

10/3/66

Dear Shirley,

I'm sure I owe you a lot of replies to letters received today and earlier...but I'm goof-off, conk-out, and weary...as well as mentally untidy...We are in the General Assembly scramble...and lots of other activity on various fronts, including the case, the family, the friends with dreary or intractable problems. I am less dejected than I was. Actually the defection was on personal matters—I guess I didn't want to admit to myself that they bothered me so much...but things improved, so I feel better all around—but don't misunderstand, not Great! One piece of good news: Maggie Field's son got a reclassification to 2-S until June 1967. At least that puts off the evil hour. (She was surprised that you had not known of her existence before the TMO letter, through our little grapevine, since she has not published.) (By the way—have you heard of or been in touch with Lillian Castellano? A good researcher, lives in Hollywood; her husband died suddenly, and she is in terrible all-pervading grief, won't accept calls or letters.)

Last Friday (9/30/66) I was in a public debate—Sauvage, Popkin and me vs Liebeler, Griffin, and Dwight Macdonald. It has kind of a nightmarish and vague aura now. Sauvage and I battled hard but I got discouraged and lost interest midway—Liebeler and Griffin are such a pair of loss-mouth cheap contemptible demagogues, it seemed easier to let them give themselves away than to corner them. They pay no attention whatever to facts. Pose the most damning fact, thinking naively they will turn white and stutter. Not at all. They brush it off, shouting and laughing like buffoons. Never mind: I'll try to get the tape (CBS re corded the whole thing; they may use parts of it on the Mike Wallace program). If I succeed, I'll make a typed transcript, although I am afraid it will run to about 100 pages of typing.

As I implied, I will not attempt a full reply to your letter. About the Kupferman proposal, I don't know what is behind it and I agree that it seems to offer little if any chance of getting closer to the truth. Still, I am glad for the bare fact that "respectable" figures go on record as believing that there is a need for some form of review—i.e., they are not satisfied with the WR.

No, I can't agree that the left or even the Left should align with RFK. I think the Left should align with truth, justice, compassion, honor, humanity, and reason in dealing with world problems of poverty, famine, and injustice. If RFK wants to align himself with those principles, good! he should be welcomed. But I can't see putting my trust in any man or any power faction on the basis of faith that they will proceed to use power properly—and certainly I am not putting my trust in a man like RFK, after his very ambiguous position on the assassination, and his ambivalent record of earlier years. (You have never commented on the methods he used—indeed, initiated—against Hoffa, which suggest the inadmissible policy of the means justified by the ends. I am quite unreconciled to the use of gangster methods, even against alleged or real gangsters.)

Shirely, I am very puzzled, I will admit, by your recurrent hints that we are going beyond our depth and your suggestion that opening the WR would be a disaster "to us." WHY?? I am interested only in one thing: to uncover the truth, whatever it happens to be. It is inconceivable to me that one should look for the truth only if it will incriminate persons or groups whom we oppose politically. If we begin to make exceptions to the rule of strict justice and strict truth, where can we end up? If this thing was planned and executed by, let's say, Tito, or De Gaulle; or by Izzy Stone, or by Malcolm X (all of whom on 11/22/63 I greatly admired), would my affection or belief in their political position justify a cover-up of their guilt or the stigmatization of an innocent man? I cannot think that anything but disaster lies at the end of a road of such temporization, compromise, and selective justice.

About K's health at the time of his death: since you say you are NOT implying that he had himself assassinated, what is the relevance of his physical condition? He probably had a serious case of Addison's disease, which could have been kept under control indefinitely, like diabetes.

As for your suspicion that the whole strategy is to maneuver us into getting rid of Warren—I am unconcerned with the strategy of others, I am concerned with my own objectives. I want to uncover the truth, whatever that may be. If to find the truth is tantamount to finding that Warren must be unseated, then unseated he must be—not for the insane reasons stated by the JBS and the KKK but, if they exist, for clear constitutional or legal reasons. Warren had a fine record on the Bench and I had great respect for him until he became babbling head of the Warren Commission. The fact that I did have respect for him makes it more, not less, difficult to forgive his role in this shameful affair. Must quit and do some official work...To be continued next time.
Love,