Dear John,

I should have made and sent you a carbon of a letter I wrote Walsh at Rolling Stone early this week. Sorry I forgot. I mentioned you in it, no way or may not speak to you.

What happened is that one I'd trusted decided to do an article on the basis of my new book. He made not one but four simultaneous submissions. I learned of it just as I was leaving town last weekend. (A rich man who systematically suffers a social conscience wanted to talk to me about Ford but decided against it by the time I reached him.) I wrote this younger former friend a scorching letter and gave it to my friend and colleague in this new book when we met at the airport to work for about an hour in the Ray case. He then got in touch with the other guy, who wrote letters withdrawing the submission. But I wrote only three letters, my colleague noted. So, because one of the four submissions was to Rolling Stone and Walsh had not responded to my answer to his letter responding to mine on the irresponsibility of his planned think piece on theories of the assassinations, I reminded him that the first approach of my kind I had made was through you to them. You will remember you told me you got no where.

There really are a number of major stories in this new work. As of day before yesterday a TV act is agonizing over one, which they haven't told me and I don't really care. They asked me for proof of something I mention casually and, under the circumstances, you can understand I tell you in confidence: my relations with the late Senator Russell and his disagreement with a major part of the Warren report. (If you are too young, he was one of the seven Senators.) This interest, this one request for proof not published in the work, can be trivial or significant, I don't know which. But the TV not attention to the content can be a major breakthrough for us as well as financial salvation on the book. We had to borrow to print, besides the not inconsiderable costs prior to the printer. I have also made a single print-media approach and can hear for a couple of weeks. In fact, I don't yet have a book to send. I'll explain. It is also why you don't have a copy in confidence.

The printer's paper source is on strike. He had to get a special shipment from out of town, which ran our costs up something like another 10%. Then he shot the negatives too large, which I discovered in checking the blues. This cost him heavily for he had to reshoot the entire job and then restrip. So, instead of making a new set of blues for us to check, he went ahead and printed. Well, he had a page upside down in one dig and four out of order in another. He thus wasted 2/7 of the entire paper cost and had these two signs to reprint. As I of course before yesterday his new paper had not come. The TV act is working from a xerox. And I can't afford another xerox. I have the one iron which we indexed.

So, as often happens, I have to waste time sort of in the role of fireman, in this case to prevent what I take to be an uncontrolled ego doing an unconscionable thing. I feel sorry for the fellow who did it because when he was personally confronted with a whole string of fictions he had fabricated in order to justify to himself what he had done he was considerably embarrassed. He is not by nature a crook nor irresponsible. This is another aspect of the Yamijan syndrome. With Y it may be worse. In this case, while the fellow told himself otherwise, he had a craving for attention.

As you know, books are folded my hand, so we can't pay for press time to have a couple of defective books folded so we can have a few to work with.

Wayne Chastain phoned me right after I returned. We had a long talk. As I told you, I like Wayne. I do not think his thesis on the King assassination is tenable even through 2/71 I did have reason to believe that the real Youngblood was in Memphis at that time. There need be nothing unusual about this. What I'm going into this for is to try to help you spin fewer wheels. There is an easy test you can make in your own mind. If you were part
of an assassination plot would you make yourself conspicuous in the area in which it was
to be committed? If you were part of a plot, would you have a man in the scene who
had no function in it but could be recognized?

Apply the same test to Dealey Plaza. Sprague's and Garrison's approach, the
Yazijian fictions based on realities that are irrelevant to the fictions and jammed
up with visuals that are not related to substantiating his claims.

Livingston has finally promised me he will shut up. I hope he does.

The last insanity of his I received is something called "Confidential Flash,"
the piece signed Val Howard, probably a name used instead of one that could be damaged
by appearance in such a rag.

This whole crazy/stupid Livingston thing has been very hurtful and comes at a
time when there is much serious work to be done, of which he has done none; and when
the needs of the sinister forces are great, so that they go for this kind of stuff.
Meanwhile, he was so utterly incompetent about it that we can't get from him a live
date to the source of the Department of Disinformation. Whether it is official or
other.

Each element of the press has its own standard of "objectivity." If a quotable
source says something it wants to print it becomes objective to quote, no matter how
inherently incredible it may be.

The net result is that people are misinformed.

Can any reality live up to the Yazijian manufactures?

All the stuff you got from Livingston was rubbish. For whatever my opinion is
worth, the time and money you spent on it were worse than wasted. And your audience is
worse off for it. You are young and will learn from your own experiences, but please
try to learn the most difficult thing of all as soon as you can: be your own devil's
advocate. You can't really afford these wastes, in time you will not be proud of the
time and judgment, and with the time and money you might have given your audience what
it did need to know.

Let me warn you about another one of these nut capers you can expect. I last heard
that the N.O. coroner was upset that Clay Shaw as buried without an autopsy. You can be
your own devil's advocate on this by determining of he exhumed and performed an autopsy.
By accident I was able to do some checking. It says that Shaw was in terminal cancer for
six months of which he had a medical student living with him. The report
of the mysterious ambulance the day before can't be found and won't respond to appeals
for reports. It was an anonymous call. The part I fear is that this cancer also reached
his brain, which is what happened to Ruby. Can't you imagine what the nuts can do with
that? But it does happen in real life and there really was no reason to kill Shaw anyway.
What he was charged with was inherently incredible, so it will be alleged that in his
dying moments he was about to confess to it.

I owe you the rest of this in a letter to Walsh. The
the rest of this is a little time I take before breakfast in an effort to help you be a
better reporter. In time you will come to understand that all this crap appearing almost
without exception in all the alternative media is the most effective service to the
Department of Disinformation, a service so thorough it is beyond their capacity to buy.
This does not mean that they say not figure in it. I've no proof and no reason to believe
they do. All that concerns me is the result. One is to destroy all credibility. Another
is to make truth unacceptable, unidentifiable. Another is to reduce the little chance that
the major media, which has been reached, will pay any attention to what is solid. And the
major media is the means by which most people are reached. Including those who do have
influence. I've lived with this long, Jon. I hope you will believe me.

Another apology for the haste and the typos. Sincerely,