

11/11/71

Gary, Howard and Jerry,

Were I a shrink, I'd read more into Ned's letter of the 9th than I have in the reply I have dictated to Lil. I have to forget all this so I can concentrate on the many other things that are before me. I Hope none of you finds my inflexibility on the doctrine of my work and what I regard as its integrity disappointing, but for me there is no choice. However, I feel this particularly strongly for three reasons, really samples in two cases: the blind insistence Ned had on eliminating such things as the McClelland observation and Specter's handling of it (to the point where he never once mentioned its duplication by two other doctors besides Stewart, which I volunteered he could leave out) even after I said I'd be content with a single paragraph on it; his insistence that the destructions of evidence, meaning for all practical purposes, the destruction of all the essential evidence, were of minor significance; and his relative inexperience with the subject, which is separate from the fine intelligence he does have. These things represent judgement values to me that I simply cannot come myself to accept. I am also disturbed by his initial insistence that on such question his judgement prevail and his meaningless modification of the current letter, where all those he names are too busy. Also, it is intolerable that I be asked as a condition of final help that I agree to that with which I cannot. My high regard for Sylvia you all know. Yet I cite you two illustrations of why I cannot accept her judgement carte blanche: her attitude toward Thornley, recently given to me second-hand by a dependable man known to Jerry as "innocent", and her unthinking assumption that Cyril simply had to ask for access to the pictures and X-rays, which in my view, right or wrong and whether or not you agree with it, could lead to an enormous disaster, whether or not the odds are for it.

I have written him what I intend as a moderate letter and I have ignored much. This is an example, for I told him when he was here that Howard simply had no time and Sylvia had declined when, before I finished the new last part, I asked her to edit the two earlier one. She had to, of course. This is not criticism of her. I then asked her if she would in a reasonable time reread them and merely blue-pencil. She agreed to but I have gotten to page 60 of what will be the new second part, III, without hearing from her. She is busy and not well, as I knew. I had merely hoped that time might find it possible. I also told her when I found that she hadn't been able to not to worry about it. But in each case Ned knew the fact, and yet he in pretended seriousness (that I think he really intends seriously in his own thinking but can't in reality be) he proposes Howard and Sylvia for his committee.

I didn't begin to say what I was tempted to in responding to his crack about corporation presidents not being as busy. The week he was here I got but two hours sleep, and that of poor quality, twice. I am again getting out of bed not later than 5 a.m. I never get there before 11:30. and if I average this against the past and I spent all that time sleeping, it is still a third more than I averaged for much more than 5 years. I find this offensive. If I didn't have to wrap packages and answer letters from many concerned people (or could dictate answers), if I didn't have to do my own filing and carding and other such non-intellectual things, I could either sleep more or get more done. But these constant direct and indirect references to my poverty really bug me. I wind up with the feeling that unconsciously they are intended to humiliate me, whether or not they are. It is even more offensive to me when I have surrendered any prospect of literary acceptability or remunerative employment when I have done what I have done and when I consider what this has ~~cost~~ cost and is costing Lil.

If Ned is not willing to make the publication of the full work possible as soon as it can be accomplished and be content with my agreement with his edited version, I can't agree. It is that simple. Gary hasn't thought it through or hasn't had, for example, Howard's experience, as with Specter, but that interview shit is totally unacceptable, as is Ned's estimate of what is persuasive, from the two foregoing samples alone. With O&D, who are crooks, I had no problems and no serious argument of any kind. If I have with Ned, I suggest the fault is not mine.

Meanwhile, the pressures accumulate and life is hard. I am having to drop everything

to go on a trip which, except in Dallas, can do me no good and the prospects there are slim. Bud has finally agreed to it and to finance it. We estimated the cost at \$700, so he has given me \$300. I presume he will send the rest, but do I have to tell you what this simple thing means when we are flat broke? Now what good can it do me to see Ray now when my book is dead? Or to go to N.O. with what is in that book alone? Those of you who know my most recent work on this, which I do not repeat for those who do not, know that this subjects me to some hazard. For even this to be possible, in Tennessee I'll be rooming with Jerry who, aside from his previous record, as his last exploits was a mendicant of Stoner and the NSRP and shot a man. All this and Ned too? Too much!

If I ask nothing for the life I have led and lead, I'm not about to be abused or humiliated for it.

The only reason I responded as much as I did to Ned's 9th is because of its superficial reasonableness in some areas.

As the three of you realize, I did not involve any of you in this. Unless you think that I am in serious error, I ask no response of any of you. I really want to do no more than to add this to the accumulation of the costs of poverty and forget it so that I can keep my mind as clear as possible and do what I can that has any prospect of serving a constructive purpose.

It is now lunch-time. I'm not even reading the letter I dictated to Hil. If it has errors in it, I regret it. Her shorthand is a bit rusty. But after lunch, aside from trying to get as much of the posting of corrections done as ask I can and getting the storm windows in so she won't freeze in my absence, I have letters from two courts to respond to and a miscellany of other things.

So you will better understand the conditions of my going to N.O., I wrote Ivon about three weeks ago, carbon to Jim at his home, and I've had no response from either. I have heard from two separate sources that Jim doesn't want me there again. And he is not what I regard as the hazard to my going there.

Sorry about your involvement.

Best,