

6/19/69

Dear G,

For whatever it is or isn't worth, just found Fred's first letter to me, dated 12/14/67, praising my work as "more and more authoritative" as he goes over them (this was before I stayed with him, we had never met) and asking a number of questions I answered.

Betzner, "somehow I suspect the Betzner reproduction in LIFE is a composite! That tree takes a weird jump." Later, "the masonry structure on the right-hand side of the 'Betzner photo' looks to be airbrush work..."

No revelation of any Z knowledge, merely comment he was "happy" to see six frames in Thompson. He said I cropped them and asked why.

Although he stipulated he had knowledge of perspective and photography and 17 yrs experience as commercial artist, in my reply I referred him to Spreague on some things, cautioned him on difference in times pictures were taken, differences in locations from which taken (Betzner farthur east), etc.

I even defended Thompson from the cropping charge, pointing out we didn't know and the automatic masking in copying.

The reason I mention this is to show the state of his knowledge before I was there and told him what I knew (addressing itself to Lifton slander of thievery on Z- you know I had done all my work long before this letter) and that long before he made those errors inexcusable in those with photo and art background, he was warned against precisely those mistakes he made and published.

Charlie Ward's action surprises me because I have not been in touch, but I think I know who his backers are. I think his statement makes chasing automatic. It is the blatant right-wing appeal. Jim was strong for him for judge when last I heard, had, in fact, initiated with governor. Nutty or not, he had to have had some strong motive. I think Charlie organized opposition position as soon as he got in trouble. The other man involved is, I believe, an old timer in Friends Democratic Club! Bud didn't backgound me on this. It is in Tuesday's States-Item, Charlie is in ~~PM~~ PM III- it is who who refused to take the phone three times when I called between court sessions, lying and saying he wasn't there, or telling opr to. I was sitting next to Mouna when he phoned and spoke to him from Bud's. Rather than having nothing to do with investigation he is the one on the staff who went out of the country investigating. He fought Aaron Kohn on his stuff, and there was no one to require it (Kohn may support him). He makes straight racist appeal, super law-order, garrison refuses prosecute, etc. Quite a statement that may get him establishment support but certainly delivers all youth to JG, blacks also.

Hastily,