

10/19/70

Dick,

Re your 10/14, thanks.

Your stuff to Ed was fine. You may hear. I have no doubt we have shaken him very much. The little thing that most disturbs me, from what I know of him, is that cavalier bit about my ulcer and arguing. That is so irrelevant, so out of character! Little things can be big clues. I remain troubled, esp. about him. He is a fine mind and he has always been selfless and genuine. If inclined to associate with a few vermin.

We should have expected exactly the kind of thing you sent, for I'd been warning him of its likelihood. I have no doubt the result will be shock, but I do wonder if it will end in the restoration of "sense". However this riddle starts and ends, I do not think his common sense will figure in either. That is where he is long.

You know I am an autopsy buff! You are so right! The diagnosis has to be some form of Alveritis, as you put it. And we'd be well advised to understand there is neither immunity nor vaccine. It has a less sinister but also deadly mutation, egotripism. One of us is heavily infected right now-Bud. With at least a subconscious realization, too.

He may or may not think we are in cahoots, but he will know better. He certainly knows that all disagree violently, and that collaboration is required. If he gets this notion, it will be no more than a defense mechanism. We also know that when I tell him I've given copies of my comment to anyone until after getting theirs that I'm not lying.

Some time ago a more sinister thought struck. That he sent the sickness around to get all the criticisms in advance of revision so that they could seem to be accounted for or to help indicate what had best be edited out before publication.

This whole thing remains an enigma to me. I make no other pretense. I lack the essential clue or, having it, have wrongly discounted or eliminated it. I can't believe he has flipped, either.

Spreague and Flammonde appeared on Fred Gale's (WMCA) show with Bud yesterday. Flammonde pretended he hasn't yet decided whether to do a book but says he is thinking of it at Bud's encouragement! How's that for a conflict of interest. Let the explanation of his trip to England with Bud is that his publisher paid for it. The hairier this gets, the more ticklish. But I think it is past the point where it is worth your time in trying to learn anything from Dick.

Bestilly,

14 Oct 70

Harold:

My copy of Dawnay letter was sent to Dienstfray today-- it's not very good, but prob. will be OK.

Enclosed is your 2 Sept 70 letter to Hoch, which I copied for myself. You know that I could not agree more. I do not know how he could be impervious to such criticism. I suspect he anticipated your response and, even before learning it, sought to harden himself for the blows which he knew would come. I doubt whether he anticipated the sort of stuff I sent, so perhaps my letters will shock him into some semblance of sense. We'll see. No reply from him yet.

My comments to Hoch were not intended to treat him memo comprehensively. I considered it sufficient merely to give him enough to put any sane man down soundly and for good. Once dead, really dead, there is no point in wasting my time and energy on a corpse.

If he ever comes round to acknowledging that his baby is dead, I think an autopsy on the corpse might be very revealing. I suspect we would find the disease Alvaritis is infectious, out to contaminate elsewhere.

I am rushed, so I won't linger.

If I get the chance, I'll check with Sprague re Flammonde.

I can hardly wait to hear from Hoch, sad as it is.

Still,

Dick

P.S. Surely Hoch will think that you and I are in cahoots -- that I am your lap-dog conspiring with you to "get" him. Sad, sad, sad.