

11 February 1968

Dear Cyril,

A postscript to l'affaire Gough: Trent Gough called me on Friday night, and rather delicately tried to convey his dilemma and appeal for help. He had only Tink Thompson for the Monday night panel discussion...Would I possibly...? I said, No. I was surprised, frankly, that Thompson had not withdrawn, even now, but naturally I could not express that to Gough. But I did tell him that I had always been frank in voicing my scepticism and lack of enthusiasm for his grandiose projects, including the bi-weekly panel programs. Since I had not had any vote, so to speak, about this project, and had not concealed my distaste for it nor my disappointment with the panel of January 29th, I rather resented any attempt to make me feel guilty or unhelpful toward the "Committee"—which seemed to consist solely of Trent himself.

He assured me that he was not trying to suggest that I had any obligation or any responsibility (but how his tone of voice belied that!) and did not press the matter. The next day I got a phone call from Jones Harris, one of our odd-ball quasi-critics, who had attended the preceding panel discussion and, I suspect, on whom Gough had now tried to dump his problem. Jones said that he felt that Tink had warned you off. I neither confirmed nor denied that, but said that you had asked my opinion and that I had strongly felt that it was not worth your time or expense. Jones then direly predicted that a great many doctors might turn up in response to the ads (before your withdrawal) in the hope of listening to Dr. Wecht. I said that I saw that as a very remote danger...considering the size and caliber of the audience last time.

Between the calls from Gough and Jones Harris, I also had a call from Tink. He was, indeed, coming on Monday night, even if he was to be by himself on the stage. He seemed to welcome the opportunity, saying that the TV and radio appearances arranged by his publisher had tapered off and this was a way to reach the public. He did not mention a phonecall from you (presumably on Thursday night, after we spoke and you expressed your annoyance with Tink's failure to withdraw when encouraging you to do so) but did persist in trying to work out a dinner date with me for Monday, before the lecture, even though I work quite late and we will have very little time, less than an hour. Then, when Jones called, he also wanted to have dinner, so perhaps the two of them will get together, and I will join them only if within the next 24 hours I should develop a greater tolerance for my fellow-men than I have been burdened with in recent times.

I am giving you this blow-by-blow account just in case of later repercussions. Tink tells me there is a review of our two books in Triumph (February), a right-wing magazine out of Washington, D.C.; and that a review of both books will soon appear in The Nation, written by Fred Cook, which Tink thinks is in some ways the best of all the reviews we have had, jointly or separately. I am really curious to see what Cook has to say. In your public talks, do you get many questions about Garrison? Do people regard his investigation as serious? And what do you usually reply on this score? It appears that the worse his excesses, the greater his mail from an enthusiastic following. This is extremely discouraging. Apparently the American public has become susceptible to any lies and flummery, however transparent and despicable. The Clay Shaw trial is now put off until April, at earliest. I do hope we can get together in March, when you come to New York. My best to you and Mrs. Wecht,

As always,