

Mr. Paul Wurtzel  
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5/29/76

Dear Paul,

We both thank you for your 5/26, the effort it represents and for the enclosures I'll read when resting. I want to address the experiences you've had before I can be interrupted. We expect friends sometime today, anytime now.

By and large I agree with Gary Horowitz. His reaction is another example of how counterproductive it can be to impose paranoia on oneself. However, as you indicate, he has a naïve concept because as I told you Executive Action is for all practical purposes a spook job. Maltz and the others are the captives of the clichés they have successfully exploited. They do not see how interference today would guarantee the success of a flick, if it today were to be attempted. I think it unlikely. Besides, a suit would make the picture and achieve other good results. Their understandable fears are based on a serious misapprehension: this proposal ~~is~~ is for a movie on the King assassination, not on James Earl Ray. He is a necessary but minor character in The King Conspiracies. There is no possible in-court development that can change any good script. Not in any substantive way.

I think Maltz has the same basic misunderstanding.

For Wakeford-Orloff this kind of film would represent one step forward. Instead of hoking it up and pretending it was all official evidence they'd really have the official evidence. Sure it will hurt the FBI. But they'll have little choice. They'll blame it all on the departed Founding Father, the saint. They'll not dare interfere with the picture or its distribution. If they make the attempt during production it can be written into the script. If they do it afterward it will come to official attention in the Congress. I think there today is no doubt at all. This fear would inhibit them if they had the temptation. If it alone did not my being in court and my record with them in court is enough to assure they'll not be that silly.

The real fear I'd imagine is not at all possible in this kind of movie: the mob. An honest job not only does not hurt them- they'd like it.

The problem I see with W-0 is that they produce and they want Lewis, not you, to produce it.

I know of Lewis. A friend was to have arranged a meeting with him during the Executive Action days. It did not come off. Maybe he was afraid of what I'd do to Lane. Did once on Washington TV, matter of fact.

~~xxx~~ All of this gets to the problem of never being face-to-face with these kinds of people. There is too much they imagine, too much they do not understand and can't see. I believe they are so adjusted to dealing with the unreal they forget their own fantastic successes when they deal with the real. I believe also that they visualize non-existing complications. There are some with this movie but you've reported none that I see and do not expect to become significant. I hope it is not too much of a simplification to suggest that these people just aren't used to the solid, factual work I do with the manifestations ranging from Percy Foreman fleeing a TV studio rather than confronting me after all I'd said about him to the FBI and Justice Department praising me when I charge them with felonies. I don't believe that people who have been successful in Hollywood can begin to see, on their own, how Establishmentarian my work really is, either.

There is a new Vegas interest. It may yet lead to my getting within striking distance of LA. I would like to be able to speak directly to these people and address their questions and doubts.

You should know there are other projects afoot for whatever this can mean. Both of which I know are bad. Freed is still trying to steal and has made some kind of offbeat deal with Jack Youngblood, Dick Russell and Ernie Baxter, a real nut who is no longer editor of Argosy. Freed has written Ray, who has not told M or me. And Maltz appears to have made a deal for his book. This is why, I think without explaining it, I asked you about "Balking Tall." I understand that is the ~~company~~ company.

I'm sorry you do not report - and I suppose because you did not learn - why W-O opted getting Lifton to "research" instead of accepting my open offer of my work. In normal considerations it makes no sense at all. I'm still interested if you can find out. If it is what I do not pretend to know, typically Hollywood, it appears to me to be very bad business in the commercial sense of business. Without this foolish approach they could have had a safe movie close to ready when it could have meant real money for them. Nothing has happened that could have jeopardized it. It could, in fact, have had enormous prospect right now. I wonder if Horowitz can now see this.

I have no records of when the IO approached me through Dymtryk but I recall it well as I do what I gave them. It was while they were before the committee. It was long before any charges were made in court. Probably a day or so, not much more, after the first hearing. It was before any of them had to go to Washington and ~~leave~~ leave with any recess, if there was one. I'm talking about the earliest days of this fiasco. And what I gave them was enough to convict members of the committee and its staff of fraud, of gypping the government out of small sums. Even enough to prove that what was represented as real hearing never took place, was merely typed up as though there had been one. I remember the case of a never-held hearing on Consumers' Union. I may still have carbons of some of this if Maltz has a continuing interest. Some of the proofs are quite simple. Like Dies' expense account for a trip home to Orange Texas at the time the "hearing" shows he was in Washington holding the hearing. For all their sophistication these hurt people were Hollywood types who did not know how to fight, even those with the heart to fight. I gave them more than enough.

