1/13/71

Dear Dick,

It is fear that prompts immediate response to your letter of the 6th, despite the fact that my should troubles me enough this monting to tell me I shouldn't type. I fear that between Sylvia and me we are and have been hard enough on Paul and that is others do this, with what I know of him and what I suspect, it may be very bad. I am not persuaded that it is likely that Paul if a fink. I think it possible he has hurt me more than he has hurt you, which is immaterial, and I know my disappointment in him and the thinks he has been doing lately can't be less than that of anyone else. But I just can't reconcile his selling out with what I have known of him over the years.

I don't know what has happened to him. Someone else, in a better ppsition to evaluate by remote control, suggests there may be some kind of mental illness. I think tha t whether or not it is true, we should regard it as a possibility and treat him with this in mind. At the same time, he knws me well, and is sharp, so if I get far out of character, he'll have suspicions, and nothing I say or do can influence him in any way then.

It certainly was less than honest for him to withhold the citation from you and his misuse of that source is consistent with his melonry. He knew he should have told you, the old Paul would never have overlooked this, and he knows better than his melon paper. The question remains, "why?". Increasingly it has become clear to me that he has gotten large stores of documents of which he has not sent me copies. Now going back to the time I started to buy heavily, when I said the hell with debt, I sent him everything, even when I found reason to suspect he was giving it to Lifton despite my firm and expressed objections to his doing this. If I haven't told you, there is no doubt that Lifton is as sick as he is bright, which is a great tragedy, for he is very bright. He is as clever at dissembling, and there are few of us he hasn't fooled. Had it not been that he must have been off on one of his spells when he first called me on the phone - so incredible that I decided to tape it while he was talking (and I have never played it back and never let anyone hear it and don't intend to). You have never heard such insanity. When I first went to Calif. I tried to avoid him, as politely as I could, and agreed to see him only because the very fine man with whom I was staying said it would be personally embarrassing to him if I didn't, and he gave me quite an exposition of what he could expect from Lifton. So I did. Last time I was out there I phoned him, on Paul's insistence. That time, having learned that Dave manufactures vilifications and also tapes phone calls, I also taped this one, and again, it was a combination of the most amateurish attempt to pump me and this far-out rubbish. I don't know what his illness is, but I do know that others interested in the assassination out there have had to rush him to the hospital for such reasons. Something is bugging him about me, and it can't be anything I started for it began before we had the first contact. I learned all of this and some of the most unbelievable details of a totally false campaign when he, as he infrequently does, for he is quite intelligent, went a bit too far. He had been campaigning against me with Gary, not knowing how close Gary and I have been. Finally, he challenged Gary to confront me with all this rubbish, involving him, the Nemcombs, Maggie Field, Bill O'Connell, a debate I had lined up with Libeler that Lifton got cancelled once the school had gotten Liebeler commited to an organized format on which he couldn't fillibuster and with both of us supplied with (unrestricted use of) tapes. I then went over my files and made copies on every single one of the many libels, and there were many, and in every single case there was total disproof of his manufactures (they can be nothing else) save in one case, a personal vilification, where the rest of the correspondence involving that person made it impossible to believe, as Gary saw immediately. In the school case, where Lifton clearly acted as Liebeler's agent, I still find it hard to believe anyone could be as dishonest. What actually happened is that I agreed to debate Liebeler without fee if he got none, and asked that if he got paid (there was to have been an admission charge), I get what he did. I was offered my travelling expenses, for when I was first asked, I said I couldn't travel any other way, and I said this would not include Los Angeles expenses, for I was certain I could stay with friends who would drive me. By the time he got through with this, I was insisting on a fee they couldn't pay, was demanding cab fare for the 100 miles round trip to the airport, was trying to get the school to finance a trip for me to California, deceived the kinds, all kinds of things that the correspondence proves is exactly the opposite of what I wrote. The picked and insisted upon a date, for

