

7/10/71

Dear Gary,

Of all the things you say of Lifton, the only thing that is new is that he really does have something. There was a time when Hal, Paul, Sylvia and Gary, separately, said this, and then Gary said she had come to doubt it. I, of course, have no way of knowing, but after all of this you should hear the stuff he gave me over the phone in 10/68 when I yielded to PH's request and phoned him when I was in LA. If that is what he has, we'll all be better off if he never publishes. I have long believed that his psycho problem is one requiring that he not come to an end, for that would destroy what meaning he finds in life. Amateur shrink. His crookedness is not news to me, as you know. Nor is it news that Liebelr has what you say. I have had details for years. It is 40 drawers of reels of microfilm, and much classified. I knew of the ultimate falling out with him that Sylvia and Gary had. Gary told me of it when she was here last year. Sylvia merely devoted some of her more picturesque and descriptive language to him, without adding details.

I have known his character for a long time, since before I met him. I was reminded long ago when you asked me to answer his charges. I then found evidence that in 1966 he offered to help Liebeler against Lane. You may remember that our rich buffs asked me to go out and get Liebeler off of Lane's back, and that time I did, Liebeler flying away from each agreed confrontation and remaining silent until JG opened up 'our rich friends, naturally, sticking me with even my flying costs!). The only reason I met with him once is to save Bill O'Connell embarrassment and the Lifton treatment.

It has long been at the point where I have really wondered what side he is on, regardless of his sickness. I had no proof that he had stolen from Liebeler, but I had assumed it. Do you now make sense out of that Receda business and his fabrications, his getting Liebeler off the hook? Liebeler must have given him much of it. I doubt Dave stole all of it. They had a common interest. My question is the degree.

I'm glad you may be coming. You can stay here, as can anyone you may bring. Let me know the date. Gary plans to come in August. It would perhaps be good if the visits could coincide, although I can think of advantages if they do not. Anyway, I'll give you a dose of Lifton you do not know. I did know and told Paul, who wouldn't believe it, that the Liebeler memo Dave used in his "book" was not from the Archives. The first page was a giveaway, and it is the kind of thing Liebeler would have gladly fed him, no? It is different that the official copy I have.

I'll pick up in the a.m. I'm going to look at the news and then to bed. Each morning now I'm taking a stiff hour's walk up the mountain, and it is good for me, but I am not getting the added sleep I should.

After almost six hours sleep! There was once a time when I'd have been anxious to know what the Newcombs have done with all that work that advances our knowledge in any way, but, aside from always wanting to know whatever I may not, my chief interest would have been to forestall another disaster. I am without your confidence in them or their work and do not find it possible to put any innocent explanation on their continuing relationship with Dave after all they knew to begin with. The one good thing Fred did of which I know, at least that I recall, he did for me, and the day for that kind of material is long since past. His Z work is largely rubbish and was done with the wrong print for it to have the meaning it might have. There are other excisions and we know about them much more dependably. We just do not talk about them now because now they have no potential meaning or use. That time will come and when it does we are already prepared for it, much more than you will know until you are here. If I know when it will be and can make the arrangements, for I do not possess this print, I will try to arrange for you to see a really good print and a really slow-motion version, where each frame has been duplicated 10 times, for example, and prints where individual sections have been enlarged, without the distraction of other contents of those frames, prints concentration on a single thing, like JFK, etc. I have as clear a

print as they saw, better than anything the Archives has except the slides, which are excellent there. Frankly, I have to be persuaded that any of them are capable of solid work or it or capable of adding meaning to anyone with a clear print as compared to the poor ones, for I am not persuaded that they have the knowledge that is required for understanding of anything new in it. I do not think they know enough about the surrounding information, what is indispensable. I am trouble that LIFE would go to nuts if they really intend to sell it, and any effort to sell it now is inconsistent with their entire history with it. Of this I would like to have more because I have established this much of a relationship with LIFE on my own: what they would not let Bud, as Ray's lawyer, see, they did let me see, with no restrictions save that not steal it, and that was not explicit. More, because they had, as I suspected, more than they had said, I could have stolen but didn't. Instead, I told them honestly that they had a valuable property they did not understand, that I believe I do, and that if they ever intended doing more with it, I'd tell them, what they do have. For the most part, nobody is in a position to understand the obvious, that having become the nature of modern journalism. But to return to the beginning of this passage, I am not going to continue to try and be fireman for fools and knaves not to be able to hurt as they have

It is not possible to succeed and it wastes too much time, when I have to waste too much anyway. Mary knows what Dave has, or at least the significant part. I think she has come to have doubts, but because she has it in confidence I've not pressed her on it. I think her attitude to the Newcombs has changed since you were down in Dallas, as it should have. They were very nice to me as hosts, but you know what happened as soon as I left, and people capable of that are those with whom I prefer no association.

