

1/14/72

Dear Jerry,

Analysis can't replace fact, but fact means nothing without analysis, and often in the search for fact we must have at least a tentative analysis. The less we know about a thing, the more we must try and figure it out. As you now know, my hunch about Lattimer's politics was correct. But I made a big mistake last night on your second call, not to note the exact date of issue of that magazine and copy the exact political language of that outburst. As you can see, I later, when I had a chance to think for a minute, decided to write a general letter to Martin anyway. I will send him the copy when I get it, but it is always possible he will call the Library of Congress, which can have it for him very fast. The previous letter should have shaken him up a bit unless the wraps under which he is are that tight.

I have another purpose in writing, to ask another thing. I hope you can realize that from the time of your visit to now I have not been able to find time to do any of the relatively little work needed to finish up the conclusions of PM, now I must write an epilogue, and I then have to add to the appendix, annotate it and add the new stuff. And Pearl is coming, so that means less time. If there is little prospect that we can find the money, Lattimer and that whole operation give us the best kind of what I call intellectual judo if by some stroke of magic I can get this book out. Slight as the chance is, I must do it.

One of the things I need immediately and do not have is the exact language Lattimer used on Long John. Too late, but I think you have learned. That stuff about waving the hat, the angles and his own lack of qualification and a few other things would have been so effective in the letters I have written. And there remains the distinct possibility that I have not aborted what I know was to have been the next step.

I should have asked you, since you now do not need it, having the cassette from which you are working, to send the real-to-reel tape of this because it might have gotten here before the copy I'm getting, which won't be until Tuesday, if the mails do not delay it. I can't see the friend who is getting it for me before then.

At this juncture, I also think that unless it can't be avoided, the best best is to say nothing publicly about L and to continue to collect and put together what we have. For example, I didn't have time to reread carefully all my own files on L. How I wish Howard could have been here when that broke, for I have confidence he'd have missed nothing. I think we can now put together one helluva story. The damage is done, let it be done, and let us work up a doozy, which I'll have to do anyway for the epilogue. I started drafting what I will mail him and Graham last night. I'll finish today and mail, I hope. I think the questions to Graham alone will set him back on his heels, if they don't get to him too late.

Now I told you one of the clips you sent, LIPress or Newsday, I think quoted Lattimer as saying he had had doubts until he saw this stuff, and you know what I had proving him a liar. But you are now in a position to make the most graphic representation of this. Take that MWN letter and this clip, please, put them together and xerox so that the false pretense and the political diatribe and perhaps but not necessarily the chart, which will not be as clear, are on one page. Make me perhaps six copies. When I get them I'll encircle the appropriate parts with a red crayon and make some use. If you would be good enough to do this with one immediately and send it to Mr. Sid Hurlburt, c/o Senator Charles Mathias, Senate Office Bldg., Washington, in a plain envelope and with my return address typed on it, you will not have to enclose a note. Mac is a good friend of Teedy's and Hurlburt knows Teddy's AA well. They know the realities and how much they can or dare say without turnoff. Marshall did promise Mac nobody will see this stuff, so this will give Mac a measure of Marshall. Now, on the charts, we must be certain that we do not make a mistake. Without a copy of what L drew for CBS or any other source, unless it is clearer than the Commission, which is not fairly represented by what he used, we'd best be careful. Gotta stop. Thanks, great find,

There is not enough time between now and when Lil is ready to go to work for me to do much of anything, so I'll continue with explanations and expositions. From my own experiences, which I think are not duplicated by those of others of us (as, others have had experiences I have not had), I knew as soon as I heard that lineup of Lattimer memberships that they fit a pattern. If not absolute proof of what you now have in that MWN, the chances were excellent that this had to be his real, inward attitude. I've known too many such cases, and I've never known one who was not really sincere in it. One of my points is that the younger of you must learn to detect some of these things, for they are, because of the changes in our national life, the kinds of things to which you will not likely be subjected, making them harder to learn. Second, I will use this to illustrate why I keep insisting that on the really important things I do want all, especially the more brilliant and the younger, to think independently. For purposes of illustration, not criticism, I remind you of Sylvia's comment on that same lineup. Now suppose we had all assumed that and you did not have the MWN? We'd have missed with what with Martin, if anything can work, may be the most effective single thing, wouldn't we. Suppose now that this incorrect analysis had been mine, and I had pressed it upon everyone else, and been persuasive?

You last night reported to me the dismay of both Cyril and Sylvia when this story broke. They just didn't expect it. Yet brilliant as each is, it was one of two almost certain alternatives. I was foiled because of Marshall's corruption. One of my big problems now is to try and find the right way to exploit that. He did promise my Senator friend that he would not permit this, and he did arrange it. There just isn't time and my other limitations, like such simple things as not being able to buy the gas to go to Washington and pay for the parking lots, are crippling when taken together. But if some of us can be quite for a while and just collect this kind of thing and I can put it all together - and if they don't pull a second punch too fast - I think I can do it in the writing of the epilogue, which will not be so long it can't be read fairly fast. Then my problem will be making copies, and I think Bud will help on that. I'll try and get Jim to be devil's advocate, for I trust him and we are not automatically at cross-purposes and he has now seen that from long before it happened I understood it. This should make it better. Jip, however, has a car so undependable his wife won't let him drive it here, thus he didn't come Monday as he was supposed to.

One other thing: remember what I cautioned you and Howard separately about being overwhelmed. Listen, but to each of us, including me, apply your own critical judgments. You are both younger than some of us, which means you have had fewer experiences in life, but you both have fine minds of your own and every right in the world to make your own mistakes. If you disagree with the older ones of us, we can usually consult, but don't take my word and judgement or anyone else's without your own evaluations. We may have less chance of being wrong on this subject, especially those of us who know most about it, but we also can be wrong and have been.

Do not think you have learned all you can from the serious mistake of transcribing Cyril on Long John first. Do much more thinking about this and you may be able to understand a better kind of M.O. As you know, I heard enough of that to know that he was great. But I also knew, again from experience, that the chances of putting it to any immediate good use were close to zero. The only way for the weak to fight with any hope of winning is to attack. Almost invariably, when the weak defend only they are overwhelmed. Transcribing Cyril was a defense of cream-puffs. Transcribing Lattimer would have given me some pretty good artillery. It may or may not have struck the target, but without the ammo, what do we fire? If you really ponder this when you have time, this one small incident can become very important to your learning, to your capabilities with these kinds of situations in the future.

Now, please be alert to any signs of the telegraphing of their next moves. They may do nothing, depending on who is involved and how, or they may do any of a combination of things. One of the possible interpretations of Graham's silence, which accounts for at least a delay in writing him, is that he is in that next step. Please heed this: whatever they do short of letting an acceptable critic see that stuff and come out and say it is disproved will ultimately be a big mistake for them. We may be hurt temporarily, but don't get discouraged, and gather whatever you can on that thing and send it to me promptly, no matter how seemingly insignificant. They can't do right from their point of view unless somebody like Cyril sees that now and I'm thinking of ways we can offset that, without any certain solution. Best, RW