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U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

12/4/76

dear dick,

the left hand alone is adequate for response to your 12/2/76. as an internal record for flashing among your members and others, one-sided that is, it is adequate. i would not regard it as an adequate or even a manly response to what i wrote you.

you accuse me of error, say you will not waste time in responding and come up with only one specific, "no one from this office has contacted an individual named John Larry Ray."

come now, dick, with all your experience dumping charges on people to compel an interest in plea bargaining and all those prosecutorial tricks in which you have had so much practice you should have been able to do better than this.

but if you have been doing your job as long as you have been hired, do you really not know who John Larry Ray is? did my letter not tell you enough if you have not begun yourself for more than tv shows and interviewing nuts?

you are not before a jury in correspondence unless you are preparing to deceive those to whom you say show your carbon. so do not say other than i did. i did not say "one from this office has contacted" John Ray. i said that one so representing himself made the effort. ~~it was~~ it was unsuccessful because when the jail authorities spoke to John he refused. if you did not know this before you received my letter, as i am sure you did, you are also incompetent in not being able to run your committee. you could easily have learned by asking those few who could have made the effort, like those who have solved the King assassination by their personal work in Chicago and along the Canadian border. (this comes from one of your members.) or perhaps from Oscar, whose trip home to Dakota coincides in time with it. you also should have had my original source on this in your hot little hands. it was John's letter to your chairman. (i can believe that he may have been too busy writing a glowing foreword to a transparent literary fake. reporters have already questioned me about this so you may yet have some fun from disregarding my advice on the responsibilities staffs bear to members.)

so much for your word, which is really what i wrote you about. there is no point in again asking you to distribute this correspondence among your members. you are afraid to.

my complaint included your violating your word on confidentiality and your not letting anything i gave you get into the hands of anyone not on your staff and in need of that material. basic in trust of a lawyer is that he does preserve confidentiality. you went farthur 10/20 and told me that in my position you would stipulate no less when you agreed. based on your agreement i performed. when much more than the time required for xeroxing passed and this material had not been returned i asked that it be ready for me when i would be in your office 10/17. Ken Broton was then apologetic. i have no reason not to take his word. in my limited contact with him i have found him specific enough about not giving ~~him~~ his word unless he is certain of being able to keep it. some of what i loaned you under these conditions has disappeared. an exhaustive search showed it was not in your offices and nobody on your staff had it. fortunately, Ken said, there was a xerox of it. he gave me the xerox as a substitute for what i loaned you.

you may not want to live by my standards and i cannot impose them on others. however, i believe that my standards are not exceptional among people of honor. by my standards, if i were running your committee, i would have shaken the place up with some vigor, if not out of concern for my own integrity then to earn my pay by meeting my minimal obligations to my employer, the house, and to each individual member of the committee. i did mention this obligation to you on 10/20. i also was more subtle and delicate when i did caution you about your badmates. if in this one aspect you still question my advice to one without experience on the hill try saying "like" to a member.

it happens that also in today's mail is the return on this missing "original" which I loaned you month before last. it is not my original. this copy has been xeroxed at least three times since 11/17. and no wonder you are considering getting a duplicating machine that colates large numbers of copies at a rate of more than one a second, making the copies that rapidly, too.

there is the shyster's evasion in the allegation of "so many misstatements and inaccuracies that it would not serve much purpose to refute them point by point," try one, not all.

then when you spend the time you do on the tube and with certified nuts you know have the traditional retreat of the bankrupt. "I do not ^{pro 288} ~~pro 288~~ to waste time..."

when someone raises questions about my honor and integrity I do not find specific response to be the waste of time, not even when I am in less than the most encouraging of health as as you can see additionally handicapped.

of course I cannot impose my concepts of honor on you any more than I can tell you how to run your committee (remember your proud boast that you demanded and received carte blanche?). but with more than mark lane in 10/20 and since with him by name I did raise this question with you, including as a warning.

how I am reminded of my files missing from your offices and not yet returned.