easily-understood reasons having to do with scheduling and advertising, so when I was out there the month earlier Dave made this me chiselling an extra trip from the gate. What was there in it by way of profit for me to fly all the way to California and back without fee? The onlt reason I considered it was to get Liebeler nailed to an organized format (and that is all in writing), where he couldn't fillibuster, as he had on the Les Crane Show, and where I'd have ample opportunity to nail his lies fast, where he'd not be able to avoid the issues, etc., and with prior agreement to unlimited use of the tape by him and by me. It was at this point where Dave started working on the kids and succeeded in getting it cancelled. I had changed none of the conditions ever, and never asked what was not agreed to at the very outset. Dave served as Liebeler's lackey, when Liebeler a) could not refuse to live with this anti-fillibuster format and b) could not gracefully extricate himself from it. This is not the only such case. In going over these files so Gary would be able to confront Lifton, I was astounded to learn that in 1966 Dave had volunteered to research the work of another critic so Liebeler could clobber him! NAI Let me add that when Gary confronted Dave with all of this, Dave was without response. There is no question about the facts. The only question to me is whether whatever his mental illness may be, it is the entire explanation. Anyway, Paul knew the essence of this, and perhaps more that did not reach me, for Lifton, I later learned, had engaged in an extensive letterOwriting campaign against me long before this. Some of the things he did have to be warnings to all of us. For example, because of his friendship with Thornley (also sick and a horrible person), he got together with him as soon as the Garrison investigation was known and got Thornley to execute a false affidavit framing John Rene Heindell. Only an unpredictable departure from his character prevented Garrison's use (misuse) of this, and do I have to tell you what the result could have been? So, aside from giving you some background on Lifton, which I have never done, I also tell you that if I were looking for reasons to have doubts about Paul, I do not have to look hard or far. He also had to know that for whatever reason, Lifton was engaged in a rather intensive espionage against me that ultimately got reported to me by those who found it so excessive and dubious -and this means his friends. Paul is not one of thise who reported it, and it may well be that Lifton's estimate of Paul is that it would have been a mistake to try this with him.

But even when it became clear that Paul,was not as cooperative as we have always been and was neither sending me copies nor informing me of what he got, I did not and still do not regard this as evidence he is some kind of fink. More, some of the work he was done makes it impossible to believe this.

We have to face th fact that people do such things for other reasons that selling out. And I sometimes have trouble woth people over this. For example, when I exposed both Boxley and Turner, and they had worked out a real disaster I was able to prevent only by accident and with another disaster the consequence, I could not prevent Garrison's labelling of Boxley as an agent and, in the last conversation we ever had, tried to persuade him that there was no basis for considering Turner one. My dislike of Turner is well known and goes back to 1967. We have to try and avoid being overly-paranoid, even if the result would be that a real agent is unexposed, for it is too crippling. Mary chides me for not being careful enough with those I do trust, and maybe she ir giht. However, I see no need for there to be nay agents among us, the government already knowing just about all we know, and if they don't know 100% it is because they are inefficient or incompetent. They use agents in other ways. Besides, so many of us eliminate the need for them to employ agents. I know they have, but not in a way that would lead to me believe Paul is one.

I think I had reason to be more shocked than anyone else when I saw that Melonry. I immediately asked myself why he did such a thing and have satisfied myself that my first belief, pressure from that whore Alvarez, is without basis. The notion that it may be illness, which does not originate with me, is easier to believe and to justify.

This is not to say that he is not dishonest, in itself a rather large shock to me and inconsistent, I admit, with everything I know about him. His dishonesty you report is blatant and without acceptable excuse. Again, I think the question is why, and I suggest that instead of giving him deserved hell about it, in strong language, if you haven't written by the time you get this, write a polite inquiry, a la Morgan, and let

us see what happens, how he reacts. His "~~xxx~~ "oversight" will not be easy to explain. Confront him with it quietly, in subdued language, mild surprise, etc.

If Paul is the sell-out Sylvia thinks of the fink you do, the hazard to my work is greatest of all, for he can, without doubt, help prepare the kind of defenses of what he can accurately anticipate of which the melonry is an example, and with the attention the other side can get, this can get much attention. You have a pretty good notion of what some if it is. (By the way, arrangements are being made for the negative you returned to be examined by a competent criminalist.)

Now that I learn, as I did yesterday, that a large part of what has been declassified had been published and yet had also been classified and withheld, I am even more disturbed at the unwise thing Paul did of which I wrote and to which you say you will make comment.

There are real barriers to real cooperation, some personal (and we all have strong personalities, strong beliefs). I think that to the degree we can, we should try and avoid adding to those existing between the few people still doing meaningful or extensive work. I think each of us, if he trys hard enough, can find what he considers just cause for resentment against others. For example, Sylvia, who never sent me any money when I had to go into debt even to go to the Archives and began by not gettinf copies because I hadn't the money to pay for them, sent Thornley $100, without checking into what could fairly be said about him (apparently on Lifton's word and her so lucidly and pointedly expressed dislike of Garrison). Now I don't for a minute think she intended it ~~xx~~ to be used as it was, and I learned only by accident, to finance their campaign against me. At the time she did this I had said nothing of Thornley more than is in O in NO, and believe me, I had plenty of reason to. Despite this reason, then not as persuasive as it is now, but at the very least credible, I tried to make it possible for Thornley to defend himself in advance of charges being place (these never were, incredibly enough). My offer even included vesting the literary rights in him. Unless he is guilty of something, which is not only not hard to believe but is hard not to believe, knowing what I now do, he had every reason to accept this offer, as his nasty friend even recommended. But they did no end of dirty and dishonest things to me, financed by Sylvia's gift ~~xxxx~~ she intended for other purposes. Of course, I was disappointed that Sylvia would allow her passion to get her into this, and her later unwillingness to hear what she was into with the sole stipulation that she preserve confidence, dismayed, really, for it is so unlike my very high estimate of her as a person and of her exceptional intelligence. I think a detached view could not unfairly be stated as unreasonableness on her part, and she is an eminently reasonable person. But I did not then and do not now consider her a fink or, with what I know of Thornley, a sell-out. Knowing that she is strong-willed, as highly-intelligent people with every reason to have confidence in their own judgement often are and are entitled to be, instead I avoid to the degree I can what I feel will make such problems for her. Here let me explain what you have no reason to know, and it will give you an ~~xxx~~ higher opinion of her great work: she works a very long and very hard day, under circumstances that often are very difficult. Sometimes there is no limit on the hours required of her. This is not to say you shouldn't have sent her a copy of your letter, for you should, but as all of us age, and I suppose I more than the others become aware of the toll, I do suggest that you not needlessly upset her or prompt her to unnecessary work, like writing letters that can do no good.

