

Friday April 29 1966

Dear Vince,

I'm sure that Chris gave you my message last night but let me repeat it, just to be certain that there will be no possibility of misunderstanding.

On Wednesday night, after Mr Arnoni and I called you and while Mr Arnoni was still here, I received a phonecall from Maggie Field in Beverly Hills. She not only knew that you had made a sensational discovery, but she knew exactly what the discovery was, and she told me that Ramparts knew it too and was feverish to use it. She used phrases such as "public domain" and suggested that there was nothing to stop Ramparts from contacting someone in Washington to go to the Archives and find the same documents for Ramparts. I explained that you had made a commitment to TMO, that you had already written the article, and that it would be published by TMO in a matter of weeks. Mr Arnoni heard my side of the conversation and seemed to have no objection to what I replied to Maggie—at least he voiced no objection.

On Thursday I felt troubled, not by any fear that Ramparts would preempt the story—which I knew was impossible for logistical reasons—but because someone with whom I had worked closely and in complete mutual trust had used such a phrase as "public domain" and had seemed to take a different and surprising view of the ethical considerations involved. I thought it was possible that I had misunderstood or misinterpreted what Maggie had said to me and I decided to phone her to clarify everything.

I placed the call last night at about 9 pm. Maggie's close co-worker Ray Marcus was there and came on the extension with my consent. Maggie explained that while she was at Ramparts on Tuesday, in conference with David Welsh and Warren Hinckle and others, Paul Hoak (phonetic sp) telephoned. She was on the extension, but the conversation was piped on a box so that everyone in the room was able to listen. Paul told them exactly what you had discovered. He did not indicate that he had been asked to treat the information as confidential nor did he suggest that he was transmitting it on a confidential basis. Maggie said that after her conversation with me on Wednesday night and the information that TMO would publish, she herself had no intention of doing anything unethical and she believed that Ramparts would not wish to do anything of the kind either.

Ray Marcus did not agree with her interpretation of Ramparts' attitude. He pointed out that the question was academic because Ramparts could not possibly go to press before TMO but that Ramparts might take the position that the information came to them unsolicited and unconditionally, and that they had no obligation to you or to TMO. That may be the legalistic position but I would still be greatly distressed if such tactics were used; and I told Maggie and Ray that nothing was more important at this juncture than the unity and mutual support of our small group. I hope that will be the guiding attitude for everyone.

However, I thought that you ought to know that Paul Hoak used poor judgment in revealing your information, if he did not actually violate a request for secrecy. I hope that any misunderstanding is dispelled and that there is no longer any question of scooping or pirating a discovery that is clearly yours and that is surely the most important finding in this case, without exception. My love to you and Livvie,