I did read George Lardner's story with all those direct quotes from him. with the passing of time and cause for caution mark has restrained himself a little in how he says you owe your job to him. he has been more explicit. and when a reporter does not cut him off and he wears up he loses this little control.

you will find that the pins and needles in the FBI's files may be the least of the pain. but we will have to let that run its course now, wont we?

meanwhile without saying it is or is not more than one I am telling you that a member of your committee has told a reporter that, in plain english you are in mark's pocket. so I said pins and needles and bed rather than pocket.

it is great stuff for tv when you write/ re that "this investigation is going to proceed in a professional, impersonal [sic] ~~sanitary~~ and detached manner. Our goal is to seek the truth." how well you learned at arlen specter's knees if not at his feet. he once said his only client was truth. what you have represented and permitted to be represented to your committee on the king assassination is professional? when I offered you, and your committee before you the contents of dozens of file cabinets it is impersonal? when I alone have been in and on the JFK case from the beginning and neither you nor any member of your staff has asked me a single question or asked for a single question? how impersonal can you be? I recognize that having asked for nothing you are detached, except for mark and his king. yet with this record, after my offers and your failure to accept them you can write "I would hope that you would be desirous of cooperating."

when your/ staffer left here one night last October with a box of records I offered and you immediately let them out of your hands I am not cooperating with you? hell, you did not even tell him to ask for them. the reason is obvious: you told your committee the opposite of what they prove. you and your former Philadelphia colleague or associate over. (I have nothing against Philly- I was born there.)

your beginning is so good I save it for last: "For someone who prides himself on his abilities for calm, unemotional and detached reflection and analysis, your two letters do you a disservice." well, after this one from you I have even less concern about standing on them, even if I have no one to whom to dictate them, pour them out and go on to whatever else I have to do. but you have not once cited a factual error. I am aware of your Philadelphia lawyer's scapout on this. so I solicit your citation of my error. other than about "an individual named 'John Larry Ray'" to make it easier for you.

am unemotional? i never told you that.

when you first phoned me you misunderstood my reference to my physical condition. you then went into descriptions others, i can easily guess who, gave you of me. i did not dispute any and i added some you did not/ tell me. you were not listening.

if you had troubled to get any one of my books instead of may i say rushing to judgement you would have know that not only am i not unemotional but unlike the prosecutor who ~~forget~~ forgets that his primary obligation is not obtaining a conviction but/ seeing to it that justice is done i go out of my way not to hide my emotion. my reader cannot be unaware of it. i would consider it dishonest if i did not guarantee that my reader, clearly not including you, could be unaware. try/ the apologue of my second book as an illustration. that early. it is earlier than 9/66 but not as explicit.

you offend the founding fathers and poor, forgotten tax payer and his time that tries men's souls.

a president is killed in ~~max~~ broad daylight on the streets of a modern american city and then is kissed off into history with the dubious epitaph i address in the opening of my third book in this sense and you expect a first-generation to course ice-water through his veins?

quite separate from what man of decent concern must feel in questions of fact, at no point in your 12/2 do you permit fact to contaminate your self-serving intent. one can ~~max~~ be ~~emotional~~ without having a need to be unfactual. in failing to assign a specific factual error to me you are in an ample company, including our lawyers may not limited to arlen specter. not our person has complained to me that i have treated him unfairly. specifically in this do i include your specter, even after i described him as a subornor of perjury and sought/ to entice him into reaction.

mine is what you may kid/ yourself into regarding as a simplistic view. if you could cite factual error you would. you do not. i am and i was specific. you are not. you cannot be.

so i leave you to your caricatures or whatever else may drive you. that your goal is to "seek the truth" obviously is not the fact.

you ~~appear~~ appear not to have profited from the teaching of ecclesiastes about vanity and that there is nothing new under the sun. nor from santayana's wisdom that he who does/ not learn from the past is doomed to relive it, nor from brandeis and who for good or evil is the teacher of us all. if you seem to lean toward the lawyers' maxim, penis captivis sciam non habet, i am more for burke and his "all that is necessary for the forces of evil to win the world is for enough good men to do nothing."

i do not believe that with, as the saying goes, one hand tied behind me i have failed you. the silence i expect from you will tell me that i have not.

sincerely,

harold weisberg