gets lost. I think a panel of critics would be a bad idea.

While the AIB will not drop its pretenses it is, apparently, desperate for the attention because it has consumed all the considerable amount of money it ripped off from the campuses and is in financial distress. I suspect Hoch's role, which begins with an authentic expertisen (if restricted to records and fact), is to make them respectable and also experts.

What this boils down to is that I see a situation also rigged to keep the firehorse away from the fire. If the horse has accumulated enough wisdom, as from getting burned one accumulates wisdom, he will not go charging to the fire unless he sees a clear way through to it. In the absence of a path opened by others during the period of quiet the only sensible way is to await developments and be alert to any path they may open, as had I been in Washington "Chillan would have made one.

When I'm in town I'll look for time and an opening on the 6th. I'll be at NBC and I may have time to stop off at ABC, where I have good connections in the wrong place. While it is probable that neither will have active live coverage, a purpose may be served at each place. Neither would present the awkwardness my going to PBS means, if I go there unasked.

Sorry to hear that George did not make law school. Good that you have help on

following up after Deloyd. If it is possible for George, would graduate school and the benefits it could hold help him into law school?

I've just finished a fast trip through about 50,000, maybe 40,000, on Ruby. Less of interest in them.

On thing I do not recall from the past is the suggestion that he was "exiled" from Chicago. Several times he is quoted as saying this and other times what amounts to a paraphrase. I recall only one explanation, not substantiated, that he stole about \$50,000. I recall no evidence that he ever had that much money at any one time.

I've indicated the pages of which I want separate copies. We had a malfunction of both the typewriter and the copier so Lil is behind in both areas of work. She had made copies of about a third of the Sections. I'll be going over the copies. Of these fewer than in the past are for appeals. (Had a nice card today from Shea, who is on vacation.)

There are omissions I'll appeal. The records yet to be provided, despite the claim to total compliance, will make for further appeals. (One on Ruby is pre-assassination.)

The FBI came up with a file it had not earlier acknowledged. In Dallas it was titled, "President's Commission of Assassinations." Literally, including the 'omission. With only a single record prior to the end of the commission's life. (I think I've already spotted the real file, a different 62 file to which I found a reference.)

Seven of the Ruby sections are of clippings. I've not looked at them and do not now plan to.

Lil will finish the large typing job she is on before the end of the Labor Day weekend. If our improvisations with the copier work she'll probably also have completed the Ruby copying by then and I'll have gone over the copies. However, aside from an appeal I do not anticipate any need for any writing about the Ruby file. I'll have a separate file of the selections for a while and then I'll run them in with the others I've made from the Dallas records.

Beckwith, aka Undicted Co-Conspirator, provided a 68-page affidavit in the King case and I've dictated a length memo to JL on it. This is what Lil is typing. I think it will bring us closer to the day when Beckwith is not provided FBI FOIA affidavits. I do not think it will make Beckwith or the DJ lawyers happier.

Best to you all,

August 26, 1978
Stevens Point, Wi.

Harold Weisberg
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21701

Dear Harold:

Your recent letters have arrived and have been thoroughly read, including the clippings and random extra zeroxed documents/.

The manuscript of 2052-73 is finished and I await another decision from the Foundation on sending out the copy to the Banta printers. They worked like molasses and know less, it seems, about the way the world runs, but sooner or later...

George Leopold is back at school in a different capacity. It seems his attempt to enter law school was crushed by a variety of circumstances, most of them beyond his control-- financial arrangements, preparation from a poor poly-sci department here, past non-scholalry approaches, late movement into the serious field, etc. But also the law prep session at Drake turned out to be a legal pip-off in the most meaningful ~~turn~~ turn one could give to that phrase. approximately 250 students all summer, 15 accepted. The dorms were paid for that interim, the professors earned bread, etc. George took DeLloyd's place and is now my CETA worker. This will give him a respite and some time to pull his thoughts together before searching for the increasingly difficult-to-find jobs. Of course, the dedicated zeal of the converted is not to be downgraded in terms of his becoming firmly rooted in JFK subject matter.

I have given some thought to the question of your appearing on the radio/TV with regards to a commentator-subject expert and I assume this means PBS; your letter gave some slight suggestion it might also be Freedberger's talk show.

To my mind you should appear and comment, for the following reasons:

1- The format is different from any you have previously been engaged with--a longer period of time, longer than most in terms of the daily hours (ie. not a 30 minute or 2 hour show). Being spread out over several days and on an extended, intense basis gives you an opportunity to utilize your strengths and contribute in a meaningful way. These AIBers and regular commentators/ radio people do not have the depth, knowledge, clarity of insight, to match you. You will fumble in the public's mind, perhaps, for the first few minutes, but slowly build up among the informed a critical insight.

2.- You have back up people--JHL, HR, --to swing into the commentary via late spots, phone interviews, etc., rebuttal to the AIBers and HAC from a position (or perspective or background) different from yours. This enhances your position. And if you do do it, get details on how to, if possible, utilize these backups.

3. Your subject matter mastery is of such a different level than the others the format will permit you to prevail in areas where they are dense or wrong or astounded. After several hours you will begin to grow on the PBS staff and upon the audience and will prevail.

4. I think it is necessary to enter the lists once more. This from the perspective of the many years where you have been engaged in the battles and have drawn from them a certain spirit--I guess I am saying a fire horse needs a fire. Also these young AIBers need the sobering experience of working with you. I think you can develop a formula of phraseology to employ when handling them so that what seems to be sour grapes comments or negative comments turn out to be after a while critical rebuttals with no personal slander or what the hell they might find in them intended. Gradually the tendency to be sulky and offended when the great minds of these AIBers are criticised will ~~fall~~ slough off. You have in the past handled the Ray family and many others in a manner to contribute to a positive understanding of the essential picture you were trying to develop. I believe the audience is composed of sane (essentially) and common people.

5. These young snots are getting their credentials developed by the PBS crew and if you do not get in now and wallow with them, you will have to wallow with them in a later, in a more ~~and~~ crazy situation as per TV specials spreading silliness, movies, books they might (~~ah!~~ will) promote. Blight the acorn the oak won't grow.

6. I appear/locally on several radio spots and got far reaching coverage over Central Wisconsin. I am surprised at the number of people who have stopped me and thanked me for my observations. I said of course basically what you and St. James have said but with a Wronian twist or two for local past observations. Over the air the people will listen sanely and this must not be overlooked.

7. Is it not possible for you to work out an angle or two where HR or JHL could re-inforce any policy point or approach to position you might take that would draw the personal ire ~~away~~ away from the situation and show the PBSers and AIBers that HW is not ~~the~~ unique, but representative of a far larger current of sanity running in USA. Also can you not, if physical difficulties might intrude, arrange for five minute hourly commentaries or wrap up observations between witnesses etc.?

adios


David Wrone