

24 December 1969

Dear Tom,

Thanks for the clippings on the misfortunes of Judge Haggerty, which bemuse, entertain, and dismay. I too have mixed feelings about him--sympathetic, because he rightly denounced Habighorst, and because he showed a proper disrespect for the WR; unsympathetic, because he seems to be such a cheap politician at heart, and personally so undignified. As for Garrison's surgery, while they are fixing his spine, I hope they will also try to repair his brain a little and if possible remove the gland that produces his insatiable hunger for headlines.

You may be interested in the enclosed clipping on Fensterwald, which came to me by way of Copenhagen, from Tink Thompson, who received it from his editor at Geis. Fensterwald is probably quite sincere but as unlikely to come up with anything new or anything conclusive as, say, Mort Sahl or...Stanley Primmer.

Actually I gave Primmer your address, hoping that you would not mind and that you might be able to inject him with a sober appreciation of Garrison's preposterous doings. He had visited me (with poor Maria, who had to listen for four hours to a conversation none of which she could understand) and left with me to read a dossier on his interminable interview with some Bay of Pigs type, I forget the man's name, which he had already sent to you some time ago. I thought it a frightful waste of time and effort on Primmer's part, to follow up so assiduously such vague, implausible, and far-removed allegations, and a crashing bore to read.

Primmer seems earnest, intelligent in the sense of an engineer's typical turn of mind, and rather humorless. With me, however, he seemed to take the position that Garrison was a roaring disappointment in whom he placed little stock--although he did seem reluctant to give up the ghost entirely. Though, now I think back, he did try to pursue the tack "Suppose for the sake of argument that Shaw is in fact a CIA agent..." but I guess I erupted before he could finish the sentence.

As for Sprague: He wrote me last week enclosing a check in payment of a wager we made long ago, now admitting that one of the Dealey Plaza tramps was not, after all, Edgar Eugene Bradley, as he had been insisting for perhaps two years. He is finally convinced, because the tramp is considerably taller than Bradley and because Bradley has now convinced Fensterwald, Weisberg, etc., that he was really on the El Paso bus that day. It is rather a large check and my first impulse was to return it; but then I decided to keep it for buying more documents from the Archives and also to keep Sprague more cautious in future wild charges.

Did you know that Ed Butler (ex-INCA) now has a TV half-hour on Sundays and also a magazine, On the Square? A copy of the magazine arrived sans covering note or sender's name, presumably sent to all WR critics because it contained part 2 of an article by Butler attacking Garrison, Lane, Weisberg, and Sahl (with a few kind words for Epstein Thompson and Sylvan Fox, who were "scholarly" e.g., non-leftist and not pro-Garrison). My book is not mentioned at all, perhaps because Butler has not heard of it (though I prefer to think it is because he found it impossible to classify me for purposes of his thesis, since I am both "leftist" and anti-Garrison---first on record, in fact, in assailing him).

With warm good wishes for the holidays and the new year,

Affectionately,