We have to be careful with our judgements, for we must, to the degree we can, collaborate, where we can. Let me give you another example that again involves Sylvia, and I use it because she is so truly exceptional a person. I was not aware of it until she later chided me for it, but those bastards Schiller and Lewis, to whom I had spoken to begin with only with the understanding that it be entirely off the record and for their understanding only, my comments about critics then having been never critical in public in those days and only when confronted since, edited their tapes and that with such dishonesty it is hard to believe. The end product, without even dots to indicate omission, is that they have me talking about Sylvia when I was talking about another. How she could have failed to realize this without my telling her, this interview having been about a year before I saw her book, I can't tell you, but it did and it hurt her, I am sure deeply.

And, of course, I was hurt that she would believe this of me, particularly when she mistrusted those bastards when I didn't, when they conned me, for her own instinctive and certainly correct mistrust should have told her they had manufactured this. Schiller, by the way, can qualify as an agent, for whether or not paid, he did act as one, for the FBI. They followed him where they could, armed with what he had been told.

I've taken all this time and told you things I never have before, and when he gets the carbon I'm sending him, Howard will learn them for the first time, to try and give a different perspective and not to needlessly add to the divisions that already exist among.us. I think Paul's recent actions require caution of all of us, but I think there is no case for him being a sell-out or a fink. There is a case for dishonesty, but the explanation that can be accepted is lacking. This, of course, is my opinion only, and I have no right to demand itsa acceptance by others. However, I do wish you would consider it a possibility and, without letting down any guard you think you should keep up, perhaps be guided by it.

On the question of whether or not he is ill, as I think on the basis of what I now know comes closest to being a possible explanation, I am not expert. I have Gary's opinion, and he is expert, that we should be careful and not needlessly harsh. Since learnig this, I have been in most cases what for me is temperate. If I went further Paul xx would detect the effort and wonder about it. We can hurt him more if we make mistakes along this line. I am not saying will, I am saying can. Again referring to Sylvia, and not to persecute, but because it is the only parallel case of which I can think, when I heard that she was pressuring Lifton, I tried to caution her that this could drive him over that very thin line. She has not responded, and there is not more I can do. But I have no hatred of Dave, evil as he has been and much as he has hurt the work I've been going (he did reach people and end the work they were doing, in one case a young person who did not understand what he was doing for me and what it meant, for he was not equipped to evaluate the fact he got - and I've neither the time nor anyone who can do exactly what he was). And, should it happen, as with such people it can from a variety of influences and perhaps without any special one, she'd never forgive herself and I do not want her so burdened.

Do try and be patient. It is not easy (except for me, now, and all my life I was the opposite-but I've learned to be and it pays off, as Howard, who has just finished updating the index of my government correspondence can tell you). Please taken my word for it that what he has done make the possibility of his being an FBI agent absolutely impossible and of his being one for the CIA unlikely. For whom else? Alavrez? If Paul would not do it directly, I do not think he would indirectly. And don't underestimate his very high intelligence,either. You knowm, for the carbon, the degree of trust I still impart in him. If I do not ask you to trust him to his, or to any degree, I do ask that you do not preclude the possibility of his writing you, especially because if you and Sylvia are right, and if I am wrong, this might lead to the proof and you'd thus be preventing it.

I will add to the memo when I can. There are more pages than I now have that are relevant and, I am happy to say, I correctly anticipated the official dishonesty and those pages are on their way to me. They will tell me more of Ferrie, perhaps only in detail of what I have already established, and may of Bringuier and the LHO/FPCC thing.

While I'd prefer not to spend more time on the Paul thing now and shouldn't have devoted this much (that I have please take as a measureof the impirtance with which I regard it) by all means argue if you consider me wrong and I will respond. If my approach is wrong, I want to be persuaded it is. I want not to make mistakes.

Sincerely,