

Plum & Maggie

3/5/67

Dear Shirley,

I understand your distress and concern and your pessimism, even if I do not feel or believe them. I look at the broad and the narrow picture differently. I do not judge Garrison by those who may be his political friends ~~or~~ who the SEPost implies are his beliefs but at what he is doing, how, and for what purpose, with what conceivable end. I also judge him, to a degree, by his enemies. Do you object that he is opposed by Aynesworth, Newsweek, the Washington Post? If his political friends are a basis for judgment, how about his friendship with Mort Behl. That is not consistent with following Ayn Rand. Or Lane?

You make some accurate presumptions of what followed my visit. This also is inconsistent with a right-wing perspective on his part. He then read the ms of my unpublished book, "Cia Whitewash; Oswald in New Orleans", which is very much an anti-right wing book, and he was excited by it and full of praise of it. In what I heard him say and in what he did while I was there, I saw nothing suggestive of right-wing beliefs on his part.

If he held such views and I believe him otherwise right, I would, to the degree I can, help him, for this is not a personal matter. In any event, I heard him say pro-JFK things.

My concern is an entirely different one. He over-reacts. He alone knows the magnitude, the depth and power of the campaign against him. It is not only a hazard to his life and that of his family, but something a brave and fearless man takes seriously if he is also a politician, his political situation. This campaign also jeopardizes his case and with it all of us. While I would prefer that he behave as he began, saying nothing, and you read the G-I and know I refused to make any comment about my appearance before the grand jury, I also know he faces political problems and realities we do not. My chief concern is that the end result might be making Shaw untriable. This also involves the possible denial of his legal rights. I believe that the focus of this campaign is on achieving this as an end or by-product.

I learned before Garrison did (it is I who introduced him to his evidence) that the CIA is paying the legal costs of those who oppose him and the investigation. That they run legal-aid societies on the q.t. would be news. I also have other apprehensions, but I believe he is right and that his doctrine, which is anything but right-wing, also is right.

On Rose and the departure from Dallas, it is of no consequence what Rose's politics may be. After I wrote the first book I learned that he had been invited to the autopsy. As for Johnson's life, that of Mrs. K, all of it do not alter the requirements of the law and the obligations imposed upon the federal government. But if it were to follow an illegal course, only with pure motives, it then should have shown similar motives in the entire autopsy, which it did not. You know my sympathetic feeling for Mrs. K. Yet she is not a law unto herself, and her desires do not transcend the requirements of the country's integrity.

Sometime in the future, when I have time and may face the need, I'd like to read your Aynesworth file. And the Larins one. I cannot now. I'm trying to finish up another book so I can finish "VIII". (It will have something of interest about Honest Joe.)...and you understate the magnitude of Manchester's error. It is total, save for its exaggerated representation of the influence of the "climate", neither of which motivated Oswald or pulled the trigger....I'd like a copy of the Humanite clipping. I can get a competent translation. My French left me 30 years ago, disgusted at disuse. Ditto if you ever see the Paese Sera story, or the one from Novedades.

You say we move slowly; I fear that we move too fast. We can do nothing without public understanding, and that comes slowly. The danger of the Camps Pean talks of is real but not yet present. We are, each in our own way, delaying that. That is my chief concern and my personal focus. Chins up!

Healy

5/29/67

Harold: I have been so long getting back to the typewriter. Believe me, I have been following everything as closely as seven papers a day will allow, and was delighted to see the nice picture and spread the NO STATES Item gave you. It was also interesting that Garrison came out with so much new information after you had been closeted with him. I would love to hear your assessment of him. Caught a small item on the back page of the NO STATES ITEM last week: that Garrison was an old friend of Thomas Dodd, also a former business partner of his. Add this friendship (of Garrison's) to his close relationship with McKeithen and Russell Long and you have a tight little nest of right-wingers for sure. Not that this should mean too much in itself. There shouldn't be guilt-by-association, etc. On the other hand, it's awfully hard to tear a man's reputation completely away from that of his friends. BY the way, what did the Sat. Eve. Post have in mind when it labelled Garrison a disciple of Ayn Rand? Is this true?

