

24 May 1969

Dear George,

Many thanks for your letter of the 22nd, broken "e" and all. I will pass the pertinent paragraphs along to Isabel Davis.

About Bill Turner's book: As you know, Bobbs-Merrill published a book of his, on police technology in general, about a year ago. My own editor (for Accessories) and good friend also handled Turner's book. Some months ago, and I am sorry that I just don't recall when it was--sometime in the second half of 1968, to the best of my recollection--Bob told me that Turner had visited him, deeply disturbed and terribly perplexed because Award had suddenly refused to accept his calls and were giving him the complete cold treatment. His book on Garrison, which was then in the final stages of production, apparently was being junked, without explanation.

It is possible, of course, that Turner did not tell Bob the real story; maybe it was just a pack of lies. Unfortunately, Bob is seriously ill and I am hesitant to question him about the matter. But somehow the thesis of Government pressure on Award to prevent publication of Turner's hymn to Garrison simply doesn't ring true to me. Why should they bother? And why should Award meekly comply? Don't forget--Award in late 1964 or early 1965 commissioned the book that Sylvan Fox ultimately wrote, which was an attack on the WR. I find it even more plausible that Award, like many of us, at first was beguiled by Garrison and wanted to do a book supporting him; but that by the time Turner's book was ready to fall, they had had a belly-full of Garrison, saw him for what he was, and had no use for him or any writer propagandizing for him. Judging from the Ramparts articles, the Government had nothing to fear and everything to gain from the publication of more Turner nonsense on Garrison.

Incidentally, I know of no single instance of suppression or attempted suppression of any book or other writings on the WR or on Garrison on the part of the feds. I know that there were offers withdrawn and cancelled commitments, in the case of Sauvage and Lane (whose books were later issued by other publishers) and Maggie Field (whose work is not a text but huge "panoplies" as she calls them, presenting a tremendous production problem--when her contract with Random House was unilaterally abrogated, she vowed that nothing would stop publication, even if it had to be done as a private printing using her own money, and since she has plenty of that I suspect that she, too, found that production difficulties were insuperable). Why should the Government even bother, anyway? The books that were published did no irremediable damage, although Inquest had them in a panic for a while, until Garrison came along to pluck them out of their embarrassment by diverting attention from the WR lies to his own, more flagrant falsifications.

You probably know that Salandria and/or Weisberg, if not Garrison himself, turned violently against Turner on the ground that he was in collusion with Boxley. I think they were crazy--incapable of seeing any explanation except a sinister one, even when all that was involved was human folly, hysteria, childishness, and excessive zeal to uncover something, anything. Turner apparently was genuinely wounded but this strange reward for his heroic efforts to sell Garrison as a sane and highly-motivated man, hurt and

bewildered and incredulous, like a wife who suddenly discovers her husband has fallen for another woman. (Nothing nasty intended by this metaphor.) From what I hear, not only Turner but Boxley too was completely innocent of anything except unbelievably infantile judgment. Since both are former Government intelligence types, this should really not occasion any surprise. The average G-man, as encountered in the WR testimony, seems mentally and morally rather sluggish.

The other night I had a phonecall from Paris Flammonde--the first since my review of his book, which I had thought was a guarantee that I would not hear from him again. Naturally, neither of us mentioned the review. He was calling to say that he was organizing a kind of sub-committee of the Fensterwald CIA to operate locally here, semi-autonomously, and to invite me to join. I simply replied, "no." Awkward pause. Change of subject.

Quite apart from my unmitigated distaste for any Garrison-connected activity or organization, even if the connection is twice-removed, I do wonder that Flammonde should have thought it conceivable that despite my low opinion of his proclivities as a researcher I would be willing to work with him or place such knowledge or materials as I have at his disposal--this rather feeble-minded latecomer to the long struggle which he helped Garrison to discredit and disgrace. I think Flammonde is just an avid self-promoter, a kind of junior Fensterwald, and much as I try to force myself to be compassionate and objective towards any past or present Garrisonite, I am beginning to suspect that it would be simpler and not at all unjust to dismiss them automatically as deficient in brainpower and plain ethics.

For anyone who has written a book as flagrantly ridiculous as Flammonde's, on its face and after the mortification of the Shaw trial, I think the graceful thing to do would be to crawl away quietly and hope that no one is ever cruel enough to mention the matter. Flammonde, however, has the audacity to give public lectures (admission \$2.00) and to nominate himself as the "leader" of further research efforts. I might easily get an ulcer from this kind of nonsense, but fortunately I do see the humor in it and laughed heartily after the phonecall. At least it gave me the chance to toss off a few more choice adjectives in characterizing Garrison and the jackasses who surrounded him, thinking to myself that if the shoe fit Flammonde (as it obviously does), he could lump it (I mix my metaphors--one of my few remaining pleasures).

So much for solidarity. Like you, I too went through a period of acting as peacemaker and appealing for unity, only to find that it was an untenable position. Who wants to be unified with cretins and crooks?

I am glad that we see the same way on UFOs and so many other issues. Would I be impertinent if I ask you to tell me something about yourself in a future letter? I don't know your age, even, or if you are a student or married or single, or when you got interested in the WR, and that kind of thing. It is only idle curiosity, let me hasten to say, not "screening" of any kind; but I am curious about people I like.

All the best,