

6/27/72

Dear Harold,

I suppose that if you want to cut Gary and me off for what we did that's your right. But you are not privy to all of the facts, and I think that they should be considered by you. I wish that Howard had sought to get the full story before he phoned you with the small part that Sylvia told him, but what's past is past, and all I can do now is try to explain everything to you and hope that you will understand. I don't ask you to forgive because I don't feel that I did something that was wrong.

I don't know if you ever showed me the Berkeley death certificate. I do know that you had mentioned it to me as something that was made available to you by Tom Kelly. I also know that Gary got it independently from the Archives when he ordered some of the materials that looked interesting in a letter sent out by Rhodes.

I learned several weeks ago from Sylvia that there might be some possibility that Wecht would be given access to the photos and x-rays, and after giving the matter a great deal of soul-searching thought I decided that it was essential that Wecht be aware of Berkeley's confirmation of the lower location of the back wound. As much as I have tried to understand why it is important that Wecht not be given access to the photos and x-rays, I cannot persuade myself that you are right. But what is more important (because I do not see myself as omniscient although you may think I do) is that Wecht remains unconvinced of the potential for harm. If that danger is real, it is even more real should Wecht go in unprepared and unbriefed. I phoned Gary and discussed the entire matter with him and asked him to send Wecht the certificate. He did send it, outlining to Wecht the history of it, how it was released as a result of your pressuring Kelly, and that you regarded it as your literary property. Because Sylvia and Wecht are close I consulted her. I told Sylvia of the certificate's origin, and I sent her a copy along with a carbon of Gary's letter to Cyril.

I'm sure that you recall that I felt that Finck's testimony and the movement of the head wound in the Panel Report were extremely important to my article on the Times. Both are part of the public record of a public trial just as Ray's extradition file is. Nevertheless, you saw both items as your work and you opposed my use of them, and so I refrained from using either. That was a decision I arrived at solely out of consideration for your feelings. On the matter of Wecht I felt that a great deal more was at stake, and I did what I felt I had to do. If those photos have been falsified and Wecht were to gain access, I think we would be guilty of something pretty terrible were we to deny Wecht the means of proving forgery when that proof exists. Sylvia knew that you were responsible for the availability of that document and why I was divulging it, and I think I know Sylvia well enough that she would never dream of using it. I've never divulged anything else of yours to anyone. I made that death certificate available to Cyril because in good conscience I couldn't do anything else.

I've felt very close to you and Lil for a very long time. In a lot of ways I suppose you're almost like my adopted second parents. If I hurt you I'm truly sorry. If you really mean what you said about not wanting to see me or hear from me again I'll have lost a very close relationship that was and is important to me. But the case is important to me also, and so I made a decision that I'll have to live with, one way or another. I hope that you can understand that.

Best,