They could have turned all of history around with effective use of it. My guess is that the fink killed it all and that men like Maltz, Trumbo and others never had any glimmer of what I believe they would have understood. I wondered at the time why I never heard anything further from any of them and why my records were never returned. Why in fact M never had even a pro forma thanks from any of the other ~~names~~ names or their friends. If Maltz wants to know more tell him to phone me. If, if I ever get out there and he wants to talk, I've be glad to take the time.

Thanks for the registration, too. I have to get to other things now.

By the way, the legal significance of a Maltz movie now is that it can be enough to go back to 6th circuit with a request for a rehearing. Foreman gets a 60% cut of Maltz on it. The contracting of this movie proves our argument in irreconcilable conflict of interest. Jim thinks this, as I do, too.

Thanks and best,

Paul Wurtzel

1688 Sunset Plaza Drive, Los Angeles, California 90069  
May 26, 1976

Dear Harold;

I have held off writing you until now as my appointment with Wakeford-Orloff was postponed till today. I talked to Gary Horowitz. He told me about Lifton; apparently he was to do all the research on King for the ~~Sixxxxx~~ Producer, Ed Lewis and the writer, Abby Mann (he wrote the script for Judgement at Nuremberg). G.H. said that Lifton had read your book and did his work at the U.C.L.A. library mostly from newspaper stories, mainly the N.Y. Times. After he completed his work he wanted to keep the literary rights to his research and only give them the movie rights. They got lawyers to bring suit. At the same time the lawyers felt that the hearing for a trial for Ray might change things if they started to shoot and a decision for a trial came down. This could be disastrous if it happened in the middle of production and entailed re-writing etc. At this point the backers pulled out and the project fell apart. They dropped any action against Lifton. He said he was interested and would see if he could get renewed interest from his people. I found out that Wakeford-O actually produces commercials. I guess if Horowitz comes up with something he has a <sup>would want</sup> working arrangement with Ed Lewis and they just <sup>service to</sup> ~~the production end~~ (with crews etc.) and are able to <sup>produce</sup> get financing. I think "Exec. Action" was backed by Avco Embassy. I am not positive. It was distributed by National General. He said he would contact me next week. Last Friday I talked with Albert Maltz on the phone. He was very interested in the subject but as I outlined the subject he felt that he wouldn't want to get involved because of the time and research and what he felt would be a painstaking project. A large concern was the FBI and the power they have (as he knows from his past problems). He brought up the point that if something new came up concerning a new trial or other things that it could cause problems if production was in progress. He felt it would be like Don Quixote

W.O. does the physical end of servicing a production - apparently it is just a name.

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tilting windmills, to use his metaphor. He wasn't against the idea except for himself at this stage of his life. He gave me the names of three other writers that he felt might be good for it if they had an interest ~~in~~ AND the possibility of it being released. That was another point. That of the Bureau leaning on distributors and exhibitors once it was finished and if it exposed the FBI. Gary Horowitz did not have the same impression and felt it could be distributed as they ~~x~~ will do anything to make money. He felt that there is a lot of paranoia around that isn't justified. I do not go along with him and feel ~~x~~ he is not really in touch with what is going on. He keeps referring how nothing stopped "Exec. Action" from being released. I have not seen it but it is not the something and they admitted in the movie, according to him) that most of it was a fiction that could have happened the way they portrayed it. The strongest they got was to say that the Bureau was incompetent in their investigation, and that the Warren report was a lot of crap. Maltz was very nice and spent a good deal of time on the phone. I told him about the work you did on the "10" committee and of all the research you turned over to one of them and that you never got it back. He said he would sure like to know the dates that this took place because his group investigated the committee but could not come up with enough. I have another very strong possibility and will not mention the name, but this person has done outstanding work on this type of subject and he comes from an extremely wealthy family and goes into the face of this type of thing. He is now out of the country but should be back shortly.

I am enclosing the Writers Guild registration and a xerox copy of "Lydia", also copies of 2 New Republic articles and a page from New Scientist that I find provocative----- Hope Lil and you are in good shape and getting the planting done. I really enjoyed meeting the both of you and would like to have spent more time. I got back and have just gone back to work on the same show I was on "Barnaby Jones." I really didn't want to but it helps the bank roll and in that way it can help what you and (I in a small way) are trying to accomplish. Give my best to Jim and again to Lil a lovely person.

As always,

