

1115th BEVERLY DRIVE
BEVERLY HILLS CALIFORNIA

Monday, 16th May
1966

Sylvia Dear -

Finally, I am able to gather pen in hand. How long overdue this letter is but I suppose I can point to extenuating circumstances. My progress, however, has been most rewarding and even unprecedented, I'm happy to say — and if the attention, compassion and solicitude of those we care about the most can effect such notable and rapid recovery (and I know that they can), then surely your letter, your phone call and the consideration they reflect have had a considerable part in that progress. You must know how deeply appreciative I am.

You won't be surprised to learn that despite the rather shocking and ominous overtones of my malady, my interest (INTEREST! indeed; MADNESS would be more fitting!) in the case has hardly abated for more than the first few days! I still quake and tremble at the chilling contemplation of what our plight might now be, had you not saved us all at the zero hour! And it is still not easy for me to fully comprehend how Vince could have erred so completely and so damagingly — although I do have enough faith in your judgment to accept your conclusion that his error was an understandable one. From my vantage point, it's difficult to see how Maneyfelt Exhibit # 24 could have been confused with the Algen's photo. Be that as it may, the rest of us will be eternally in your debt — at should, above all, Vince and Arnoni.

Dave Lifton has called and given me a run-down of his new rôle, re Ramparts — and, with no intent to demean his considerable talents, I am dismayed at their having chosen him in any direct capacity. In recent months he appears to have considerably broadened his knowledge of the case. Whereas, in the past, he had concentrated primarily on the shots, the wall, the photo with rifle (193 A+B) and the ballistics, he now seems to have delved much further into other areas. I have no quarrel with his knowledgeability nor with his capacity to discover, uncover and bring new concepts to bear. But, being of a decidedly unstable — at times — emotional structure, I fear the possible consequences of his acknowledged association with Ramparts as one of their main sources of information, material and development, for, how quickly the anti-critics would move in for the kill if they were able to make capital out of the fact that he had been undergoing psychiatric guidance and was carted off to the hospital for his odd behavior in the UCHA library only two months ago! I have never gone into those details with either Stan. Sheinbaum or Dave Welsh — but just from a few phrases each has dropped during conversations with them, where Dave's name was mentioned, I know that they are aware of his sporadic instability and, therefore, I'm the more incredulous ^{at} their engaging him for their proposed attack! I have faith in their proven talents to put forth a really first-rate, excellent magazine — but inasmuch as they (not Sheinbaum, who hasn't the time now, anyway) are all so young, fiery, crusading (a large plus, in other ways, of course!) and are, at the same time, such neophytes in this case, I can't help feel that they are guilty of ill-considered

3.
judgment, in this particular instance. Dave has
great value, additionally, insofar as his total willing-
ness to call, interview, track down, seek out any
one he thinks can be important to the case is con-
cerned; almost a "fool's rush in" attitude which
allows him to badger, pester, and corner people by
phone and by any other means. This is precisely the sort
of thing I cannot do, for example, but which often pays
off with unexpectedly favorable results and/or information.
Nevertheless, the combination of their placing concrete trust
in both Jones Harris and Dave gives me pause. At the risk
of sounding disloyal or "back-biting" to a fellow sleuth,
I must render a realistic, honest opinion. Maybe he'll
prove to be an unadulterated asset — and I hope he does —
but risk does exist! It goes without saying that Dave
does know the case far better than anyone I can think
of at Ramparts, which is, of course, a plus; I just hope
they don't go off half-cocked on some flight of fancy,
thereby leaving all the rest of us open for attack and in-
tense jeopardy!

I'm palpitating with anticipation over Epstein's released
book and hope it won't be too much longer, now. Bill
O'Connell sent me a note to the hospital and I quote from
it: "Pickwick Bookstore finally let me read the blurb. It
was somewhat equivocal — this is my recollection after a
quick glance at it, and that was all that was permitted
me! He maintains that not all the truth — he uses the
phrase 'political truth' — could be told by the Warren Comm.
and that he, Epstein, will make available some of the
documents and exhibits he himself examined, access to
which others were naturally denied. He does not, apparently,
accept the conspiracy theory, either (??), though he adheres

