

Maggie, dear—

Sunday morning 10 am 21 Nov 1965

The special delivery just came and I almost passed out at the terrible news about Joe's LA classification, and then heaved with relief at the reprieve. I share all your feelings about Viet Nam, as you surmised, and this past week's news of the blood-drenching, the lustful joy of the newscasters at the killing of 800 of the "enemy", the descriptions of the wounded screaming in agony on the battlefield where they lay with the dead, has been literally unbearable. I hope that if Joe is ever faced with the choice that he will refuse to take any part in this filthy rotten cruel and utterly evil carnage.

I also share your anxiety about Buchanan and the Paris-Match story, more than I can say. I am very apprehensive about the possibility of errors; even if they are minimal, I hate to see the story break under such auspices as B. for reasons which are self-evident. However, there seems to be nothing that can be done now except wait and hope for the best.

About Epstein—as you know, I have always wondered at his detachment; but although his letter to me was offensive and presumptuous, I do think it expresses his actual feelings—some sympathy for the WC as a whole, inordinate and rather ridiculous admiration for Eisenberg, but at the same time the intention to write objectively about the defects of the investigation, as he sees them. He may not go all the way with us, but in his cold-fish way he does seem to be aware of at least some of the inexcusable deficiencies and the wholesale bias, and I think that to that extent his book is going to be a very strong blow to the WR.

It is a paradox that this "cause" brings one into close contact with people who in essence are rather alien to one. You and I happen to be very empathetic, not only about the case but in almost every other way—in fact, I haven't yet encountered any issue of values on which there is any divergence between us, and this has been for me one of the most gratifying aspects of this sometimes-thankless business. I also gravitate toward Sauvage, Salandria, Lobenthal, and a few others. But I have very strong reservations about Jones Harris, Epstein, and a few doubts in my mind about Sylvan Fox, in a way—in his case, also because of his semi-detachment about the case, and his downright coldness personally. Buchanan and Lane—I need not belabor, and Lane's claque are included. Oddly enough, although I have had alienations from Curtis Crawford, I retain great confidence in him and continue to enjoy very much talking to him and working with him. I am absolutely sure that he is fundamentally more with us than against us, and that his present posture of accepting the WR has no emotional roots and no real intellectual conviction—as he himself almost admits. By the way, he has been opposing the Viet Nam policy for a long, long time, and his previous appearance on the Randi panel was on that subject—so I know that you would find him completely sympathetic, on that question at least. As for Jones Harris, I don't like him very much as a person—he is terribly supercilious, about everything and everyone, and I suspect he is rather hollow, bitter, and lonely, and has much of the phoniness of the theatrical world. However, while I was rather revolted when he said that Matusow was one of his "friends," I must admit that he has a large indiscriminate group of friends and acquaintances, including many people we would both admire. I try to take that into consideration but I wind up, as you seem to, feeling a fundamental mistrust of him as a person, because almost every remark he ever makes on ANY subject seems to put me off. I have learned not to waste time by challenging everything he says, but I do argue on certain points. For example, yesterday in telling me about the TV producer's call, Harris said that he didn't like Mort Sahl and made many disparaging remarks about him. I happen to like Sahl very much—but I just listened and didn't waste time arguing with him. On a previous call, however, I blasted him when he suggested that no leftist or left-leaning person could contribute any respectable research to this case—I was so uncompromising about that that I didn't think he would ever call again. But no such luck! He continues to waste a lot of my time with calls every three or four days, but I am listening, because occasionally he drops a piece of valuable information—e.g., the Killam/Carter business.

packages. But, to appease my conscience, I have just struggled for almost an hour and managed to get the basic package made, with the two tapes (Belli debate and Ball debate) and the set of panoplies. Now, if you will be patient a little longer, I will have to get the outer wrappings to meet post office specifications, and then get to the post office. I had been hoping to do this in the coming week, BUT...

Last night I finally heard from my publisher, for the first time since I delivered them manuscript on October 8th! I had been getting quite worried because he had not replied to the questions I had put, re checking the index citation by citation for accuracy, adding a name index, etc. Now he tells me that he intends to set the index into type in three weeks--does want to use the name index in expanded form, which means enlarging my existing index of some 200 names to about 1000, and typing the whole business up--and, most dismaying of all, I have to get the checking of the subject index done myself, if I want it done, as he has no facilities in Honolulu for that! This means engaging someone at my own expense, IF I can find a qualified person who has the time to do it quickly, and all in all it means a crash program at the busiest of times at the UN, because I want to do everything possible to avoid any delay in publication.

So, Maggie, please forgive me if I have to delay a little longer on returning your material. I hate to fail you, after you have been so marvelously generous and quick in sending it. Another sin on my conscience is that I have not yet sent you the tape of the program of last Saturday night. Isabel taped it, as I may have mentioned; and last night on my way home, I yielded to impulse and bought a tape recorder, in three minutes flat. Now I must learn to operate it, then get together with Isabel's tape recorder, and make a copy for you to keep. I promise to get to that ~~them~~ minute I have disposed of the remaining work on the index, which must come before anything. By the way, one aftermath of the broadcast that I don't think I mentioned was a suggestion that I contact the producer of the Mort Sahl program, which will begin on a local TV station next Saturday night, and which apparently intends to discuss the WR that night. I definitely don't want to be on the program but I did write to the producer offering to provide any source material and suggesting Sauvage as a guest. So, instead of getting a response from the man to whom I wrote, I get a call this afternoon--from Jones Harris, of course, who knows EVERYBODY. The producer contacted him, to see what my credentials were, and Harris says he gave me excellent references, etc., and that the producer would like me to be on the program. However, I have said "no" definitely, as I cannot spare the time, don't want to be on camera, and can't afford to compromise my position at the office (where there have not yet been repercussions on the radio thing) by a TV appearance that would be considered a definite impropriety for an int'l civil servant. So I do hope they get Sauvage.

