

I was upset over the alleged treatment given to the Italian  
(and then joint of HHS) by the Am. Secret Service men.  
NY Times reported the treatment as a "brutal going-over".

April 11, 1967

Oh, Sylvia, you know how I feel about arguments. In the long run, we may find that each of us is partly right and partly wrong about those people and circumstances we are so hotly defending. I think in my case I am always ready to accept the errors the Kennedys made because I see them like myself: often stupid, often wrong, but always wanting to do better, wanting to do the right thing. The reply to this is "Yes, but you are not up there; whereas the Kennedys are, and stupidity (harmless in you) is unforgivable in them." What do we have otherwise? Johnson? Percy? Romney? Nixon? Reagan? Not one of these men is any smarter than a Kennedy; in addition, not one has the grace that the Kennedys have to say "I was wrong. I'm sorry. Now let me do better."

My argument with Arnoni is only that he has no where to go. And I plead with him (useless) for the sake of Aloya's "single child" to modify the moment with support of RFK. At the very worst, can RFK be more of a rightist than LBJ? Isn't there a chance that if we all support RFK, and he is elected, negotiations would begin? Would it be worse than it is now? I don't think so. Arnoni seems to feel he would rather the luxury of a total rejection of the Kennedys, the Percys, the LBJs, etc., than any compromise: yet a compromise could alleviate the suffering of the "single child."

In his Senate speech (3/2/67) RFK said: "Let us reflect for a moment not on the wisdom and necessity of our cause nor on the valor of the South Vietnamese, but on the horror. For although the world's imperfections may call forth the acts of war, righteousness cannot obscure the agony and pain those acts bring to a single child."

But I agree that the argument is silly between us. We both want the same thing in the long run. I may be too naive; you may require more perfection from the human animal than he is able to deliver; but we still struggle along together, you and I, too lonely in this son-of-a-bitching mess to alienate one another. I have had this same reaction with Vince. Vince is very sweet and dear to me but he has exasperated me almost beyond belief. One week he writes: "I want very much to see RFK President of the United States" and the next week he writes he despises him. Most of us, seeing the errors of the WR, are appalled by what appears to be RFK's abandonment of us; but I have some kind of insane confidence in him that won't let me turn away. And saying this leads me to what I think is one of the most significant pieces of news lately: Did you read Walter Lippmann's column on the Manchester book? I am probably reading into it only what I want to see. But it seems to me that Lippmann (who like Jackie Kennedy moved away from D.S.) indicates (infers) in this column that the assassination was more than the work of a single senseless assassin but was related instead to events that have followed it. Please read his column on this (I'm sure you have) and let me know what you think. Is it possible that there are some (the Kennedys among them) high in the liberal establishment who are beginning to see what happened in Dallas and more important WHY it happened? Sylvia, the fact remains, that wretch though Arnoni thought JFK was, he was murdered in my opinion for putting into effect and planning to put into effect various changes in US governmental structure that could NOT be tolerated by (in my opinion) the CIA.

I agree with Harold W. that there must be exposes for example (as Kennedy intended, see Carl Rowen, see 1000 Days, see KENNEDY) on those right-wing military men who were robbing Am. military bases for weaponry to sell AT A PROFIT to so-called "free" Cubans. (The Novel-Archaca Smith development is one of the most interesting. Castorr must tie-in eventually, as will so many other names in the right-wing hierarchy.)

As you know RFK (after taking over a study of the CIA operation following the Bay of Pigs) made sweeping indictments of "free" Cuban gadfly raids on Cuba. These were stopped in so much as these orders were obeyed by authorities having to do with coastal waters. Remember, throughout this period, there was much contempt for RFK; individual CIA men blamed him and JFK for the failure in Cuba because they claimed JFK "chickened-out" and would not supply American air cover. --See Ramparts-- On the other hand these poor fish never did get an unbiased account on the Bay of Pigs. Kennedy never did promise air-cover, but expedient CIA men ~~had~~ told certain "free" Cuban leaders that KENNEDY HAD GAURANTEED IT! The hatred for JFK among the "free" Cubans was enormous. This report, reaching the President through the SS, even necessitated a special trip by JFK and Jackie to Florida to try to quiet Cuban hatred. Kenendy had a rare tolerance. He didn't hate people because they hated him, because he had an awareness about their sources of information. The CIA was really in trouble with JFK and RFK at the time of the assassination. But all these things are history and will I am sure, be part of the entire picture in time. There was also a FBI push through 62-63 to clamp down on hit-and-miss Southern arms storers. And it was this that bugged me in regard to Alba and LHO. There was strong evidence which the Kennedys were trying to pinpoint that NRA arms and ammunitions were being grossly mishandled, planned as a matter of fact in any number of illegal ways, to end up in the hands of racists. In fact, you name it and JFK and RFK were trying to learn about it and do better with it, whatever it was. So he had to be stopped. But I hope all this will come out. I hope it so much, not only for LHO but for JFK too; no one in our group seems to care or rememembr that in spite of wealth and fame, he died and those who loved him died a little at the same time.

As for Manchester's complete book, I disagree 100% with his foolish emotional connotations and judgments on LHO and the evidence, etc., but the entire book is absolutely marvelous. From much reading I knew a good deal on Dallas before and after the assassination, I knew a lot about the Kenneyds and the actions of official Washington on that terrible weekend, but this book is staggering in its detail and infinitely valuable. Manchester has written with much less rancor for LBJ than I would have shown. He has written I think fairly impartially on the Kennedys (he loves them as I do in spite of differneces over the book); the reviews in TIME, NEWSWEEK and NY TIMES were almost ecstatic and I agree. The WHOLE book is much more, muchmuch more powerful than the excerpts. I hte excerpts anyway. If I were an author I would never allow them. As for the money, I understand Manchester share will be around \$500,000 and the Library will get the millions; but while we live in this system, I have no objection to anyone making a packet. It is amazing how many people (so-called capitalists) who live in the SW criticize Mark Lane for having made money on his book. Actually why shouldn't Mark Lane have made money? He did a terrific, dangerous (still dangerous) job, and he is entitled to every cent he can wrangle from this system.

What a mess this is. I am typing against time. I have an appointment in town in one hour and I am sitting here looking like a Steinback refugee! I am following the case as closely as I can reading the NO States Item, Picayune, the Dallas Morning News. I am still not completely with Garrison but I am told by everybody, you, Vince, Harold W. and Mark Lane (read his statement in the NO papers) that I am wrong; so I can only hope. But how is it possible that Russell Long is pushing for Garriosn's investigation? That man (Long) is bad, he is bad all the way through; McKeithen is a right-winger, Garrison is all for McKeithen. I get too confused. Sylvia, you know I love you--and I even love Arnoni--although he would shudder to hear it. How can I part with any of you when you are all so good? Be tolerant for just a little while on the Kennedys and with me--perhaps we will surprise you yet. Did you like my Pope's encyclical?

Write as soon as you can telling me what you think of Lippmann's column. S.