

2/7/68

Dear Sylvia,

A short while ago I returned from Washington feeling unwell, under sedation, hardly able to walk straight, and so far ~~fast~~ tired I can hardly walk at all. It had been my plan to rest a few hours prior to some things I must do tonight - and it has been so long since I even thought of taking a nap! I found in the mail your letter of February 5 and to everything else found the burden of dismay and frustration added.

Some years ago when I raised chickens, there were occasions on which they were subjected to stresses they could not endure. As a consequence some were killed, some damaged in other ways, and some just badly torn. It was ~~were~~ that a torn chicken survived. Usually the others destroyed them. As time went on I learned to cope with this. When, as a consequence of my own original investigations and methods I was able to come close to eliminating the cannibalism from the flock, I found one problem I could not overcome: self-destruction. Those damed fool hens would stand there and eat themselves, just pick away at their injuries until they killed themselves.

Knowing your passion, your seriousness, your dedication, I presume you will not welcome this, yet in honesty to you, as I slumped lower and lower into the chair as I read your tirade, this futility of the henhouse returned to me.

Your letter appears not to have been intended for me as much as for an excuse to give what you wanted to say wide distribution. I am dismayed that you would do this without consultation with me, for there are, whether it through your all consuming hatred dawned on you or not, certain things I did not want advertised and did not myself call to public or general attention. Is there nothing left for you but hatred? Has it become so vital that it blocks any thought, any reasoning, any effort to understand? ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ Can you not see now that, whether or not it was your intent - and I have no doubt it was not - you have violated my confidence?

It is precisely because of the quite principled thing you did in phoning Bud, as you recount in your third paragraph, that I got in touch with you, for my own respect for your work you know, your position I well know, and this gesture on your part, without meaning any other way, for there was nothing you could do for Bud that he could use, was significant and important precisely because it was motivated by principle and nothing else. It made me hope we could breach the disunity of the past two years, ~~work~~ work together again, communicate again, inform each other. We do have common objectives, beliefs, principles and can help what we all want by helping each other.

Many times during our conversations I reminded you I spoke to you in confidence. So, as soon as I do not take the time I do not have to write you a covering letter with what I sent you, you start writing everyone, I do not know who all. I do know that those to whom you said you send copies are two to whom I did not, for I sent copies to but three people.

Dear Sylvia, please find a motive other than hate, please try and have something to say beside "I hate Garrison". You have every right to hate him, every right to proclaim it, but is there no end? Have you nothing else to say? Has it never dawned on you that there can be (and I assure you there are) many things of which you have no knowledge your intemperance can ruin, things you would not want to in any way impede?

We are neither of us children, It dismays me to write a chiding letter ~~for~~ to you. If I did not continue to have a high regard for you, for what you have done, for what <sup>+</sup> hope and believe you will yet do, I would not write you at all. I would ignore them matter and be silent, Please try and understand that this unpleasant letter is an expression of friendship and do, please, try and consider what I say as dispassionately as it is given to a passionate person so passionately involved. You ~~demon~~ yourself with such letters, for you send them to people who know what you do not and cannot tell you, and you cannot but make them wonder about you. I do not want to dwell on this further. When the immediate matters have passed, I will at whatever length you want. But until then, please, Sylvia, do learn to express something but the endless repetition to which you add nothing. You may very well accomplish what is the last thing you would want.

There are some errors of fact I do feel I should communicate to you. Whatever happens, it will not be true that "such a default would constitute a gift ~~for~~ and a triumph for the Warren Commission, the autopsy surgeons, and the panel..." or the other formulation, "...nothing less than a disaster...". It would be very bad, but less than this. Read your words again. It is only to the past that you address yourself, to the disembodied. No boon to the assassins, to the government? To those who today derive benefit?

It is true that your position has not deviated since April 1967, but it is not true that this is "vindication". You know my feelings about this, but there are factors invoked I did not go into with you that you apparently did not detect on your own. They are real to others than you and me, for they do not relate to us. You just haven't thought about this.

