

6 August 1970

My dear Ruth,

It was a pleasant surprise to receive your letter; all three envelopes arrived together, this morning. Be reassured at once that I was not offended at all by your silence up until now. I fully understood, or at least, I imagined, the difficulties and the delicacy that might be involved. And not too long ago your sister Pearl did call and give me a message from you, from which I knew that your friendship continued without change.

I read your letter with considerable interest and relief to know that the general situation is at least tolerable to you and that Varda has been receiving effective help. Both she and Seth are lovely young people and vulnerable, but I believe that they possess the inner strength to overcome the effects of the emotional dislocation and the trauma which they have experienced during the upheavals of the last few years. You yourself seem to be much more calm and in greater control of the situation, into which you have now more insight, I believe.

Unhappily, you are entirely correct when you say that A has injured everyone who ever showed him generosity and affection. As time has gone by, I have thought about him less and less frequently, which is only natural. But when I do recall the strange period of my "friendship" with him, and the shock of discovering his treachery and utter phoniness, the realization of his venality and greed and his practice of what in essence is plain theft and fraud, in contrast to his public claim to the highest possible morality--and his intolerance of the human weakness of others--my feelings remain as strong as ever. True, he is sick; but he is sick in a most obnoxious way, swollen with colossal vanity, cruel for the pleasure of cruelty the moment he senses weakness in others, and pursuing the almighty dollar with far greater lust than any of the "spaghetti-loving-Americans" he so despises--those "corporate swindlers" who even so do not generally steal from their own families and good friends.

I cannot feel foolish for having trusted A, for having failed to see through him, and I do not regret it even though it cost me dear--for no one with inner morality would even be capable of suspecting such ugliness and depravity lurking in the mind of a fellow-human-being whose facade was that of an ethical and dedicated person. In other words, it would "take one to know one", and for me things did not fall into place until I saw those bank forms reporting interest earned. I cannot say that I miss A, for at best his "friendship" tended to be oppressive. My only hope is that you and the children will escape further anguish, and that in the end justice will somehow prevail.

There is no special news on my side. I have had a few articles published in the Texas Observer, which is a kind of liberal magazine of the southwest, much like The Nation in the east. Otherwise, there is little or no movement in the Oswald case or the later assassinations. I am completing my 24th year now, at the UN, and still find my work generally satisfying and absorbing at times--such as the recent World Youth Assembly, which I attended as an official "observer." It was an unparalleled experience in many ways and fully confirmed--if confirmation was even needed--that there is indeed a fascism of the left. My niece Susan delighted me recently with the news that she is pregnant, and I look forward to the birth of her baby next February or March.

With affection,

Sylvia