With apologies for the mixed-up-ness of this letter, and ~~my~~ fondest greetings, as always,

Saturday night 20 November 1965

Dear Maggie,

In two more days, it will be two years since life changed so drastically for all of us, and I wonder how many more November 22nds will pass before we can be satisfied that our work is done. There has been so much movement these last weeks that I am no longer sure what I did, or did not, communicate to you. I think I did tell you about the possible new "peripheral" death—the husband of Wanda Joyce Killam (CE 2882-2883) and the disappearance of John Carter? As soon as I can obtain the newspaper story on that, I will rush a copy to you. Meanwhile, I hope you will soon write about Dave's contact with the witness who saw the people gather behind the structure before the motorcade; also, about the Kilgallen story with the transcript of interrogation of the woman whose name was withheld. We are trying to look into that here, to determine if possible if any of the people (Lane, Nash, or others) who contacted Aquilla Clemmons made a verbatim record. If we can eliminate that possibility, and that transcript turns out to be a WC deposition, its suppression from the H & E will be just about as devastating to the WC as almost anything else. So if you can shed any light on the origins of that transcript, please let me know right away.

One aftermath of the broadcast was that Curtis Crawford and Charles Kramer were asked to participate with Sylvan Fox in another panel discussion, on a Philadelphia station, which took place last night. The station barely comes in over my radio but I managed to hear a good part of it through the overlap with another station. It was generally similar to the panel I was on, although the Philadelphia moderator was vastly more intelligent and positive than Randi. Arlen Specter had been asked to be on last night's panel but needless to say he refused. I don't know why they did not get Salandria, who lives right there, and this time I did not call to alert him, on the assumption that he would know about it already, as has been the case when I called him on other such occasions.

Strangely enough, our friend Thomas Stamm has never called since the broadcast just a week ago tonight, and my "detective" proclivities are automatically at work, to figure out just why. I was struck during the broadcast by Randi's saying one or perhaps two times, when we were speaking of the "Mauser" which became a Carcano, that he would not know the difference between a Mauser and a rifle from the Ideal Toy Company. It happens that Stamm works for the Ideal Toy Co., which is not a famous one as these toy outfits go, and it seemed to me a very peculiar coincidence for Randi to keep mentioning it. I have come to the tentative conclusion that when Stamm learned about the broadcast, from my telephone call some days before, he may have felt "miffed" not to be included and may have written to Randi on his office stationery, asking for an invitation. How else explain the references to Ideal Toy Co. and the fact that Stamm has not called????

I had one hearty laugh, by the way, when I received a photocopy of a batch of "forged" postcards which Bill Crehan had sent to the Randi program, praising the panel. Bill sent me the montage, under the title "S Meagher Fan Mail Batch # 2915" or whatever the PO Box no. was; one card was signed "J Cadigan" and another said that the Marr lady knew "too much, was she a plant???"

Maggie, I must tell you that I have been feeling monumentally guilty about my delay in sending back the tapes and the panoplies. It is not merely that I have been mercilessly busy—at the office, where a new outbreak of hostilities with my loathed "boss" began some weeks ago, causing me to use precious time in writing all kinds of quasi-legal documents to refute his formal charges of insolence and improper attitude and to demonstrate that his own completely improper management of the office made such "insolence" inevitable; with the broadcast, for which I studied like hell; etc. It is also the fact that I am such an inept maker of

If Harris and/or Epstein are channeling information to Liebelor or anyone else, I certainly would not like that because of the hypocrisy and treachery involved. But so far as actual information is concerned, I don't give a damn—I have nothing to hide, I'm proud about the brilliant work being done by people who are now my friends and co-workers—you, Dave, Ray, Salandria, Sauvage, etc.—Illian Castellano—and I'm absolutely serene about the rightness of what we are doing.

I'm charmed by your cousin Hannah. That is marvelous! After listening to the tape, I think it was "Sylvia Marr" and not me. You know how alien one's own voice sounds on a tape; that, combined with blank passages in my memory of the discussion, makes it sound like a different and unknown person. A few times I even felt a pang of suspense half-way through hearing one of my passages, not remembering how the particular point was going to be substantiated, and feeling a moment of fear that I was saying something erroneous. As a matter of fact, I did say a few things that were spontaneous, in the sense that I had not previously written or said those particular things...they just emerged from my subconscious, apparently.

Yes, the Allen/Scott column was fantastic. I don't think that Bundy paid for those 8250 sets of the H & B—he commandeered them, God knows for what purpose, and we paid for them—you and I and the rest of the citizenry, just as we paid for that shoddy and shameful WR, and ~~possibly~~ possibly for the very guns and bullets used...and on top of that had to spend fantastic sums, you especially, in going about the business of fighting that false and ugly document.

Maggie, I think I have exhausted myself, between last night's letter and this one. I don't think I have omitted any news of importance, and I know I had better get right back to my indexing. I hope and pray that you will have no more cause for the heartbreaking worry you experienced about Joe. All my love,