

28 December 1966

Dear Philippe,

Thank you so much for your letter of 20 December (what ^{are} you doing in Hong Kong???) and the interesting excerpts from the lady in Dallas. The Ruby affair is taking on the most incredible dimensions. As you said, everyone was ready to bet money that Ruby would never walk the streets alive and free to talk. Not me, I must admit: it seemed to me so pat that I believed he would be let go and then disappear somewhere into Mexico, to spend his hard-earned money. But I was wrong. The murderers are so bold, they have no fear of the public--and indeed why should they? The public that complacently watched the murder of Oswald and complacently accepted the expensive package of lies called the Warren Report--they will scarcely make an outcry when Ruby is silenced in his turn.

Actually, the breathless scandal of the war between Manchester and The Family has eclipsed poor Ruby entirely. He is scarcely mentioned, for everyone who knows the alphabet is awaiting the next tabloid with the next revelations about Jackie's true confessions. One is embarrassed for one's fellow-countrymen and women; for the lackey-"historians;" for the degradation of all standards of decency and dignity.

We had a terrible blizzard in New York before Christmas; and at about 4 a.m. Monday I awakened because I felt cold, and turned on the radio. When I then heard a news bulletin that Manchester had been rushed to hospital in critical condition with an unknown malady, I almost collapsed with disbelief. In the black and silence of night one's thoughts are morbid and this fantastic development seemed entirely too much, even in this already-stupefying melodrama. Now they say he is not really so sick; but he is "confused and depressed." I am sure they are preparing the soil for a deranged Manchester, who, like the deranged Ruby, can henceforth proclaim conspiracy and foul deed in high places without being paid any attention. But what can anyone expect from a country that is deliberately murdering little Vietnam? Of course there must be bestial individual acts, to match the national atrocities. The Ks are not the heroes here--they are in solidarity with the inner circle, even if they have differences of degree and a struggle for ascendancy. But they are no different fundamentally--they are just prettier and more literate, but I think they have black hearts.

Do please stay in touch, Philippe, and accept my friendly warm wishes for a Happy New Year, to you and Mrs. Labro and the baby,

Sincerely yours,