

Paul, Dock, Gary, Mary

2/19/70

Dear Penn,

How does one reason with a man who appears to have left, approach a mind closed to what it finds unwelcome, show to those who will not see, or deal in realities with him who knows it not?

I am dismayed at the permeating, minor, careless error of your new book, disappointed because it does you no credit and can be used to the detriment of others. It is even self-contradictory, as having three men arrested behind the pergola on the grassy knoll, only to have them four and arrested behind the post office, when neither is correct. Even when you were with me and heard impartial confirmation of what I already had from two independent sources on Odio, you have her the captive of those who befriended her after her surgery.

It is to marvel, however, that these people who are your political enemies do not accept the invitations to sue that you flaunt in their faces.

My purpose in writing, however, is to make a record between us of the known error you have in this book about me. That you would print such rotten stuff without making any effort to check it, at least give me a chance to dent it if you are so persuaded that Boxley is both perfection and infallibility, was sufficiently incredible. That you would reprint it knowing it to be false is absolutely beyond adequate condemnation. How can you be so utterly irresponsible?

Not only did I not believe Boxley was a CIA agent inside Garrison's office (and still do not), but I have no reason to believe he was ever a CIA agent. So far as I am concerned, this so-called "~~xxxxxxx~~ task force of eastern critics", three in one place, two in another, had other purposes. Rather than asking Jim to fire Boxley, I saw him but twice that trip, each time briefly, and made no such request of him, nor did I suggest it. On the next trip, I think I talked him out of believing Turner is an "agent", but does one know? I do know that I never believed it, never suggested it, and despite my dislike for his total lack of honor or morality, I have, whenever the question has arisen, always said not only that I do not believe it to be the fact but have no reason to consider it might be.

I understand you were in New Orleans for the trial. Did you ever check any of that hogwash out? Like the morgue book, the corner reports, the autopsy photo? Or was that manufactured, the entire book that Boxley never asked for faked? Did you ask what the "radio equipment" (first "engineering equipment", really turned out to be? Or is everybody an agent except you and Boxley?

If your purpose was friendliness toward Jim, how can you leave this without explanation, his firing this great investigator who in all those months did nothing to prevent the disaster of the defeat? Is it that you dared not print the Boxley explanation you gave me, that the bad boys on his staff were feeding him pills that make him their captive? So what did you do, leave him look like an awful fool? Firing this paragon with no reason at all?

When I take this and the so much more I do not mention and add to it your refusal to pay the money you owe me, knowing my desperate need for it, I can only wonder what has happened to the man I once knew.

With deepest regret,

Harold Weisberg