

October 18, 1967

Dear Sylvia,

First, I want to apologize most sincerely for not writing sooner to find out how you were feeling. I must confess that your severance of relations with Maggie -- a condition which I deeply wish will be temporary ~~yes~~ -- disturbed me enough to cause my thoughtlessness. I certainly hope you ~~are~~ are fully recovered by now.

I had hoped that our deep division over Garrison could be kept in perspective, and not allowed to break the bonds of affection and mutual respect that had developed among us in our long and lonely battle. I still hope this can be the case, and I for my part want to proceed on the assumption it will be.

However, since it is obvious that this is the Garrison phase of the case, irrespective of what one may think of him, it is apparent that he can not be avoided in conversation among critics, or indeed, ~~among~~ among any interested persons.

It is not my purpose here to reopen a debate between us as to the merits or lack thereof of Garrison and/or his case against Shaw; and I'm sure you would be equally unenthusiastic as I at such a prospect. Nevertheless, I feel I want to state my position on this as simply and explicitly as I can. ~~xxx~~ I do not know whether or not Shaw is guilty. I have seen no evidence, one way or another, sufficient for me to arrive at a conclusion.

What I feel, and have felt since I first decided to contact Garrison in April, is that it is extremely important that his case be presented in court under conditions -- prior to and during trial -- that insure the minimum possible interference with due process of law.

However, I do feel an obligation ~~xxxxxx~~ to tell you that I have recently arrived at a definite conclusion about an important related question, albeit not one ~~xxxx~~ necessarily tied to the previous one of guilt or innocence; I conclude that Clay Shaw and Clay Bertrand are indeed the same person.

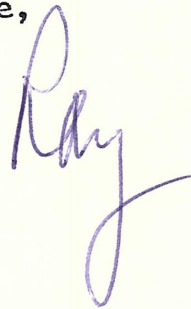
~~xxxx~~ Since this is based on seemingly irrefutable proofs, this conclusion is firm, and could be changed only if the "proofs" prove spurious, a condition which I believe unlikely in the extreme.

I do not state the above with the wish or expectation that it will change your mind, and ~~xxx~~ would not even if I felt at liberty to spell out the details of these proofs. I do say it in the hope that you retain sufficient respect for my integrity to believe I wouldn't say my conclusion is based on proof if in fact ~~xxxxxxx~~ I didn't believe it so.

Although the question of guilt or innocence ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ is a separate one, I admit this conviction that Shaw is Bertrand makes me further believe it more likely than not that he was also a conspirator in the plot. I stress, however, that the latter is a tentative opinion -- definitely not a conclusion. I am most anxious to see Garrison's evidence tested in court. In the meantime, it must be noted that, contrary to Menahem's implication in TMO, it is the ~~is~~ defense and not the prosecution which is delaying the trial.

Again, hoping you are well, please let's hear from you.

Love,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ray". The signature is stylized with a large, looping initial "R" and a long, sweeping tail that extends downwards and to the right.