Your report on Bradley is inadequate. He comes across as you describe him, but he is also a wretched person, capable of real veil and up to some now. He made me a few minor promises as the result of a great favor I did him, and he hasn't even kept them, when they mean little to him. In fact, he has, without those noble souls who know him so well, ~~xxxx~~ telling anyone, been making very bad noises -aside from his suit, about which they have also informed nobody. So, of them, I remain with the feeling that they long to achieve something, that it means much to them to think they have, and that they are incapable of it. But this ambition dominates them. I hope that your visit with them is not followed with you as mine was.

My concern with Lifton is that he is in a position to have significant things, from what I have already told you I knew he had access to. Long ago I gave you a different account of his real relationship with Liebeler than was accepted, and his record left little doubt. But he is sick, and he can take something really good and twist it to find men from Mars now in those Brown and Root tunnels, or again return those papier-mache trees and have flyinh saucers removing them at night, and ruin anything good he might have. I had assumed he got from Liebeler thought theft and through favor, and when I knew how hard he was trying to steal from me, there was no problem with his morality. The only problem continues, his lack of sanity, his precepts, his irrationality, and these cannot be coped with. Isolation will merely make him sicker. Naturally, if he knew anything of real value, I'd like to know it, but I've made and am making no effort. My big worry is not what does he know that I do not but of what is he capable that can hurt us all? Your description is of two immorals, each disapproving the special manifestation of the immorality of the other. When Dave could not filch the entire thing, he screamed when Fred wanted to take parts. I have trouble believing any real LIFE rep would have let them get in a position where they could really do either. As I have in anyone trusting either. If you can expand my knowledge in any way, I'd like it, but I do not think they told you anything significant and dependable.

I saw the draft of Sylvia's piece on Jarman/Melin, gave her a criticism she approved, and have seen the finished form and Belin's response. It is a fine piece with some good content, but it is, again, the ghost of a ghost. We are far past such things in our knowledge and I think that, essentially, they are a futility. Proving official dishonesty is like proving the sun will rise now.

The Clinto stuff appears solid. I had nothing to do with it, but I was impressed by

the witnesses. I have given that aspect it a dimension it didn't have independently. New witnesses and I have them on tape. I regret you will not be here long enough to hear such stuff, and I really wonder if it is worth the time. We know that Shaw was not truthful. What is not as clear as it could be is why. I suspect that what I told you is the case, what you also seem to think, that he had other involvements. I remain with two beliefs unshaken: he was Clay Bertrand and he had a CIA function or functions. There is nothing new in my telling you this, and you know some of it if you read all of COUP. He housed at least two CIA outfits, and the nature of his legitimate employment made some of this inevitable. There need be nothing sinister about any of it, but that is something that can be established only with more knowledge. I hope Jackie will decide to let me know whatever she does know. I keep more significant secrets than this about personal lives, including more than one about the internationally important. You know at least one. But I guess Jackie doesn't. If she needs persuasion, when you are here I'll show you a file that shows the trouble I went to to forestall such misuse of the innocent that could be made to look real nasty, involving an important family.

You read me clearly on the Ray incarceration. There is no rush, but it would be good to have that all lined up for the time when it can be used. Assuming the changes Nixon is making in the courts will not have made it a futility.

Your bar appearance should have been a real bash. As you may have seen, younger members have become activists elsewhere. If any of them are ever anxious to make a serious attack on the seniors, I can help them. I have some and can get the rest of what they'd want.

In an effort to tone my muscles and reducing the pace of aging, I'm taking a real stiff walk every morning it is possible. We may have rain soon, so I may not do it today. If you remember the mountain here, you'll know that four miles in it, at a brisk pace, first all up steep hills, is work, so that the descent is not easy! I fear I'll not be able to extend this because when I tried yesterday, there were three vicious dogs. They may mark the highest point to which I can ascend on the road, and I'm not about to tackle the jungle. But I'll have breakfast soon and if it is not raining, I'll go get the exercise, followed by a quick dip and then work. The thing that I intend writing LIFE about is not Z but LA, the yesterday's quote from the DA acknowledging the tampering with basic evidence. I have something official, unquestionable and very hot on that. I sent a copy to the Washington Post last night. If I had an agent, I'd have been on the phone to him midday yesterday. The whole prosecution and the judge, who rung another in, were up to something very improper, and it involved making the evidence unavailable. Say nothing of this, but their plans even foresaw and depended upon changes Nixon would make in the Supreme Court, and this two years ago! At any other time, it would be worth money, too, a story that could sell. If I write them, I'll send you a copy.

Glad Hal seems to be getting interested again. He describes the girl in Europe as his important girl friend, but she cannot be. He is too involved to understand it. I do hope he finds another who can be the real thing, not just the image of one. He has not told me of the new one, and I refer to none in correspondence. In fact, it has been a long time since I have heard from him and I suspect the reason is that he is getting opposition and resistance from old friends in the media on FRAME-UP, me or both, and he is reluctant to tell me. He probably thinks he is saving me hurt, but all he could give me would be detail. I know the fact, having my own ways of appraising it.

