

3 September 1967

Dear Maggie,

The last few weeks have been very busy, but not the kind of busyness that produces "news." A lot of it has been office work--we are back in our active phase, covering meetings, and I am temporarily in charge because Rudy is abroad for some weeks. I've had to bring office work home at night--imagine! And at the same time, galleys of Thompson's book would be waiting when I got back from the office, for urgent checking. His publisher is really putting enormous effort into getting the book out at the same time as mine, and of course I have made every effort not to be the one to hold them up by even an hour. In the middle of all this, visits from Harold Weisberg, and then Ray and Letha. I was glad to see Ray and Letha and to find that our mutual affection and warmth have not been at all affected by differences of opinion on Garrison. Ray did seem less insistent than a few months ago in his judgment and is already working on strategy (the no. 5 man) in case Garrison fails. As for Harold--I don't know which was more distressing, the three-hour lunch, or listening to him on the radio later that night. He was so obstreperous that the host actually went off the air for half a minute, to coal things down. Harold was right on every point of evidence, but he managed to sound obnoxious and irrational. It is tragic, because he is a good person and a fine researcher.

The Lane incident is also very distressing. You had called me on 7/30/67, after your weekend at Lane's, to tell me of his favorable reaction to the book. Had he said anything to you at that time about The National Guardian? His letter to me was dated 7/27/67 but I never received it--and I feel convinced that he never mailed it. The "copy" that I received at the end of August was original typing on heavy stationery and I think it is really the original, unmailed letter. Ray and Letha saw the exchange of letters, as did several other people; and no one thought that Lane had a grain of justification for his attack on me. On the other hand, I got the impression from your call on Saturday that you do agree with Lane, at least in part, both on his letter to me and on his reaction to my reply to him. Perhaps I am mistaken. But I would like to know where I was wrong, if you think I was--I'm sure that our relationship would survive disagreement on this, and I don't think I am above error or beyond criticism. I would welcome your frank comments on this, Maggie.

Harold is another story. It is almost impossible to communicate with him. He kept reproaching me for never having written a line about his book last year. When I reminded him of the review in Studies on the Left, he said, oh yes, he had forgotten that. Then he switched his attack to my letter of June 1966 to the Washington Post, insinuating that I had in some way done him an injustice in that letter. I was at a disadvantage, not recalling any longer what was in the letter; but I looked it up a few days later and found that it dealt exclusively and solely with questions of evidence, not mentioning Inquest or Epstein--so I am even more at a loss to understand the basis for Harold's reproaches. He also blames me for not having taken up cudgels against Vince and Arnoni last year, when they wrote him rather unkind letters after reading Whitewash, on the grounds that his book totally ignored the existence of other critics and researchers. Well, in fact I had considerable sympathy for their point of view, at the time, although I did emphasize to them that Harold had made an enormous contribution in terms of his research, whatever his eccentricities. But he just doesn't realize what kind of impression his boasting and preempting of credit for everything makes on his readers, or his listeners. I tried, as tactfully as possible, to suggest that he should give this some thought; he reaction was to repeat the whole catalogue of injustices against him. I was a wreck by the time he left--as I told him, it was as if we had been in separate rooms without a connecting door.

Let me end on a happier note: Susan recently met a chap who seems head over heels in love with her and doesn't leave her side. She seems to reciprocate. Yesterday she took him to meet Ruth (my oldest niece) and her family. So it appears to be serious, and likely to lead to marriage. I haven't met him yet, but he sounds most attractive and grown-up and seems to be Mr. Right. It is wonderful to hear Susan sound so happy. By the way, I met Mary Solak on the bus early one morning, while I was on my way to the dentist (yes, I finally had to repair a tooth that broke). She was about to leave for Europe, for a three week trip. I hope Annie is well again? Love, as ever,