

5/2/66

Dear Sylvia,

I will not have time to write a letter tonight and I'm too tired. I regret we just cannot accept Salandria's invitation. I'd really like to. But three weeks ago there was a family affair in Philadelphia where I'd have seen some cherished friends among my relatives and I could not. I hope he believes me, for I do not want to give him offense any more than I want him to offend me. I think it would be good for us all to get to know and understand each other better, too.

What news I now have will follow, and since it will do no good to mail this before Saturday anyway, I'll add anything that might develop tomorrow to it by then.

My request for access to those films owned by UPI was honored, limited in two ways. First, I had asked that all those accredited by the Archives be allowed to see them. So far as the letter to me goes, this is not the case. Only I am now accredited. So, if and when you want to see them, let me know and I'll tell you what I did and who I did it through. Meanwhile, I assure you that through the Archives, to which I'll give the written permission I received today, I'll also try and broaden it. As things are now, there will be no chance I can do this before the end of next week. If there are any things you'd suggest I look for especially, please let me know. Also, if there are any things in them you'd like me to report to you on. My authorization also includes frame by frame scrutiny, an exact quote. It does not include any reproduction rights, nor does it preclude them. Were I to desire these, I'd have to negotiate with UPI. I suggested this language and believe it is fair to me and everyone else and assures UPI of the protection they sought in placing the restriction on the films to begin with.

As I told you, I made a point by point refutation of the alleged fact in the Post story. I delivered it by hand Tuesday am and it was read in my presence. I got no satisfaction and was further abused yesterday afternoon when Shaw's statement that he always thought a single bullet wounded the governor alone and fragmented in so doing was cited as proof of the Specter dream! So, I made the exact quote and mailed that. Today, through the uninvited intercession of a famous European correspondent I saw the editor of the Washington Post and gave him copies of the letters. I made polite but firm representations on behalf of both myself and Epstein, specifying I didn't know him and had no authority to speak for him. There is no reason to believe anything good will come of this, but I hope it will. This elderly gentleman is a fine one, I think, and when I said this to my wife she reminded me of previous occasions on which similar judgement had been wrong. Nonetheless, I regard him as a fine, decent gentleman. He is, even if he agrees with me, and you know how the cards are stacked, in a bind, for I do not know any paper that will say we made a big, unfair and damaging mistake. So, we'll wait and see. I'd prefer you say nothing of this. You can, I'm sure, add to the documentation I mustered, and when I think it is proper, I'll send you a copy of the letter(s) I have informed the proper person at Viking about this at length. We are to meet and talk further soon, when he is in DC. In spite of its evil, this major story did break the ice on doubts, and that is a plus.

Your letters of the 31st and 1st arrived on 3rd. I read and answer them hastily because of my own involvement and interrupt the writing of a series of five programs to do this, so please understand it is hasty and must be because the reporter and tape machine are coming and because I have had other interruptions. The Washington Post thing, which I now believe will result in breaking the thing wide open, is what I have been working on more than any other one thing for a long time. Someday I'll show you the correspondence. You may find some if it will tickle you. The Times is now interested and will do a story this coming Monday even though Viking apparently does not think so. It will be by Peter Kihss, a column long, and will mention all books and writers, including Salandria, "Minority of One, Lane, Epstein (who'll probably be featured) Fox, Buchanan, Joesten, everyone he knew of or I could think of when under pressure. I hope I didn't forget anyone. I have been working on the Times from the Washington end since last Summer and as recently as day before yesterday when I had a long chat with the man assigned (Graham) and gave him some fresh material they will not now use. Beside the LA thing you mentioned, there will be stories in Detroit and other places, as far away as Winnipeg and Australia. I have been in touch with Viking, offered my help, told them what I have done and plan, and am meeting with them beginning tomorrow. I have also offered Agel the sharing of my tomorrow night's half hour on radio. There will be much more, and for a good deal of it I will be responsible. When you see the list of what I have done in the past month alone and see how I have been spending money I do not have you will perhaps understand that I have been working in interests other than my own (including introducing both Salandria and Arnoni and the magazine and ideas with which I still am not in accord to the potential of a press in Europe and in competition with myself). There is no major paper or syndicate not now at least in a position to be familiar with the Warren material, and with some of the correspondents I have spent much time, including telling them what I understood, that the Epstein book is a fine one. It may smother me, but I have done it. And I have done it on the record. So much for my selfishness. I do not and have been able since World War II to hold rancor or hard feelings. Of the few things I cannot and do not abide, one is an attack on my integrity. You will eventually see the correspondence and will be able to decide for yourself whether I drew the wrong conclusions, which I regret whether or not they are wrong, and whether I reacted as a consequence of the conditions you pointed out and whose accuracy I concede or as any man with any self-respect would. In this I want you also to be aware of the fact that I could have exploited these things and the Lane one for my own benefit and for the promotion of my book. Instead I kept them private, as I did my criticism of Salandria's article, which I mentioned to you alone and in private. You have not changed my mind on this one thing. Only evidence will, and I tell you know that will have to be overwhelming. We all err, and I am no more immune to this than he, and I make no claim of perfection or immunity. I also want you to note that I did not start any of it, did not call the first name, and in each case terminated it. My last letters from Lane and Arnoni are and will be unanswered, and you can see for yourself what this means. It was I who received the first blow and who also first called peace, who first was attacked and who first said we should not fight each other. This addresses itself to motive. You need not apologize for understanding friendship. He who is silent when impelled to criticism but pretends friendship. I desire none of this squabbling and repeat did not start it and tried to end it. Note that I made no response to Salandria in response to his letter to Dellinger. I only sent him a copy. Yet both assailed my integrity without basis and both ignored the facts in which they were of possession. The best that can be said of Salandria's letter to Dellinger is that he seeks to enforce his beliefs upon me. You will not my silence on all of this. I have made myself and my response clear, and to me that is all that is called for. I want no disputes with these people and would like to get along with them for everyone's mutual benefit. This must begin with mutual trust and respect, all around.