"There is the immediate prospect of another miscarriage of justice and another sacrifice of an innocent man", you say. I feel it is not asking too much of you to give me your proof of Shaw's innocence. I have told you repeatedly, going back to our last and very unpleasant meeting in the UN cafeteria the summer of 1967, that there are things I know that I could not say. Is it more than clairvoyance that tells you the accused is innocent? There is an enormous amount of knowledge not indicated in the 26 volumes, a vast amount that I have gotten on my own, independent of Garrison, much he will not use, some of which he doesn't know. I told you then and I now repeat, I have the most substantial reason for believing Shaw and Bertrand are one, as Clark, in an unguarded moment, with his information coming from only the FBI, said. I know absolutely that there was and was suppressed an investigation of Shaw, by the FBI, and I have some of those who were part of it voluntarily on tape so stating. I know of not just interview reports but signed statements. There was more than one investigation, and I know about the earlier one. I know what Andrews told me and I cannot now tell you but will when the trial is over. And so many, many other things of which you have no glimmer.

Read your concluding question intended as other than a question. The answer is not what you expect. It is affirmative. I have a concern you do not have, that things have reached a state where for justice to be done the guilty may have to be acquitted. It worries me, as <sup>+</sup> hope it might you. You speak not only of Shaw. I tell you also that, when the Thornley matter is over, I will give you access to what probably will not be part of any proceeding but will shake you up a little. Sylvia, I showed my trust in you by inviting you here to see my unpublished material. I have done that with very few. I do not withdraw that offer now. I have not changed my opinion of your brilliance, your sincerity, your genuineness - not of any of your rare gifts and attributes. I beg you only as a friend to be less of a lemming, less the creature of unbridled hate and now that things are in court, to control yourself until there is a judicial determination. If there is no chance you can do any good, please forgo the possibility of doing harm. Please, when the trial is over, come here for a weekend and let me tell you some of the N.O. things I developed myself.

There is another aspect of which I must tell you and then I must stop. With what you know I think you cannot begin to understand the corruption of the other side, the despicable things that have been done against Garrison which cannot in any way relate to any excesses on his part and predate any statements by him of which I have knowledge. There are so many vile things authenticated, of the past and of the present. There is no question about the offering of large sums of money and other considerations. Some of those approached have told me about them in detail, on tape, and then had such pressures applied they had to accept. I fully expect several will not survive, not live to bear witness.

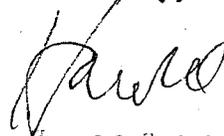
In saying "against Garrison" I am saying against a free and fair trial. That may have already been rendered impossible. You cannot begin to imagine what has happened in part of the judiciary. I tell you of what I know, not of what Garrison has told me - for he has not. When I properly can, if you want, I will tell you this.

Sylvia, it is no longer enough to hate Garrison, which I can understand, and it is not constructive. To say, as you do, "He is a bad man" is not proof that the facts are against him in the present case. I have doubts about what can be adduced in open court, but not about the facts.

Vince phoned me night before last to tell me that he had nothing to do with the final decision (and you mistake the sense in which I told you he had power) but that had he been consulted, he would have advised the course taken. Now, emphasizing again that I address you in confidence, I later learned that he had not been informed, that the decision had again been changed. I tell you that as of today the hearing will be on the 14th, that Wecht and Forman will be witnesses, and please be silent. You know how I feel about the essentiality of the hearing. What you do not know is that there is a legitimacy to a contrary view in New Orleans, not New York, or Maryland, or Pittsburg, or Madison, or Philadelphia. There is a defense of the other view that never dawned on Vince.

I am not able to read and correct this. I hope the typographical errors are not of the kind that will make understanding impossible, and that you will try and penetrate any fuzziness of expression that might be attributed to my extreme fatigue. It is such that if I did not feel of you as I do I would not have written.

Sincerely,



Harold Weisberg