

31 January 1967

Dear Maggie,

Last night I spoke to RRay, to ask him if he could supply some photographs for the photo appendix of my book; and he, too, filled me in on the Lane/Liebeler affair with special reference to Lifton-the-Fink. Giving him the greatest benefit of doubt, I regard him as sick in the mind, disabled, as if with pneumonia or smallpox. But while recognizing that he is sick (rather than "evil"), I don't want to be infected nor to provide nursing services. Actually, I think the analogy does him too much honor—he is appallingly immature for his age, obsessed with his own importance—with the case taking second or third place—and an insufferable pest and bore. So much for this cross among many crosses we have to bear: I say, force him to the other side, and let him badger and annoy the Liebelers, not us, but make sure he is cut off from any material for raving and informing and cannot serve as a pipeline to the Liebeler-Schiller-Lewis axis.

Jones Harris is a different kind of problem but I have reached the conclusion (and I think that Vince has, too) that I can no longer be bothered with him. He, too, has caused me needless emotional turmoil; and while he is not as transparent as Fink Lifton, he too is motivated by a compulsion to be the grand strategist—and yet too lazy to do his own research. I know that he has used me to do his spade-work and the only reason I did it was that it was helpful to my own work to be stimulated to explore some of his freak ideas. For example, after the Philadelphia story was published, he asked me by phone to read aloud the Benavides testimony—in the course of which we both suddenly realized how significant was his reference to a red car that pulled up ahead of him on 10th. However, I cannot forgive Harris for his blind hatred of and assaults upon Lane. It ill becomes a so-called "critic" or "researcher" to obstruct Lane while fraternizing with Liebeler. My letter to Harris mailed Saturday was a real scorcher; but unfortunately he phoned me at midnight, despite a verbal request earlier in the week that he discontinue his calls to me. He has the chutzpah not only to disregard my request but to phone at that late hour, wailing that he had a "problem." You have a problem? said I, well, you can jolly well call your friend Epstein, or call your friend Liebeler, or call your friend Felker, BUT DON'T CALL ME ANY MORE.

Having received your special delivery this morning, let me hasten to reassure you that Vince told me that he was withholding from Harris and Berendt everything he has on "B" and they have only what was in the Gr. Phil. Magazine. I asked Vince out of the same apprehension you felt when it became apparent that Harris and Berendt were sticking their fingers into this highly sensitive affair.

FFROM HERE ONWARD, CONFIDENTIAL

Yes, the "B" thing is extremely important and significant. Vince is certain now that "B" was in the 10th Street business. I too questioned why he was still at large; maybe he took out insurance in advance, ie, document to be opened only in event of certain contingencies. But, as important as "B" seems to be, he is not linked to Deadly Plaza—and that is why I am much more impressed by the information I got from X. X is the man who was staying with Penn. Let me try to tell you as much as I can tell you about this, relying upon your ingenuity in understanding veiled references. X brought the electrifying information that an official (not federal) agency is quietly pursuing the events, because they are not satisfied with the WR at all but they feel, as we do, that it was a bigger thing, and they incline toward the very same groups that we have felt were exiled in their cloaks and daggers. They have under active consideration one individual, definitely linked with LHO in the mid-1950s per H & E but as X told me, also linked with him in the summer of 1963 and in Texas at the right time. The piece of mosaic I was able to supply was something that placed him in the right city, where he had denied being. He is mentioned phonetically in Whitewash II page 19 (I think p. 19, I don't have my copy here) and in my S.Ind. p. 116, where he is mentioned twice—once by his real name, and once phonetically as a different individual.

Arnoni too began to press and stated his scepticism bluntly. She did not pass that test either. Now we had to leave, to make the last train. She decided to leave also and was in the car, so that we could not communicate with V at all. Nor could I reach him this morning. I am sure he is still sold on her and I am getting worried again about his rashness, talkativeness, and gullibility. I will try again tonight to reach him and convince him that he is walking into a dangerous trap.

I am groping in the dark--very much in the dark. I can't figure out what the trap is; but my bones and cells tell me that we are walking on a road that has been mined and that while R's story is a clever fake, we are nevertheless making contact with those we are trying to find.

I hope that some of this does make sense to you, vague as it is. My main purpose is to forearm you and Ray and Lillian and the others--if you ~~are~~ are contacted by a stranger or strangers, exercise utmost scepticism and say as little as possible about what you believe or what you know. At the least, the R affair is a strategem to find out if we are getting close; but I think it is something more than that--maybe a set-up aimed at ~~my~~ double-jeopardy, an "expose" that falls flat on its face, so that ~~my~~ later suggestions along the same lines will be laughed into silence.

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