

July 19, 1972

Dear Harold,

Your letter of 7/17 both distorts what Walter told you and reveals a very convenient memory.

I did not refuse to get your foundation file back to you. I said that the file was not my responsibility, and I was not going to drop everything and rush off to Brooklyn to get it.

I had nothing to do with you giving that file to Linda. When we all came down for the weekend you put Don and Linda to work, and when they asked if they could be of further help you gave them the file to take home and index. You never asked me if you should do this, nor did I comment on it one way or the other. Any subsequent involvement of mine in retrieving the file I regard as a courtesy, not a responsibility. I told Don a couple of weeks ago that you required the file back. I have not seen him since. I will see him this Friday at which time I'll get the file and send it to you (out of courtesy).

As far as sending back to you anything you ever gave me, I will say what Gary said. If you really want everything back (knowing that I could withhold some things or xerox others if I wanted to) I will send them. But I have no intention of dropping everything that I am doing and ransacking my files merely so that you can satisfy yourself that I am not inserting these things in the Congressional Record. I have many more pressing matters to occupy me at present.

Walter tells me that you told him that Gary and I made available something that was in some way unique from what was available from the Archives, and was therefore unquestionably not in the public domain. Just to set the record straight, what Gary sent Cyril and I sent Sylvia was a copy from the Archives -- not a copy of anything you sent Gary. If your copies have unique characteristics they are still quite safe from Cyril's or Sylvia's scrutiny.

On re-reading your letter I find more examples of convenient memory. Don and Linda were perfect strangers when they first stayed at your house the weekend of the demonstration. But that is not when you gave them the file. It was quite a bit later after you had become pen-pals and after you had given me several gifts to give Linda for her new apartment. It was their second trip to your place when they were not strangers but invited guests that you gave Linda the file. As far as my asking if I could xerox the file, after Don and Linda had broken up and you asked me to retrieve the file, I in turn asked you if I could make a xerox of it for my own files. What that has to do with anything escapes me.

You know, the tone of your recent letters makes me wonder whether you regard others highly or with deep friendship only for so long as they regard you as a father figure -- unquestioningly accepting all of your judgments as invariably correct. It seems that once that complete reverence begins to falter the scale tips completely and those whom you must know would like to be your friends and care deeply for you nevertheless become arch villains deserving of the most poisonous villifications you can conjure up.

Best wishes,