The latest from NO ties Novel into the CIA (1961), also with Double-Chek (reference in INVISIBLE GOVERNMENT), with the DIA, with Robert Kennedy, etc. One thing that IS happening at any rate: we are being asked to focus more and more on a localized, disgruntled element and AWAY from any Washington innuendoes. Since I have felt for a long time that friends of LBJ gave impetus to the assassination (probably hiring anti-Castro Cubans or anyone, for that matter), I can't ~~feel~~ feel Garrison's search will lead down this alley. For all his talk, Garrison is hung up with McKeithen, Long and Dodd--and we all know what THAT means! I may be being overly suspicious. Having lived in this part of the world for eight years, I am wondering if any good thing can come out of Texarkana!

Have been re-reading your books which I do regularly. Harold, Burkley and Powers (I think the latter) both asked Rose to come to Washington with Kennedy's body, but that pompous gentleman refused. I agree with you very much that we are a nation of laws not men; in fact, this was always one of JFK's ~~favorite~~ favorite points; on the other hand, no one in Mrs. Kennedy's party on that terrible day in Parkland (that terrible place) knew whether or not Mrs. Kennedy herself was a target or not. And since she would NOT leave the body, it was absolutely essential to move the body to get her out of Dallas. You have probably read Manchester's account of this sordid scene by now, which I have reason to believe is very accurate. Rose was intent on humiliating the Kennedy party. He was NOT so dedicated to law or to protecting the rights of the innocent; Rose was consumed with nothing more than the intense hatred of the Kennedys that motivated nearly every petty official in Dallas. Actually, Johnson should have waited for Mrs. Kennedy IN THE HOSPITAL. As I have said many times, can you imagine JFK in a like situation going off and leaving Ladybird behind in a strange New England hospital. The idle argument that every president MUST obey the SS in these matters is beyond discussion. Each President does as he likes in these matters. Johnson left because he, too, expected an assassination attempt ON HIM in the hospital; yet, the left has taken it on itself lately to carry on a diatribe against the Kennedy party for "unlawfully" removing the President's body! I talked to a Leftist a few years ago who told me he would not take his wife in to Dallas because the city was too dangerous; yet he has been the loudest in criticising the Kennedy aides for hustling Mrs. Kennedy out of Parkland. At any rate, O'Donnell, Powers, Burkely, etc., all tried to get Rose or some Dallas official to accompany them and the body to Bethesda but the stubborn right-wing bastard would not. With Rose, it wasn't a question of law or protection of the rights of the accused (Rose doesn't give a damn for nonsense like this), with Rose ~~it~~, it was stubborn ~~xxxx~~ bureaucratic pride, plus a detestation of the Kennedys. Do you imagine for a moment that had LBJ been killed, Rose would have opened his mouth over the transfer of the body? Certainly not. So it hurts

me to see the Left ~~joining~~ joining with Rose in this attack on Mrs. Kennedy. I appreciated the fact that you recognized her distress.

One of the reasons (in my opinion) for some of the depositions, etc, being buried so deep (75 years) for the "protection of the Oswald daughters, is not because of their father, but because of many statements made concerning the morals of their mother. I think a lot of Hugh Aynesworth lies (depositions) are part of this treasury.

I sent a letter to Garrison on Aynesworth after that sick attack in NEWSWEEK. My stories on Aynesworth are basically inconsequential; on the other hand, they point up the kind of man he is and the way he played "leak" for the WC. I am writing a letter to Manchester on Sorrels and Honest Jow, also on Hosty. Manchester made some fatuous remarks. What a pity he didn't study the volumes better. His strong suit was in his reporting of the atmosphere in the Southwest, the funeral, etc. No one can negate his value, historically, but I surely do disagree with his assessment on Oswald.

Did you ever see the clipping on Shaw from Humanitie? If you didn't I can send it to you. My French is poor, but I was able to make it out.

So, Harold, we move slowly. Will we be able to move fast enough to stop the right-wing tide in this country? I think not. Actually I think we are lost, as lost as liberals always are, whether the country is Athens or China. Penn says we will all be in camps within the year and perhaps he is right. I have always said it was because we sat like idiots and chewed up that damn story they fed us on the Woodstock. If we had held ground then and fought, it might be better now.

Love to you both and do let me hear from you when you have a minute. Have you seen Lewis' book? I haven't. I understand The New Yorker is doing a story on us. I wonder when it will be out? I usually don't read this magazine. ^{730 boring!}

A Texan ^{was} just named Rusk's underman. Serves ~~him~~ ^{Rusk} right.

Love, S.

On looking through Manchester's INDEX, I find I have talked to more people involved in the investigation than he ~~was~~; yet he billed himself as knowing more than anyone else. Pity.