

9/16/70

Dear Sylvia (cc Mary),

Having made my share of bad judgements, trusted those unworthy of trust, befriended those not friends, I had hope you'd by now have made an independent evaluation of what I have considered possible with Paul. As I told you, I have no way of knowing whether what I've considered possible is real. I am aware that some might be wishful thinking, for that whole thing is simple incredible. I cannot find anything rational that explains it, not what I can credit.

Because I will soon be even more pressed for time and because I cannot afford to phone you and discuss this with you, I'll tell you the essence of what had occurred to me. Time is passing, if there is to be an effort to publish that monster (thanks for the address of Physics Today) and it is to be answered.

Because aside from the absence of anything that can be called "science" and because of the lack of even simple logic in that piece, plus other things, I immediately wondered if Paul was being pressured by the arrogant Alvarez, who is a fink - and a crook - and a great ego. It seemed that with Paul working for him, with his doctorate depending upon him, possibly his future, he could be pressured as otherwise I'd consider him incapable.

Built into that awful thing was what destroys it, in several, very comprehensible areas. That and the note that could be taken as a warning, that publication was intended and it was assumed the press would pick it up, made me wonder further if Paul, of whose intelligence I have the highest opinion, was giving us signals, particularly you and me. And it is a remarkably poor job, so entirely unlike him.

I began making separate inquiries immediately and the answers are not definitive. They have also been few, and from Paul only silence (but I do know, from what he had written me earlier and from others, that he is and has been unusually busy with his regular work). So far, I have been able to get no single confirmation of this theory and only signs of Paul's seriousness of intent. In short, I have been able to develop no reason for crediting my own conjecture. I thus have to consider it wrong unless and until I can get support for it. This, in turn, raises other questions in my mind, as it cannot in yours, for I have had a relationship with Paul you have not, have trusted no one more than him, and have informed him of things I have not shared generally. The timing on this business is rather remarkable. If it had been calculated to break at a time when it would most benefit the government, the timing could not have been better. While I am not saying it was so designed, I am saying two other things: this is the effect and to his knowledge it is the effect. If I see no reason to conjecture further about this and certainly make no accusations, I also feel I cannot avoid mention of it to you.

Aware as I am of my own errors in judgement - and some have been so painful I'll never forget them - I still cannot believe Paul is either a conscious fink or had "sold out" or anything like that. Yet I cannot reconcile this with the utter incompetence of what he has done, and that incompetence alone is sufficient to make me wonder if the paper is no more than the expression of an inquiring mind seeking balance. That business of the fifth floor is the kind of mistake Paul would never make, nor is the omission of Tague, nor the belief that if the shot came from the rear and only from the rear it had to have come from the sixth-floor window and to have been fired from that rifle, by Oswald's finger, which is exactly how this will be taken, and he had to know it. There are other lemmings in it.

There is more, but I think ~~now~~ more is needed and there isn't time for it. If you have any opinion - and in the absence of fact, we have to go on opinion - I'd welcome it as soon as you can find time for it. I gave Mary alone a copy of what I sent Paul (two weeks ago - ample time for response). She was here and we did have a chance to discuss it. She has not commented since, so I do not know what she may think of the hasty and incomplete analysis I did.

If I have not heard from Paul in a week, perhaps less, I will write Physics Today and ask for simultaneous space for the opposite side. I will defer doing this for a few days because I think this whole thing can be utterly ruinous to Paul, and that I would avoid if at all possible, lacking proof of deliberate intent on his part to hurt us and what we seek.

On the other hand, because of the gross misuse that is inevitable - and correct use is a sufficiently great disaster - I cannot delay this indefinitely. Also, I have to anticipate even less time than I now can find, so I'll have to do it fast if I am going to. I'd especially ^{like to} have enough time for others, particularly you, to go over anything I'd write. I think I have the essence in what I've already done. There are, undoubtedly, a few things I've missed, and some have come to mind.

Aside from you, only one other person has sent me a copy of what they sent him, someone you do not know. It was a very bad thing, full of what can be taken out of context if Alvarez is personally involved or if Paul is as bad as can be argued from this paper. I have suggested to others with special competences that they ask for copies and time to respond. I have also asked Paul for copies I can have my own scientific experts examine. He has not supplied them. His silence has been complete. I suggest your response and mine may account for this as much as his work obligations, for if this originated with him, aside from the gloom he will have to worry about what he involved Alvarez in.

In fairness to Paul, my first letter, separate from the analysis, was somewhat elliptical, for I had to consider that if he is under some kind of special pressure, extra care was essential. I do not doubt he understood the ellipsis. However, I have been in touch with a mutual friend who correctly understands what puzzles me. He will soon be seeing Paul and I may have more information of a more dependable nature. If I do, I'll let you know promptly.

Sincerely,