And glad you had so good a time. We all need these things. You did what I never had a chance to do out there, go sightseeing. When I had time out there, neither the Newcombs nor Burton thought of it, and I never had time in SF. We do hope you can make it here and that you can stay for a few days. ...I presume, having heard nothing from him, that Ned's visit with Weinreb produced nothing. I'd like to be wrong, but I think the chances were not good anyway. I hope if this is the case that it does not discourage him too much. He spent a night with us, and we all enjoyed it. Best,

THE MINNEAPOLIS CLINIC

OF

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Thanks for your last letter and its enclosures. I had a great trip to California--the first good vacation in a number of years. I saw much of San Francisco, and got a chance to drive down to Big Sur on the coast road, taste wine in the Napa Valley, go up the coast to Mendocino, and yet still see many drug treatment agencies and free clinics. Some of it has led to an as of yet unconfirmed invitation to be on a panel in Washington this Sept. If that comes off we will be able to get together, since I will be able to get to APA convention.

I stayed with Hal for a weekend and had a good time. I spent some time with Paul also, and met both their girlfriends. Hal's important girlfriend is still in Europe, but his current replacement is a nice gal. According to Paul, the melon thing is dead and will not be published by anyone. He indicated that he had always felt that the head movement was 100% proof for a shot from the front, and that the first time he really doubted it was after the melon experiment. I pointed out that my belief was based on more than the movement, and that I knew the movement was not 100.00% certain proof alone, and that I had rejected the idea of testing it because of the problems with such an experiment, etc.

Hal is getting reinterested in the case, largely due to FrameUp.

I spent two days with the Newcombs in LA while seeing the LA Free Clinic. They have been working incredibly hard on the case for the last couple years and have come across some interesting stuff. They have benefitted a great deal from Mary's work--Mary being fairly close to them emotionally. They took me to meet Bradley who I found to be a docile, naive, dedicated fundamentalist who would probably get along very well with old HL Hunt.

In confidence, I learned some interesting things from them. First of all, they, Mary, and Sylvia haven't spoken to Lifton for a year. They broke off as a group after Mary and Sylvia got together and found that Dave had told them different stories and a # of lies. Dave, as usual, is totally isolated again. They considered releasing the info that Lifton has that they know of, when angry, but decided against it. All, however, feel that he will never publish. What he has that ## is of crucial importance came from Liebler, and that stuff tipped him off as to

where else to look. Liebeler apparently had a mini-archive with classified documents in his home, and Dave used him unmercifully. When Dave# got something of real importance, he showed it to Liebeler, who contacted others for a mini-commission meeting about what to do about it. Lifton then robbed the memo on that meeting from Liebeler! The Newcombs feel that while Lifton now completely disgusts them due to his lack of scruples, his dishonesty and thievery has been the key to success. Unfortunately, no one is benefitting from Lifton's raids, etc. Another important detail is that Lifton and the Newcombs got to spend a day with a LIFE copy of the Z film due to the fact that LIFE is trying to sell it and they got a businessman to front for them as representatives of a phony corporation. Lifton had a plan to steal the film and Fred got so angry that he slugged him. Then when Fred tried to pull a Tink and photograph the frames, Dave started screaming. Ironically, Fred and the others except for Dave have shared what they learned from the part of the film they studied, but Dave is not sharing. Dave told Mary one version of this, and Sylvia another. They have a complete chain of possession on the Z film which came from the records of Tink's trial, so that stuff is available publicly. Please don't refer to any of this in letters and keep it to yourself.

Ned# tells me that Sylvia is doing an article for the Texas Observer charging Belin with suborning perjury. Ned is meeting today with Lloyd Weinrob, a minor commission lawyer who helped with LHO's biography.

If the Clinton stuff is true, then I would agree on that basis alone that Shaw may have helped Oswald establish some sort of cover. I am not convinced he is uninvolved in this affair, only dubious, as you are, that he was a conspirator. He may be# connected with other affairs, including CIA ones, which involve LHO. We are agreed on that one. But, I see Shaw as a victim in the NO trial, perjury notwithstanding. All Jackie was told was that Shaw knew LHO. I will ask her for more details if there are any. I certainly do not feel Shaw is meaningless--far from it--but feel that he represents some wasted chances from our end.

The Bar Association thing was fun, and seemingly successful. I pushed your most recent book, and Mpls sales will tell the story as to how successfully.

Ray's incarceration, from your description, would probably have the same effect as brainwashing techniques in making his pliable. There is work on this sort of thing, but little in the way of experimental evidence. I agree with your postulations about the expected effects. All I disagree with is the importance of artificial light. Continuous light would have effects, and being completely imprisoned to the point of not seeing outside would also. Much of this could be argued by a smart lawyer with the aid of an expert on brainwashing techniques. So I agree with your concerns and will see if I can get someone working on the general deprivation problem.

Well, I'd better go now. I hope this letter finds you and Lil in good health and spirits.

Gary