

4/30/71

Dear Ray Cole,

When it became inevitable that I'd have to write something like the enclosed letter to Boggs, I tried to phone you yesterday. In your absence I did speak to Chuck, and I presume that he has or will communicate what I told him to you.

As I meant them when I offered them, I still mean what I said when I told both you and Chuck that you may see what I have, what I am working on, what I expect to be able to accomplish when this is completed, with the one reservation, the preservation of confidence. Because of the unconscionable hazard to which Bud has needlessly subjected my work and its potential, I have gone further to Chuck and do to you in that I have offered first-access upon completion. I hope you will find this as fair and open as I intend it to be, particularly because it begins with the offer of a confidential backgrounding. This encompasses much more material than you have any way of estimating. I think you will find it hard to equal in recent history.

And I do hope you will preserve for me the confidence Bud breached, not for the first time, and not on this item alone.

Returning to Boggs, in whom I overheard your interest when I was awaiting Chuck a week or so ago, if he uses any of that stuff he may never recover from it, its potential is that bad. If you doubt it, please come, with or without Tom Boggs, and let me play devil's advocate. Bring your copy or use mine. If you have more than the one, I do not.

I have to leave for New York in the morning. As I told Chuck, there is a press conference scheduled. There is advance indication of a pretty fair turnout. To a degree what I offer will not be controlled by me but by the publisher, who has all the originals and is making copies for distribution at the press conference. However, to the degree it is possible, despite his long delay with it, I will withhold what he has been sitting on and says he wants. This goes for what you said you'd like, but my chances there are slimmer if those at the conference have read the book. If I can't hold it, I have similar, unpublished material, in some ways more sensational, and I will let you have it.

If I can keep to the present schedule, I'll be back late Wednesday night. I do not know whether I'll have to go to Washington Thursday, if I'm back by then. If I do not, there will be much mail to be attended, for I have considerable correspondence with others working seriously and unselfishly in the areas of my interest. I have to be in Baltimore by 2:30 Friday. Other than these things, so far as I now know I am free the early part of the week of the 12th.

Because of my personal liking for Bud, I regret what he forced upon me, knowing full well that he was, one of his men having come up and gone over this with me and assured himself that I am correct. However, I owed at least this much to everyone, to you, to Boggs, to the work so many of us have worked so long and so hard on, to myself and perhaps above all, as he may come to realize, to Bud.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg

No bcc