10/21/71

Dear Jim,

I had a very heavy mail today. A short note from Bill is sensible, as is a long letter from Jimmie, of which you'll get a copy of my answer. All the rest, including your undated one mailed yesterday, with the (thanks) Porsch piece I'll read when I've time, range from disappointing (yours) to stupid. This includes a non-responsive and personally offensive letter from Cyril that I've answered and I'm circulating neither. My purpose is not to fight. But let me get to the disappointment in yours.

It is worse than not enough to say, "I think we can get Sprague to retract some of his statements in the last article." I also think it is a waste of time for you to write a retraction. Save for the making of a record, retractions are almost without exception counterproductive and serve to exacerbate the wounds they never heal.

Nothing less than the permanent closing of that sick mouth is worth anything and if you can't do that, spend your time on what has the prospect of serving a constructive purpose. But maybe, at long last, you are getting a notion of why, when I had nothing but the highest personal regard for Bud and no reason to doubt his stability I was willing to trust him personally, a rather serious mistake I freely acknowledge, but could have nothing to do with the CTIA. In only slightly exaggerated form was Sprague not typical of the entire board, of whom for the best the most that could be said is tha t they are only dishonest on this subject.

And if all you could accomplish is the possibility of a max possible retraction in partial form, ought you not be asking yourself the kind of people you are dealing with and whether it is worth it. When the article is as bad in every way as that one and when he is considered fit to be on the board of directors on anything having to do with assassinations?

And after this you are willing to consider even looking at any articlaes that are planned? Is some of it rubbing off on you? I'll not raise the question with either SM or PH, but I'll consider both publicity happy + nuts if they consider it. The only answer is silence by those who really have nothing to say and by those incapable of separating fact and fiction, dreams from reality.

Even accurate articles can hurt and Sprgue, having nothing of consequence of his own, serves no purpose in writing of the materials of others all of who are as gifted in expressing themselves as he is. Include Bud, whose stuff has been as awful as it is sick.

Hastily and disgustedly,

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Dear Harold,

Enclosed is a copy of the Prosch article. It seems to provide some possible ways of checking further on not only Prosch but on Birmingham activities in general.

I think we can get Sprague to retract some of his statements in the last article by him. In the meantime I will draw up a draft which I may send if he doesn't submit one himself. I think there is general agreement that all further articles by anyone will be submitted here first and referred to an established critic--most likely Sylvia or Paul--if there is any question about the accuracy of the contents. Probably, though, the damage is already done.

Jim