to a 'middle road' position (3rd question marks in preceding sentence are mine!) Well, we shall see. At Hunter's in Beverly Hills the clerk I spoke to said this book 'will blow the lid off the Warren Commission'. Others have been more reticent. "The Hunter's clerk is saying what I had hoped to hear but the blurb Bill perused at Pickwick is both unbelievable and disheartening! I pray that Viking will really get behind the Epstein book and promote it vigorously, relentlessly with an "ad" campaign, space on TV, outlets and much bron-haha, in general. Otherwise, I fear it will be buried and ignored like everything else. It seems to me that only Viking's handling of its advent can accomplish the hoped-for eclat, unless the book fails to establish the fraud unequivocally and leaves any doubt of conspiracy, etc., in the public's mind.

The enclosed came to me a day or so ago from an interested friend. I think it carries such a punch that I had 15 Xerox copies made of it to distribute. Since it is possible that it may have ^{your notes,} escaped, which isn't really likely, I wanted you to have one.

Ray loaned me a copy of "A Texan Looks at Lyndon" because I had never been able to bring myself to even dignify its existence at election time '64 when it made its only splash among the Birchers. By now, however, I'm responsive to almost any compilation of evil-doings and because of Ruby's letters and of the possibility that I might happen upon a connecting link therein, I've made myself read it (mostly during the lonely hospital hours at night) and I think I may have such a link. Duff's Haley (the author), speaks of George and Herman Brown as being FBI's financial angels, mentors, "among his big business friends" etc., etc., - and as the dominant

figures in the firm of Brown + Root in Houston. The names, of course, instantly rang a bell in connection with my long-standing, ubiquitous suspicions of one Geo. de M. in "the case" and if you recall Raigorodsky's testimony (17 of IV), you'll remember that ~~he~~ ~~was~~ ~~often~~ ~~in~~ ~~contact~~ ~~with~~ ~~Ferman~~ ~~and~~ ~~Geo.~~

Jenner says: "Do you know of any business interests of de M. in Houston?"

Raigorodsky: In Houston?

Jenner: Yes; in the last 5 years, let's say?

Raigorodsky: Yes; he told me that he was going to see Ferman and Geo. Brown — they are brothers.

Jenner: What business are they in?

Raigorodsky: Well, again, don't put this down.

Jenner: Off the record." And then later, there is further questioning as to how often G. de M. saw the Brown Bros. + the information that de M. went to Houston on a regular basis + was dealing with them on "that Haiti situation". In Haley's discussion of the Bobby Baker cover-up, he refers to the "Haitian meat deal", etc. God knows what opening a few of those Pandora's boxes would reveal but, of course, the lid is tightly clamped + the W.C. goes off the record!

* * *

Dave just called! God, I get so unnerved when he tells me how he goes about seeing people. He's so incredibly naïf and such a babe-in-the-woods politically. He had apparently just barreled his way into Liebler's office — and altho' he admitted that L. didn't want to see him — Dave dangled "3 explosives" at him + according to Dave, L.'s curiosity finally took over — whereupon Dave proceeded to inform L. that the FBI had declassified its report on the assassination! (That was his #1) He claims that L. scoffed and

& told him that "that thing is nothing but a crock of..." (you-know-what) & that the W.R. was far more accurate & closer to the truth! — that the FBI report was flapped together hurriedly in the early weeks following the assassination — and that it's, to say the least, erroneous !!! Then Dave proceeded to bring L. up to date on the imminent publications of Ed's & Mark Lane's books, implying that he was giving L. something to worry about!! All it seems to me that he accomplishes with these rather boyish forays is to give them ammunition with which to thwart us further — but he seems to feel he's scaring them! He feeds them news of what we're all doing & what the latest findings & developments among the critics are and I sometimes wonder if he isn't deluding himself as to what he "gets out of" them. But I can't be certain. He claims he's been instrumental in setting up a soon-to-be-forthcoming interview between Ramparts and L. Maybe so — and maybe L. will spill a gem or two, but I remain highly skeptical until I see differently!

I have a whole slew of notes and letters to get off — so I know you'll forgive my beating a something less than hasty retreat. I do feel ever so much better for having finally completed a letter to you.

Many thanks again, Dear friend, for your myriad kindnesses, past & present — and do keep me posted.

My love to you,

Maggie.