From now on we will all be even busier. If I may make a suggestion, should you get the chance, note the citations in refutation to the alleged fact in the Washington Post story because this may add to mine, which was in haste, with a less fresh mind and with less to draw upon. Mine is adequate; it may possibly be fortified, and it cannot be too strong. This may be the first clear target. I am trying to use it as that and may succeed. It may also be helpful because among the major columnists, most of whom I have approached, at least one is giving serious consideration to a column. The Post may have ruined the chance; I may have been able to salvage it; I do not now know. I have used this also elsewhere. I cannot predict with what result or if, indeed, with any. But I can also tell you this: at all of the major TV networks, at two of which my material has been read and at one on the highest level, at both major wire service, at one of which the material has also been read, I have been working. The basis for all is laid. I wish I had the time and money to be working in Washington today. But I have to get back to the radio news script I am working on, for if I can hold the five three-minute newscasts I now have and use them properly, they will be on prime time and with a major audience and can perhaps bring much out.

I have not changed my opinion of Warren personally not in his capacity here. Until I am convinced he should bear ^{more than} his own share of the guilt alone, I will be unconvinced. I do not believe he is God. I know that like all men he can err. I am convinced he did in this case err grievously, and you certainly recall I did carefully and forcefully document this. I would regret his becoming the goat. I do not believe he should be, and until I am convinced other than I now am will do whatever I can to avoid it.

You need also not apologize for your other friends, for I understand that as I am subject to emotions so are others. I take no offense at your letter, and there is no reason why I should even consider doing so. Your motive is more than good; it is quite proper. Yet so you will understand, I will give you a brief quote.

Arnoni, May 16; "I have found your book, in the main, to be merely a reiteration of research, analysis and criticism by others." Among other things he here told me he is aware of many publishers who would and will print my book. After my history he bludgeons me with that, with the history of the Lane and Sauvage books? Aside from dishonesty, he tells me my main trouble is conceit. All of the quotes from publishers or editors who read the book he wills into offhand opinions from those who had not seen it. And my book is not truly definitive. Salandria, May 26: "But the author, ~~has~~ perhaps unintentionally, has caused a flaw to creep into his work. He has not rendered that historical ~~judgment~~ justice so characteristic of Karl Marx, to wit, the habit of quoting the source (my emph.) - no matter how obscure - which enjoy priority in time for the publication of the material discussed." You very well know that my books was finished by mid-February 1965. In God's name, who could I have credited, and what other sources could I have credited? To the best of my then and present knowledge, there is not a single one. And so far as I am concerned, if they permit it, this is done. And I have just recalled I didn't mention Feldman's writing to Kihss. I agree with you on the need for arresting this awful drift, most especially at this time. I hope you will see that I have done what I could to do this by not worrying it further, having not initiated it. There is more constructive work we could be doing and should be, and I will now and in the future avoid reference to those who, once my book was available and could have done some good with it, only hurt.

If I can I'll keep you posted on whatever publicity there is of which I know and hope your own heavy commitments permits you to do likewise. I have just had a letter from Agel in which he says his BOOKS is out and he made a big thing of it. I'm meeting him tomorrow night for the first time. I offered to share the radio program with him but he thinks he cannot make that. If there is anyone from Viking at the book thing in Washington tomorrow, I'll make them the same offer. I have already made it to the man in Viking I spoke to, Garvasi. Believe me, I am trying to be unselfish at a time when it hurts because of our pressing needs. Of all those who offered to come

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forthand help financially with the private printing, not one of these I was able to approach has, and my only help has come from others and is minimal. This is a pressing problem, for the next payment is due June 10, yet I have not taken a moment from what has perhaps already been constructive work to address it. I'll have to improvise at the last moment. I do believe I'll be able to. But I'll face the same thing, much magnified, by the end of the month, when the balance is due. You can have seen another way in which, regardless of their intentions, both Arnoni and Selandris have hurt.

Somebody has helped a little, for I'm getting a few mail orders from California and New York. Yet I get requests like from the Australian Newspaper Association that require a special trip to town for special mailings.

We may have a chaotic period ahead. I feel, as you correctly presume, the lack of sleep. I'm still starting work usually between 4 and 5 a.m., sometimes as early as 2 or 3:30, and I'm never in bed until after 11. If the taping is done early enough, I'll try and catch up a little tonight. Lets all hope that the now-present interest of the press and the priming already done amount to something, and our loss of sleep and other things will begin to have meaning. If developments go as now at least seems possible, I will not be able to do the additional writing I projected in the immediate future.