

4/21/72

Dear Matt and,

Glad you are back and sorry you still find writing painful, the way I think you once used. Sound like you have a good setup, especially for the kids and Jeannine and school. Imagine I'd hardly recognize the kids now.

The letter you sent directing me to Black Star for some pictures did reach me. Black Star was unproductive. It is not that important, but I did make several efforts when I was in NYC. Don't worry about the one removed from the envelope that reached me.

Don't bother buying Frank's book. From the little you know it will pain you enough to find such skill in the literary whorehouse. Orestes Pena once told me that the best whores are lesbians. Frank reminds me of that. He is as persuasive a liar as I have ever read, and as skilled and conscienceless. My concern was not that his nastiness would hurt you, although I resented the ridicule dragged in with no context of apparent purpose (copy ref. enclosed). I wanted to use this as a human element to his face when we confront, if he shows, in St. Louis 5/7. You seem to prefer no reference at all, so I will make none. I am hardly without material. For personal reasons I hope you will take as a token of regard and because it is so illustrative and comprehensible, I wanted to jam this down his throat. On camera. All that beautiful interview you got with Aylee he uses, in other ways, with the key things left out. One of the apparent purposes of this book was to "answer" FRANE-UP (which I'll not send separately).

Although I did not then know you, I recall the Wynne Oaks affair very well. And I live within walking distance of the 20-some months of vigil at Ft. Detrick. You'll note he makes no reference to that. Or to the seeming (I doubt it is really real) change in national policy, of which that was the beginning, bacteriological warfare now allegedly being out. Detrick, in fact, is/ became the center of cancer research.

My only remaining interest in the Fitch picture is as a souvenir. I have little wall space in my office (ours is a thermopane house - I DO live in a glass house!), which has 10 of my file cabinets in it, but I'd like to have that to look at once in a while. There are few pleasant N.O. memories for me, and you all are one.

I'd appreciate the balance of your Memphis notes. My book is out and dead but my work continues, rather productively, as I can't now describe. And if you met the black woman photog who was there, I believe from St. Louis, and had any kind of rapport with her, I'd appreciate a note for I intend looking her up when I get there, 5/6. You may remember that you gave me all your notes. There were in a cardboard box. I took only some and then didn't get back until after you left. The can have meaning you could not then begin to imagine and I might very well not have known enough to understand. This is all part of a continuing effort to see if the "E" can be changed back to a "C" in America.

Vince was with the school board long before you left, before he went to N.O. with me. He and Garrison still have a thing going, described in its reformulation Jim attributes to Vince in a manner in which the good guys are the CIA. I was in N.O. in November, saw Jim Vince, and he held forth on this at some length, not completely consistently with some of Vince's writing on that subject that appeared later in a minor mag. If Vince is getting out of this, it is the best thing that can happen, esp. for him. Jim is very sick. Sick as he clearly was before you left, that is nothing to now, back or head. Great tragedy, great talent wasted. You kid yourself if you think the Shaw trial is over. A switch is on, with Shaw suing in dead seriousness. I had a long talk with Sal Panseco. Jim is so impressed with his own towering and unique genius that it is impossible to help him of those decent people who put up the money he misspent and who alone can be collected from.

Dear friend, some of us (many fewer today) have never left the front lines. Best to you all.